



Israeli armor burning after Sinai battle in October 1973.

Del/Gamma

Rabin Out, Inflation Soars, Strikes Rage in Israel

Crisis in the Zionist Bunker

For Arab/Hebrew Workers Revolution!

APRIL 10—While Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin was ambassador to the Zionist state's chief imperialist benefactor, he was not above looking after his own. During his sojourn in Washington Rabin lined his pockets through the time-worn tactic used by American politicians of soliciting legal bribes through speaker's fees. It is reported that he made some \$90,000 in this fashion, a drop in the bucket compared to the millions the CIA lavished on King Hussein of Jordan, but enough to cause a minor scandal in Israel where Zionist leaders raised on the kibbutzim are supposed to live more spartan lives.

After returning to Israel, Rabin left some \$20,000 stashed in Washington, D.C., bank accounts in his wife's name, an illegal act under Israel's stringent currency laws. When confronted with this malfeasance Rabin lied, claiming that the amount involved was only \$2,000. (The practice of Israeli courts is that a sum that small would subject the malefactor only to a small fine, whereas for \$20,000 he may well have to go to jail.) However, the lid blew off Rabin's cover-up, and this was the straw that broke the back of his campaign for reelection as prime minister.

The Rabin resignation and general government crisis was only a culmination of the mounting social crisis in Israel. Inflation continues at near-South

American rates, provoking the greatest strike wave in the history of the Zionist state. Arab protest demonstrations continue on the West Bank. While a new candidate for the governing coalition was soon selected, he is in no better position than Rabin to deal with the severe social crisis.

Rabin was the candidate of the leading party of the Zionist establishment, the so-called "Labor Party." This is a clique-ridden bourgeois formation based on petty political barons and their personal fiefdoms in the highly stratified and corporatist Israeli capitalist economy. The "Labor Party" was formed in 1969 through the re-unification of two split-offs, Ben Gurion's Rafi Party and Achdut Ha'Avoda (Unity of Labor) with the traditional party of "labor-Zionism," the Mapai (Palestine Workers Party).

Even the fused "Labor Party" has never been able to garnish enough votes in the Knesset (Israeli parliament) to form a government. A Knesset majority relied on a coalition with the right-wing National Religious Party (NRP), based on the orthodox rabbis who impart talmudic clericalist sanctimony to the chauvinism and racialism of the Zionist state, and the "left-wing" Mapam (United Workers Party), who drape this reactionary client of U.S. imperialism with a threadbare red flag and May Day "socialist" rhetoric.

As has been previously reported in *WV*, the present parliamentary crisis was precipitated when the NRP Knesset members abstained on a no-confidence motion tendered by the even more fanatically orthodox "United Torah Front." The Torah Front accused the Rabin government of desecrating the sabbath when a ceremony for the newest and most advanced U.S. fighter planes to be added to the Israeli arsenal ran late into a Friday afternoon. Rabin expelled the NRP from the cabinet, and lacking a



Schezen/Gamma

Israeli troops patrol Nablus during November 1974 demonstrations by West Bank Palestinian Arabs.

majority in the Knesset, he then resigned, forcing the present elections.

"Allon Plan" and the NRP

The bourgeois press explained Rabin's expulsion of the National Religious Party as a result of incompatible positions on the territories Israel occupied in the 1967 war (Golan Heights, West Bank and the Sinai peninsula). Rabin's formal position, the "Allon Plan" (named after the Israeli deputy prime minister and foreign minister Yigal Allon), is based on maintenance of "defensible borders," that is, continued Israeli military occupation of that land and of those borders which the Zionist chauvinists consider necessary to their military security.

Under this plan Israeli military forces would continue to occupy most of the Golan Heights, a substantial strip of the eastern Sinai peninsula and an armed ring around Samaria and Judea, the densely populated portions of the

Palestinian-Arab West Bank. Troops would also be stationed along the Jordan River, and the old city of East Jerusalem is considered annexed by the Zionists. Samaria, Judea and the densely Palestinian-populated Gaza Strip would be placed under Jordanian control to be policed by the hated "Black September" butcher of the Palestinian people, the Hashemite monarch King Hussein.

It is clear that the Israeli government would not proffer even this token restitution if it were not for tremendous international pressure. But, speaking for "labor-Zionists" Allon gives a rationale for the thief returning a fraction of the spoils: the desire to retain the exclusive "Jewish character" of Israel and not to add to its already existing Arab minority of 400,000. The NRP opposes the return of any occupied territory, especially in the West Bank, while supporting the Jewish

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Zionist Bunker

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clerical-fascist Gush Emunim (Bloc of the Faithful) settlement movement in Samaria and Judea. To retain the "Jewish character" of Eretz Yisrael, the NRP calls for forced population transfer of the Palestinian Arabs from the West Bank to Jordan.

