slogans did not argue powerfully for stopping settlements or exchanging territory for peace, the points on which Labor distinguishes itself from the Likud. Rather its slogans were designed to compete with the Likud's maximalism: «The Alignment says no! No to a return to the 1967 borders. No to the uprooting of settlements. No to negotiations with the PLO. No to a Palestinian state. Yes! Yes to a democratic Jewish state. Yes to defensible borders. Yes to responsible Zionism. Yes to peace and security. The Alignment is the only hope.»

Likud, for its part, conducted its main campaign on the ground, taking advantage of its governmental power to demonstrate its policies. Ten new settlements were officially inaugurated in the week before the elections, in addition to other outposts created by energetic settlers with IDF collaboration. In the month prior to the elections, there was a massive military build up along the frontlines in the Beqaa, tripling the number of Israeli soldiers, bringing in more tanks and other armed vehicles and building new fortifications. In the same period, 'Israel' conducted a sea war against Lebanon: bombing an island off the northern coast, highjacking a Cypriot passenger ferry bound for Beirut and later a Lebanese freighter, and blockading Lebanon's southern coast for a week. While these acts are in line with Zionism's aggressive aims in Lebanon, they were also used to justify continuing occupation, telling the Israeli public that there is indeed a threat from Syria and the «terrorists» but this can be dealt with without risking Israeli lives too much.

## Unity through aggression

Labor's fight against the extreme right was only sharp on the question of democracy (for Jews of course). Yet this is not without connections to Israeli policies towards the Palestinian question where the underlying unity between Zionism's main factions emerges. As is known, Labor's main objection to annexing the West Bank is that this would mar the Jewish state's demographic purity, i.e., the problem is not that 'Israel' is an occupier, for after all Labor initiated the 1967 war and occupation; the problem is the steadfastness of the Palestinians on their land. We can compare this with Tehiya's more straightforward platform: annexation of the 1967 occupied territories with second class citizenship for Arabs in the future expanded state. On behalf of Likud, War Minister Arens suggested another version of the same:

If the territories should be annexed, the inhabitants could be offered Israeli citizenship without voting rights. Kahane's KACH has the answer for resolving these different possibilities: forcible expulsion of the Palestinians.

Given the past experience, it is not totally hypothetical to imagine a new assault on the Palestinians of the West Bank, or some other new military adventure. Such a move might be spearheaded by the extreme right to provoke a new regional situation and internal balance of power in 'Israel' to consolidate the Zionist right and its state. It is not unknown for Labor to capitalize on the extreme right's terror. There are many historical examples: The first Labor government presided over an 'Israel' larger than allotted by the UN partition plan, for which much credit goes to the extreme right's terror, as at Deir Yassin. Labor's support to the invasion of Lebanon provides a more recent example. Israeli history is a cycle of crises resolved through aggression. The deep right-wing tendency in the settler population supports such an option in the present situation. A recent poll revealed that 54% of Israelis would prefer no Arabs in their country; another revealed that 30% view with favor replacing the parliamentary system with something that works better.

Also in view of historical experience, imperialist support can be expected for Zionist military adventures. With the talk of a military defense pact to be concluded between 'Israel' and the US after the elections, a new green light may already be in the offing.

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# Socio-economic Base of the Right's Strength

On June 23rd, as Israelis were going to the polls, an article appeared in the Lebanese daily Al Safir entitled «Whatever the results, the transformation is deep in the Zionist society». The author, Hussein Abu Nimal did not aim to predict the election outcome, but to give a picture of the Israeli socio-economic structure which would determine the political results. His main thesis is that the consolidation of the right in 'Israel' is an abiding phenomenon with deep material roots. The following is a synopsis.

Much of the media focuses on political, social and ethnic divisions in 'Israel', giving an impression that there are sharp class and ethnic contradictions. The term civil war has become commonplace in Arab circles when referring to 'Israel'. Unfortunately the 'Israel' that is going to the polls has nothing to do with this. Many ideas presented about the enemy do not stand up to serious scientific scrutiny. One cannot question the existence of problems in 'Israel', but are their nature and extent as has been depicted? Concerning divisions between Jews of eastern and western origin for example, it is known that eastern Jews constitute 60% of the Israeli population. But does that mean that the size of the problem equals 60%? Similarly, does the culmination of economic and social problems in 'Israel' mean the culmination of social struggle?

Much of the talk about the problems in 'Israel' overlooks the reality of the deep transformation of Israeli society over the last quarter of a century and especially the last ten years. The political changes that have occurred are not without an objective base.

Setting aside the objections to applying the terms left and right within Zionism, we can examine the causes of the Zionist right's having attained power and the overall rightwards shift of Israeli political life. A corollary of this was the Zionist left moving towards the positions of the right. Accordingly, Begin's 1977 victory was no coincidence. Many of the reasons given for this victory at the time were related to subjective rather than objective factors. It is a great mistake to view the surface phonemena without evaluating the underlying causes.

## Ethnic and/or class divisions?

The extent of the problem of eastern and western Jews has been examined in terms of its political expres-

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