

finding an entirely new face, a neutral face, to head the party.”

### Alternatives to Peres

One favored option, which is being especially pushed by the Party's Jerusalem branch, but also by cadre across the country, is to have current President Yitzhak Navon head the Labour ticket. As Israel's president over the recent period, Navon has established a reputation for statesmanship and, as a cultured Sephardic Israeli, is thought to be the sole prominent Labourite who could effectively oppose Begin. Labour insiders have told *EIR* that pressure is mounting on Navon to step down from the presidency, so he could be eligible for the prime ministerial candidacy and head the ticket in early elections, should they be held. Navon's term ends in May 1983, so if elections were to be in October-November of next year, as is being mooted, the "Navon option" could indeed come to pass.

Another alternative mooted in certain trade union-based Labour Party circles is that of Yaacov Levinson, former head of the powerful bank Hapoalim (bank of the Histadrut National Labor Confederation) and currently head of the Ampal-Israel corporation. Levinson is considered a "Gaullist" in Israeli economic terms, as an advocate of using dirigist methods of state-directed credit for productive ends. He is thought in this respect to be an alternative to the "free-market speculation" economics of the current government, influenced by fascist economist Milton Friedman.

Levinson is not known to be making an active bid for the candidacy for prime minister, but the very talk of such an option underscores the dire straits of the Israeli economy at this moment. Israel is reliably reported to have a total foreign debt at this point of some \$23 billion, by far the highest in the world on a per capita basis. According to one trade-union leader in Israel, "The economy is in very, very bad shape, and the bubble will burst within months. The government is just borrowing money, printing money, encouraging speculation. Agriculture, which used to be the crown of Israel, is being ruined. To get people's minds off this, the propaganda machines all day say, 'We are strong, we are strong.' It is like a drug."

In this context, it is not surprising that certain Labour circles have reacted with interest to the programmatic proposals of Lyndon LaRouche, as representing a possible basis for mobilizing the Israeli population. These proposals are centered on extending the drive for a new world economic order into the Middle East, through joint Arab-Israeli commitment to "Great Enterprises" in water and energy development, reorganization of the Israeli debt, and a renewed scientific and infrastructural development push within Israel. Were elements of such a program to be efficiently adopted by Labour, and were they to be the basis for a new self-identity for large numbers of Israelis, the Israeli voter would have an alternative choice were elections to come to pass next year.

## The political legacy of Nahum Goldmann

On Aug. 29, Nahum Goldmann died in a West German hospital at the age of 87. Immediately, the news was flashed around the world that "a towering figure in Jewish history" had passed away.

Goldmann was co-founder and president of the World Jewish Congress for 29 years, until 1978. For 12 years he led the World Zionist Organization. From the seeming first promise of a Jewish homeland during World War I, through the Holocaust and the founding of Israel, Goldmann acted, as he sometimes put it, as an ambassador at large of the Jews and a citizen of the world (see *EIR*, Sept. 14).

Among his last public acts was an interview given to the West German news magazine *Der Spiegel* published the week of Aug. 22. Believing that it is even more important that Goldmann's voice be heard and understood now that the man himself is no longer with us, we reprint here excerpts from that interview.

**Q:** Mr. Goldmann, you have said, however Israel's invasion into Lebanon turns out, the whole thing could "still end in a political catastrophe." What did you mean?

**A:** I mean, that the aggression against Lebanon is the climax of a line of false development which Israel has taken from the beginning.

**Q:** From the founding of the state?

**A:** Since the founding. . . . From the beginning, there was in Zionism a deep split. A great philosopher and thinker, Achad Haam, from Odessa, claimed against Herzl, that the state is for the Jews quite unimportant, that what is important is a "spiritual center."

**Q:** How should that be possible without a state?

**A:** Since religion, whose power had preserved the Jewish people in the Diaspora for two thousand years, lost its power—most Jews are today no longer strictly orthodox—the Jews must have a new center, that would inspire them to continued existence. . . . Zionism never decided between

the two directions. Chaim Weizmann, my predecessor as president of the Zionist Organization, [and I] belonged more to the Achad-Haam wing. We ourselves said, if all peoples have their state in the 20th century, then the Jews should also have one. But the crucial point was with the state as the "spiritual center."

