

Anti-Fascist Unity Key in Israel

By Meir Vilner

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Since the Israeli elections the press has been referring to a "union" between the Likud and the Labor Alignment. The people have been engaged in discussions regarding this political possibility.

The concept of "national unity" can lead to serious error because it is essential to keep in mind the entire right wing bloc surrounding the Likud as well as the forces close to the Labor Alignment. It will then be seen that the extreme right has been strengthened in the 11th Knesset. Characteristic of these developments is the fact that the right wing Tehiya Party has five seats and there was the election of Meir Kahane. It is also necessary to keep in mind the Morasha faction of Haim Druckman, an extreme religious nationalist grouping with two seats. There are also in the Knesset leading spokespersons of other right wing groups. The significant fact is that the Likud is now a stronger force and that, after the defeat in Lebanon and in spite of the general economic crisis.

This also reveals that amongst the people generally there took place dangerous developments. The Labor Alignment is slipping backwards, though the largest grouping in the Knesset, they too lost seats. This is not to ignore that they did not go to the right wing parties but to Shinui and Shulamit Aloni's group (Ratz).

The Labor Alignment Responsible

The basic facts are as follows. The continuing occupation, with its brutality, the racism, nationalism and fanatical clericalism, which unfolded as a result of the occupation, oppression and war — from these roots sprouted the racist and terrorist movements.

The Labor Alignment as well as the Likud bears direct responsibility for this development. They are full partners of the Likud in the politics of occupation and war in Lebanon. The political outlook of the Labor Alignment, including the approach to the general economic crisis, is no different from that of the Likud and is revealed most clearly in the results of the election.

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The Alignment played on Likud's ball field and agreed with the Likud nationalist line and the rightward political line on all questions. Therefore, that section of the populace calling for change voted for other parties which opposed the Likud, as for instance Shinui and Ratz (the Shulamit Aloni Group). Mapam and the "doves" in the Labor Alignment were singularly silent during the elections.

Is it not then understandable that the Likud proved capable of retaining the majority of its strength, many voters finding no alternative programs in the Labor Alignment?

The broad masses indicated in their actions, in view of the politics and declarations of the Labor Alignment, that they do not have serious grievances against the Likud government, not as regard to the central issue of Palestine, not on the issue of the war in Lebanon and not on the questions of the economy and the general crisis. As a symbolic example we have the approach to Lebanon. The Likud holds that we will not leave Lebanon until we strengthen the "armed forces of Southern Lebanon" who are to guarantee security under the protective wing of the Israeli Armed Forces. The Labor Alignment said, regarding this question, that we will leave Lebanon only after we have organized the armed forces of Southern Lebanon.

As a result, at the recent elections there was an increased polarization and there is an increased danger of terroristic racism and fascism.

The Question of a 'National Unity' Government

There is being projected a proposal that a "national unity" government is the prescription for solving the ills besetting our people. We must ask ourselves if that is the needed prescription and if there is not another for the current crisis.

We warned, even before the elections, that the basic policies of the Likud and of the Labor Alignment with their common outlook will lead to a partnership between them. The election results strengthened this tendency in both blocs.

It is clear now that in the Labor Alignment there is a drawing away of Mapam and of certain personalities, such as Abba Eban, who before the elections had decided to oppose this tendency. It must be emphasized that it is not only the election results that gave birth to the idea of forming a government of "national unity" but that it was due also to the common political outlook on the central questions. It is naive to think that we can restrain fascism, which has been strengthened through the actions of a Likud government which is ideologi-

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cally and politically in partnership with Tehiya and other extremists.

Can such a government be stable and if stabilized what will be its character?

It is patently obvious that the leaders of the Labor Alignment will create the appearance of conducting confrontation politics with the Likud and with the leading fascists. Therefore, they seek a conference with the Likud. Since they are not prepared to change their basic politics, such a government, should it be established, will, therefore, present their current political program for the occupied territories, their program for an occupied zone in Lebanon, their program for further colonization, their program for serving and carrying out U.S. policy throughout the world, their program for colossal military expenditures which are chiefly responsible for the economic and general crisis.

Giving a "Dove" the Responsibility of Forming a Government

What is the approach of the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality? In the first instance, we repeat by saying that another Likud government will be a catastrophe for Israel. We will energetically oppose a government of national unity of both alternatives — both Likud-Labor Alignment and Labor Alignment-Likud. Furthermore, we will do all in our power to foreclose the road to both possibilities.

As for a positive proposal, we can propose to the President that he should give the responsibility for the formation of a government to a member of the Knesset representing the Labor Alignment who will be prepared to unleash a political program which will lead to ending the occupation of the Arab lands, who will call for the convening of an international conference for an Israeli-Arab peace with the participation of all the concerned parties, including the PLO and Israel as well as the Soviet Union and the U.S. — this today is the only way to normalize the situation now that all other methods have failed. Furthermore, there is a need to call for the immediate unconditional withdrawal from Lebanon, for an end to colonization, for the passage of legislation against racism and for the guarantee of equal rights for all nationalities, for guaranteeing the annual cost of living adjustments and other grants.