Whatever their programmatic differences, there has been enough effective unity in action up to now between "Labor" and the NRP to preserve the coalition government. The minister of housing who is responsible for the government's settlement policy gave financial support to the "illegal" settlements and expropriated additional land to provide for their expansion.

Imperialist Peace vs. Zionist Annexation

U.S. policy has always hewed close to the "Rogers Plan" named after Nixon's first secretary of state and embodied in UN resolutions 242 and 338. Under this plan Israel would relinquish most of the occupied territories for a peace treaty through which the surrounding Arab regimes would recognize Israel as defined essentially by the pre-June 1967 borders. The "Rogers Plan" like UN resolutions 242 and 338 is purposely ambiguous, calling for "secure" borders and not defining how much of the occupied territories Israel actually has to relinquish.

George W. Ball, who as U.S. under-secretary of state from 1961 to 1966 was a major architect of the imperialist rape of Vietnam (and who is presently a partner in the bond brokerage of Lehman Brothers charting the financial rape of New York City), argues in an article in the current issue of *Foreign Affairs* (April 1977) that Israel should be forced to relinquish all of the occupied territories and recognize a Palestinian statelet in the West Bank and Gaza. The quid pro quo would be a peace treaty and diplomatic recognition by the Arab states. However, he argues that to induce the Israeli leadership to accept this plan nothing less than a U.S. *diktat* will do. He writes:

"America's indispensable role is to provide the means of relieving the political leaders on both sides of the need to make politically unpalatable decisions by furnishing them the escape route of yielding reluctantly under relentless pressure of outside forces."

Considered as an abstract possibility, an American bourgeois government might force Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories, imposing the "Rogers Plan" by unilateral fiat. But no existing American bourgeois tendency which is a serious contender for governmental power favors such harshly anti-Zionist policy. An American *diktat* to withdraw from the occupied territories would produce such a profound crisis in Israel that it would risk destabilizing the entire Near East. In addition, the pro-Zionist lobby remains quite powerful, backed by popular sympathy toward Israel, in part reflecting racist attitudes toward the Arabs.

Carter is not committed to a new, different Israel-Arab policy. His erratic and totally contradictory recent statements on the subject reflect his double-talk electioneering style and the fact that Lester Maddox couldn't teach him the forms of international diplomacy.

Carter recently gave free rein to his penchant for talking out of both sides of his mouth. Zionist candidates for Israeli elections know that the real campaigning takes place in the U.S., not in Israel. So, of course, Rabin had to make the pilgrimage and carry his campaign to his old hunting grounds in the capital of U.S. imperialism. Carter greeted him by supporting the demand of the "Allon Plan" for "defensible borders."

This heartened Rabin and dispirited the Arab rulers. But two days later, as Rabin was departing, Carter held a press conference where he paid lip service to both the "Allon Plan" and the

were made fully manifest. The Yadlin trial revealed what the Hebrew masses always suspected, namely that in the promised land of Mosaic law and the "socialist" paradise of the social-democratic lepers, the Zionist government is saturated with the stench of graft and corruption.

Yadlin was the head of the Histadrut's sick fund, the Kupat Holim. The Histadrut is not only Israel's major trade-union federation, it also controls 25 percent of Israeli industry and most of its social services, including hospitals and clinics. Thus Yadlin controlled most of the country's health and medical services.

In August 1976, Rabin appointed Yadlin to be governor of the Bank of Israel, a position at least as powerful as the chairmanship of the Federal Reserve Board is in the United States. After his appointment was announced, Yadlin



Carol Gootter/Newsweek

Zionist demonstrators seize land from Arabs in occupied West Bank.

"Rogers Plan," calling the difference between "defensible" and "secure" borders "just semantics." Stating that "defense lines may or may not conform in the foreseeable future to these legal borders," and suggesting possible "extensions of Israeli defense capacity beyond the permanent and recognized borders," in the same press conference Carter also called for "substantial withdrawal" and only "minor adjustments in the 1967 borders."

Immediately afterwards, in the midst of and playing to the Palestine National Council meeting in Cairo, Carter ventured out in a demagogic fashion to be one with the people and made another contradictory statement before a Clinton, Massachusetts, town meeting. He stated that "There has to be a homeland provided for the Palestinian refugees who have suffered for so many many years." This sent spirits soaring among gullible PLO supporters, but the following day he made yet another "clarification," placing the "homeland" securely "in the framework of the nation of Jordan."

Retired secretary of state Kissinger chided Carter for not preserving the norms of hypocrisy, deception and obfuscation inherent in bourgeois diplomacy, and for being too blunt. However, Carter's "bluntness" consisted in crudeness, deception and deliberate ambiguity, not in any frank statement. For Carter everything is reduced to semantics, and even the Gush Emunim will support a "homeland" for Palestinians—as long as it is east of the Jordan and is inhabited by all the Palestinians currently living west of the Jordan! Carter's contradictory statements managed to simultaneously confuse his own State Department spokesman as well as undermining Rabin.

