

Letters from Abroad

OUTLOOK FOR MAPAM

Tel Aviv

After months of negotiation between Mapai (Israel Labor Party) and Mapam (United Workers Party) over the terms on which the latter would join the Israel government coalition, the Mapam executive council voted 157 to 95 in early March to break off discussions. The council majority, particularly those from urban centers, resolved that conditions were lacking "for the participation of Mapam in the government on the basis of a joint minimum program." Among the specific Mapam

demands on which no agreement could be reached were: opposition to a pact with Abdullah so long as the Transjordan-British alliance has any application to the Arab sector of Palestine; no participation in or encouragement of a facsimile of the Atlantic Pact in the Middle East; no Marshall Plan for Israel; support of a United Nations pact outlawing atomic weapons; support for a "Big Five" pact; immediate extension of equal rights to the Arab minority in all respects; freedom of trade union action for wage raises; and placing of the main tax burden on the rich.

Mapai had hoped to use these negotiations to guarantee the continuation of its reactionary policies by a new coalition government. But it is clear that Israel, which

is at present undergoing a serious political and economic crisis and a threat to its security, needs not merely a government reshuffling, but a basic change in its political line. For many months now the Communists have warned that the policies of the social democratic-clerical government were leading to catastrophe.

Imperialism is weaving its net about us with its accustomed skill. The latest phase is the arming of the Arab countries and the threat of a "second round" of war. Now imperialism is offering us the baited promise "to send light arms" and extend a loan of the well-known Wall Street type. The Israel government appears eager to swallow the sugar-coated bait, oblivious of the hateful hook—further enslavement to aggressive American imperialism.

Certain members of the minority of the Mapam executive council urged acceptance of Mapai's argument that inclusion of Israel in the Marshall plan is merely an

"abstract hypothesis" and therefore is not worth discussing. But that very day Eliahu Elath, Israeli ambassador to the United States, openly stated that Israel is ready to accept Truman's "point four" program for backward areas. It is well known that at present Truman's plan would mean Marshall "aid," that is, economic enslavement plus military control through arms shipments plus political enslavement in the form of a Middle East bloc or "individual" pacts with the United States, or both. In brief—triple enslavement.

The negotiations between Mapai and Mapam have only served to dull political watchfulness within the ranks of labor: they have given rise to illusions and have paralyzed political struggle on the part of the Mapam. The statement by warmonger Henry Morgenthau urging Israel to join a Middle Eastern pact was an alarm signal. The Communist Party derived no satisfaction from the fact that it was the sole organized force among the people of Israel which expressed the will for peace and independence at that moment.

The Mapam executive council demand for a new government policy will now be tried in the arena of daily practice, in immediate and emergency action. No one can have the slightest illusion that the Mapai leadership will voluntarily agree to the conditions on foreign and domestic policy set by the Mapam executive. The significance of this program is not measured by its proclamation alone, but by the struggle for its realization. And the guarantee for a successful struggle in defense of independence and for social progress, economic development and ability to maintain immigration is the *active unity* of the left-labor forces, of Mapam and the Communist Party. Such unity will attract workers from the ranks of Mapai from among non-party workers and the working intelligentsia. The serious dangers threatening our land make this unity most urgent.

The recent peace congress in Tel Aviv, in which diverse elements, including Mapam and the Communists, participated, proves that such unity is possible.

"FREIE YISROEL" (FREE ISRAEL)