

Israel: Mapam Splits Over Pro-Stalinist Policies

By AL FINDLEY

A split has taken place in the Mapam, pro-Stalinist labor party of Israel.

The party split following a statement by a Mapam deputy, David Lifshitz, in the Knesset, that the Arab Stalinists were imbued with Arab nationalism and were anti-Israel. For this "crime," he was brought up on charges, refused to attend the trial, and on February 21 sent in a letter announcing the formation of a new labor party. The other deputy publicly associated with him is Anna Lanman. News dispatches also speak of support to the new party by 5 deputies, and 35 per cent of the Mapam, especially in the large cities.

So far, all of the dissidents have been from the Achduth Avodah section of the Mapam, and have denounced the Mapam for being almost indistinguishable from the Israeli Stalinists and for accepting the latter's leadership.

As reported in previous LABOR ACTION articles, the internal struggle within Mapam was expected to break out in an open split; the main question was when and where. At bottom the cause is the complete subservience of the Mapam leadership to the foreign policy of the Stalinists. As long as Russia supported some Zionist demands, the Zionist Achduth Avodah was able to go along. After the shift of the Stalinists to an anti-Zionist position, they tended to develop resistance but hoped for a change in line. They now have become tired of one-sided collaboration. The Stalinists have been making it difficult for their Zionist followers.

OREN CASE

The latest blows suffered by the pro-Stalinist Zionists were: the anti-Israeli statements by the Egyptian Stalinists at the "youth festival" in Berlin, and the disappearance of the extreme pro-Stalinist Hashomer leader Mordecai Oren.

Mordecai Oren, a member of the Sneh-Rifin wing of Hashomer Hatzair, which advocated immediate organic unity with the Israeli CP and the Cominform, disappeared in Prague when he went there to inquire into the whereabouts of his brother Orenstein, a leading Stalinist official who had vanished in the purges following the downfall of Slansky. But he too—although an Israeli citizen—met the same fate; he vanished into thin air. Reports circulate that he was arrested for "encouraging immigration to Israel."

Of course, no one knows when the Czech government declared this to be a crime; or, if it did, when Oren had the time to commit it, since he disappeared immediately upon arrival. Such questions do not concern Stalinist "justice."

In all probability, the Czech Stalinists will try to make him "confess" that he was the go-between for Slansky in the latter's "subversive" dealings with Israel, "cosmopolitans," and "Jewish capitalists."

Oren's fate had a visible effect on Achduth Avodah and even on Hashomer elements. The Mapam official organ, *El Hamishmar*, printed not a single word about the affair; it merely reported that Mapam had sent an emissary to free Oren. Among the ranks the leadership has been spreading the report that Oren was arrested for one day and then released. They have not dared to offer public confirmation.

STALINOID LINE

It is not yet clear how much support the new party has among

the Mapam members. It is unlikely that it will attract organized support from Hashomer elements. The organizational principle of the Hashomer collectives requires "ideological unity," and any member joining another party would be expelled and lose his livelihood. But the new party may get much sympathy and could be the beginning of a chain of events that may affect even the Stalinist line of the Hashomer.

There is some possibility that the new group may not carry along all of the former supporters of Achduth Avodah (38 per cent of Mapam) and the Left Poale Zion (12 per cent of Mapam). A few of the Left Poale Zion leaders had already joined the pro-Stalinist Hashomer at the last Mapam conference held in the fall of 1951.

While the leaders of Achduth Avodah are anti-Stalin (they do not want to see Stalinism in Israel; in private they criticize Russia's lack of democracy and say that Tito is building socialism in Yugoslavia), nevertheless their opposition to the Stalinization of the Mapam is based on emotion and on what is to them the acid test: how it affects Zionism. On theoretical grounds they had given up not only advance positions but basic lines to the Stalinists. This may now have its unfortunate results.

Thus, their draft program "recognizes that the world revolutionary movement that is growing in the process of gigantic struggle and encompasses the mighty camp of the Soviet Union . . . is the movement that fights to free the world from fears of war, exploitation and fascism." The party will be "true to its friendship with the fortress where socialism is being built in the Soviet Union,

the people's democracies and China." Achduth Avodah opposed "anschluss" with the Cominform, proposing instead greater cooperation. It favored continuation of the right of factions in the party but also opposed the entry of Arab workers into a single party.

TOWARD MAPAI?

Hashomer Hatzair proposed "eventual" affiliation to the Cominform and "future" admission of Arabs into a single party and trade-union organization. While Hashomer condemned Tito, the Achduth Avodah draft program was loud in its silence.

Despite the abolition of factions, Hashomer did in fact continue as a faction because of its ideological control of its settlements. The Achduth Avodah people also created their de-facto faction by splitting the Kibbutz Hamenchad, transforming it into a homogeneous ideological unit, in preparation for a showdown with Hashomer inside of or outside of the Mapam.

The fate of the new party is speculative. It will probably continue independent existence for a while at least. There is, of course, the possibility that it may re-enter the Mapai or unite with a left wing of Mapai.

It is also to be hoped that its people will rethink their sad experiences with Stalinism in a fundamental sense, as well as their views on the Arab question. For their own reasons the Hashomer pro-Stalinists adopted a position of friendliness with the Arabs, in line with Russian foreign policy, but there is no reason to confuse the Stalinists' motivations with the need for a real socialist policy of rapprochement of the Jewish and Arab peoples.

ISL FUND DRIVE

Slow Pickup—Fill Up Those Z

By ALBERT GATES
Fund Drive Director

For this second report of the 1952 ISL Fund Drive, which is not quite two weeks old, we can report the contribution of an additional \$824, or a total in the campaign of \$1805. However good this is, the amount does not match the drive of last year which netted almost \$1000 more at this stage.

Cleveland goes to the top with 50 per cent of its quota.

This week saw New York and Buffalo join the list of contributors with \$432 and \$300 respectively. That's fairly good. We say fairly, because New York—which is usually the pace-setter in the total amount contributed—is lagging far behind its usual pace, and since it has the largest quota, this effects the total drive more than any other single branch. We are advised, however, that after a late start things are beginning to move along more rapidly and the next two weeks should show a rapid climb.

At this time of writing, Buffalo is in first place, followed closely by Streator and the Socialist Youth League. The others are far behind. But worst of all, half of the branches and cities have not yet been heard from at all. There's the rub. Detroit, Seattle and Akron, to mention a few, haven't sent in one penny yet! Why not? We would like to know. Let's see if we can reduce the number of "0" percentages by the time we make our next report.

Readers should bear in mind that of the money collected thus far, almost all the sums have gone to liquidate local debts and we haven't yet received enough money to take care of the more important obligations recited to you in the opening statement on the drive.

Fund Drive

TOTAL \$
Cleveland	.....
Buffalo	.....
Streator	.....
Socialist Youth League	.....
Chicago 358; New York 1	.....
Detroit 5; Northwest 5; N	.....
Oakland	.....
Pittsburgh	.....
Chicago	.....
New York	.....
Newark	.....
Philadelphia	.....
Los Angeles	.....
General	.....
Akron	.....
Baltimore	.....
Boston	.....
Detroit	.....
Reading	.....
St. Louis	.....
Seattle	.....
Yongstown	.....
Indiana	.....
Oregon	.....

CONTRIBUTE to the

Independent Socialist League
114 West 14 Street
New York 11, N. Y.

Enclosed is \$.....
the ISL's 1952 Fund Drive.

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY

(Make checks payable to Independent Socialist League)
Albert G.

Subscribe to
LABOR ACTION