Graft and Corruption in Eretz Yisrael

While there are real and ultimately incompatible policy differences between the Israeli "Labor Party" and the NRP, especially regarding the occupied territories, a more important reason behind the expulsion of the NRP probably was to hold elections before the scandals emerging from the trial of Asher Yadlin

was accused of accepting \$9,000 in bribes. The entire "Labor Party" ruling establishment was implicated.

In particular the minister of housing, Avraham Ofer, was accused of accepting bribes when he headed the Histadrut's construction company. On 3 January, Ofer committed suicide; and when Yadlin heard of Ofer's suicide, he suffered a heart attack. After several weeks in the hospital, Yadlin decided to sing. A little plea-bargaining brought a little honesty and Yadlin's testimony at his February 14 trial further implicated



Popperfoto

Rabin with Carter during his recent trip to Washington.

"Labor Party" leaders including Finance Minister Yehoshua Rabinowitz.

"Democratic"-Zionism, "Socialistic"-Zionism, Stalinist-Zionism

The main benefactor of the revelations of rampant corruption within the "Labor Party" has been the "Democratic Movement for Change" (DMC) led by the archeologist Yigael Yadin, the Jimmy Carter of Israel. While claiming to fight "big" government and "big" business (which in corporatist Israel are often the same), and to fight corrupt politicians, Yadin's "Movement for Change" is merely cheap populist demagoguery which masks positions and candidates who have often defected from the

right wing of the "Labor Party."

For example Neir Zorea who headed the Land Development Authority under Rabin and was responsible for the policy of the Judeasation in Galilee of expropriating Arab land, has defected to the DMC. Likewise the former head of the Israeli secret service Mossad, Assa Harel, has joined the DMC. The DMC under Zorea influence has taken a hard line on defending Zionist settlements in the occupied territories and has called for the denationalization of the Israeli state sector, more incentives to private enterprise and support to a vicious compulsory arbitration law that would effectively ban strikes.

Shimon Peres, Rabin's Defense Minister and arch rival within the "Labor Party," replaces Rabin as the "Labor" candidate for prime minister. Within the framework of the "Labor Party," Peres is considered a hawk and there is some speculation that Mapam may bolt its "Alignment" with "Labor." To save Mapam's pseudo-socialistic conscience Peres appointed Allon, who is considered a dove, to the important position of candidate for defense minister.

However, Mapam has little conscience left to save as it has remained in the Zionist government despite its grossly chauvinist and racist policies. Mapam claims to recognize the right of Palestinian self-determination but claims that this right can only be exercised within Hussein's Jordan, a position not fundamentally different from the "Allon Plan." Likewise the pro-Moscow Israeli Communist Party, which has grown substantially in the most recent period, calls for a mini-state solution to the Palestinian question and co-existence with a Zionist Israel. The DMC, Mapam and Rakah represent a continuum of "democratic" Zionism: all believe in the myth that the fundamental democratic questions which directly challenge the Zionist state can somehow be resolved without a social revolution.

The present political crisis within Israel takes place within the context of a profound social and economic crisis. Inflation is at an all time high. Prices increased 40 percent in 1974, 39 percent in 1975 and 37 percent in 1976. The average income tax rate, the highest in the world, is 46 percent. Disposable wages dropped 8 percent from April 1974 to the summer of 1975. Israel's external debt is \$1,859 per capita, again the highest in the world.

In the context of a sharp economic crisis and as a militarily besieged society, Israel's "ingathering" of world Jewry into the "promised land" is becoming a failure. Immigration fell by half in 1975 and emigration, which averaged 7,500 per year from 1968 to 1973, jumped to 12,000 in 1973 and 21,000 in 1974. In 1976 emigration exceeded immigration and fully 60 percent of the Jews permitted to leave the Soviet Union for Israel went instead to West Europe and North America.

The greatest strike wave in Israel's history is taking place now. In March alone there were strikes or slowdowns by Bank Leumi workers, customs officials, government hospital physicians, telephone operators, petroleum workers and drivers, and university lecturers. A dock slowdown paralyzed Israel's three main ports and protests on the West Bank, centering on opposition to new taxes and demanding freedom of Arab political prisoners, have continued unabated.

An Arab/Hebrew proletarian party must be forged which links the militant struggles of the West Bank Palestinians and Israeli workers against their common enemy, the racist, chauvinist Zionist state. Such a party must call for the total withdrawal of Israel from the occupied territories; for smashing the reactionary Zionist and Hashemite states; for the right to self-determination for the Palestinian Arab and Hebrew-speaking people, which can only be realized through proletarian revolution and a Near East socialist federation. ■

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