Strengthened Fascism and the Call for Electoral Changes

Relating to rampant racism, many people and forces are these days terribly troubled as a result of the election to the Knesset of Meir Kahane. They feel that

an increase in the vote requirements will make it possible to avoid occurrences of this sort.

Those who are requesting a change in the voting laws to require an increase in the number of votes required for election to the Knesset or by calling for regional elections are not only aiming at Kahane. This anti-democratic idea is not a new one. If the aim is to prepare to check racism in this fashion, let it be known that this does not depend on a new electoral law. We can close the door to racism by introducing a law in the Knesset against racism and by outlawing racist organizations. We have already proposed such but the Knesset majority rejected it. The racist and fascist forces have been strengthened by the occupation, by oppression and wars and not because of this or that election law. If this proposal will be presented it will then be possible for the reactionary forces to grow and precisely as a result of such an election law.

Progress of the Peace Forces

The election results reveal progress for the peace forces. Is it meaningful progress?

It is progress but this does not balance out the serious turn to the right. One has to differentiate between the consequential peace forces — the key force recognized that there are two states for two peoples and calls for the withdrawal to the lines of June 6, 1967 and then there are the various doves and moderate forces who espouse anti-Likud and anti-fascist positions. But the latter do not present a correct nor realistic peace plan in light of the above mentioned principles. These moderate and dovish forces are in the Mapam and some also in the Labor Party, in Shinui and Ratz. The consequential peace force in the 11th Knesset will be, as it appears now, the DFPE.

The Progressive List, as a new force in the Knesset, also presents a peace plan in a general way. However, their anti-communist and anti-Soviet positions hold it back from presenting a correct path for the realization of a lasting peace and for the establishment of unity amongst the peace forces in Israel.

The DFPE in the Most Difficult Elections

The DFPE protected its strength in the Knesset. How do we assess the situation?

This was one of the most difficult elections, though the result is certainly a victory. We received 70,000 votes; this is an increase of 5,000 over the 1981 elections. I repeat that the struggle was a difficult one because it was conducted in an atmosphere of nationalism.

A special factor was the concentration of a campaign against the DFPE and against the CPI by the Progressive List. They attacked us in their publications and at their meetings. In order to gain votes from the nationalist Arabs they attacked me because I endorsed the Declaration of Independence of Israel. To win votes from the nationalist Jews they highlighted the military prowess of one of their candidates, M. Peled. They spread lies, for instance, that Charley Bitton, DFPE Knesset member, was conducting sham negotiations with the Labor Alignment on supporting the Labor Alignment after the elections. They personally defamed Communist Party leaders in a most brutal fashion. Various groups and crazies helped the Progressive List. On the one hand, the "Moslem Brotherhood" and from the other side "Metzfunitzen." The information media extended themselves in their enmity towards us, praising the Progressive List.

I want to underscore that the success we had at the elections is due to the comrades of the CPI, our sympathizers, the comrades of the Black Panthers and many compatriots of the DFPE. All these were active with great devotion in the difficult election struggles.

Unity of the Anti-Terror Actives

Kahane is now barking. He has already carried out a pogrom demonstration in Arab Jerusalem, preparing for open provocation against Arab residents. Many democratic forces are uneasy. What is necessary to be done by the democratic and anti-fascist forces?

In the first instance it is essential that there be unity of action by all the forces who are prepared to struggle energetically against rampant racism and against fascist hooliganism. Ignoring the ideological differences amongst them, we must, however, reject the arguments that the danger comes from both extremes. Such an approach misjudges the seriousness of the danger that threatens in light of the Kahane gangs, the Tehiya and the Moresha. Thirdly, the Jewish anti-fascist forces must place themselves on the side of the Arab people in order to liquidate the racist provocations.

The International Scene an Israeli Problem

What conclusions can be drawn from the fact that during the elections there were no discussions about the international question, such as the atomic weapons race, at a time when the danger of an atomic bomb catastrophe is also a question of the existence of Israel?

During the elections this was obviously one of the weaknesses of the political leaders, that is, the separa-

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tion from the international questions as though Israel and the Middle East were not a sector of the world. All the political groupings, other than the DFPE kept hidden from the general public the dangerous threat of a global nuclear war, a danger whose source in the first instance is the U.S. government of Ronald Reagan.

Very few people in the land show an interest in the new danger flowing from the installation of atomic rockets. What could happen is that there will be no opportunity to control an unlimited arms race threatening the existence of humanity. We consider with grave concern this situation in which all the political groupings are equally guilty on this threatening problem or actually side with the U.S. atom terror.

This particular line is tied in with the fact that the Israeli political apparatus — whether the Likud or the Labor Alignment with all their allies — takes the position that we have to help ourselves through the U.S. In order to realize the plans for annexation and for the "liquidation" of the Palestinian problem. And like blind horses refuse to see the danger that if a world conflagration breaks out, the region and Israel will be devoured in it.

Therefore, we request, in the interest of the lives of the people of Israel that there be undertaken the politics of peace not alone in the interest of the Arabs and Jews but also in the interest of world peace. This is an Israeli problem not less so than a U.S. problem. □

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