**Q:** And so a quite different state arose. If you see in that the beginning of that distorted development which led to the Lebanon disaster, that seems to us to be extremely linear thinking. The wars which Israel has undertaken were up to Lebanon, defensive wars, perhaps preventive defensive wars. But this one is clearly an offensive war. Isn't that for you the essential difference?

**A:** Certainly it is that, even though the preventive defensive wars could have been prevented. And above all the Six Days West conflict. In the course of time, the Americans have time this great nonsensical expansion began, this aggressiveness. . . . But I want to immediately add that according to my view, the Americans are more responsible for the bungled situation in the Near East than Israel.

**Q:** For what reason are the Americans to blame for the development in the Near East?

**A:** They have determined Israeli politics. . . . The Jews have placed themselves totally on the side of America in the East-West Conflict. In the course of time, the Americans have gone so far as to consider Israel as a bulwark against the Russian influence in the Near East. De facto, Israel is today a satellite of America, which in my opinion is a travesty of Jewish history. We have not had the prophets, the Bible, and our whole culture so that we could after 2,000 years be a satellite of America in the Near East. . . . In my opinion, there can be no partial peace. The Arabs, despite all their internal contradictions, have yet a great solidarity. I had three long conversations with Sadat. He was convinced that Camp David would not by itself lead to peace. . . . Camp David in itself is to be welcomed. I too would have done that, but I have always said, it will not lead to a great peace . . . fundamentally Camp David rested on a misunderstanding, to put it mildly. If I wanted to put it pointedly, I would call it fraud. Sadat thought he would get the whole Sinai back and that would be a precedent for the West Bank of the Jordan.

**Q:** You have said that the period of Begin is "one of the most catastrophic and unhealthy in the history of Israel;" that you only hoped that it did not last so long "that it became a real danger for the existence of the state." Would you have thought ten years ago that Begin would even have been able as the head of the government of Israel to march into Lebanon with 100,000 men?

**A:** No. I spoke often with Ben-Gurion about Begin. I was a close personal friend of Ben-Gurion's, even though we were political opponents. He considered Begin a fascist and had a very bad opinion of him. I have said of him, he is no states-

man, but rather a provincial, small-town Jew with all the faults of the Jews of the Diaspora. But he is a man of conviction. I consider him far better than, for example, Sharon. He has no conviction, he only has ambition.

**Q:** . . . Israel, the only democracy in this whole region, has entrusted its fate to a political extremist and a former terrorist. Isn't that depressing?

**A:** Israel has not become a state of intellectuals, is not a state which lives on the basis of mind, of social innovation, but rather a little America in the Middle East, with a strong army, a huge armament industry and friends such as the Nicaragua of Somoza and South Africa. . . . The Jews have lived more centuries of their history in the Diaspora than in their own state, and with their own state they have had no great success. . . . The Jewish people have stayed alive thanks to the prophets, thanks to Moses and the Bible, thanks to Einstein and Heine, and not because of generals or Begin's demagogues. If Israel stays as it is today, it is a caricature of Jewish history, a complete distortion. If Israel remains as it is today, very quickly all Jews in the world will plunge into conflict. . . . Begin's aggressive politics and the solidarity of most Jews with him will strengthen anti-Semitism throughout the world. Historically, Jews have always been trouble-makers. The world has accepted that as long as the troublemakers were men like Isaiah or Einstein. But troublemakers such as Begin and Sharon or generals who run wild will not in the long run be accepted by the non-Jewish world. . . .

I went to Palestine for the first time when I was 18 years old, and wrote a book on that. When I read today what I had then hoped, and see what has come of it, I have sleepless nights. . . .

**Q:** What did you think when in 1917 the Balfour Declaration promised for the first time a state to the Jews?

**A:** I was 22 years old; all Jews felt a tremendous enthusiasm. They thought the English would give us our state immediately. I wrote at that time in a German-Jewish newspaper that . . . the day on which the Arabs would give us a Balfour Declaration would be greater. . . . And I blame myself that I did not do enough to represent my viewpoint. . . . I am in favor of the Palestinians receiving their own state, in a confederation with Jordan.

**Q:** That will not happen as long as Begin is in charge. How can he be replaced?

**A:** The bombing of Beirut was a criminal action. The Israeli government has deceived the people . . . Sharon has deceived the government and the government has deceived the people. . . .

My great dream would be for a sort of Common Market in the Near East, consisting of Israel, Palestine, and Jordan. If these three states would work together economically, the Near East could become in one, two generations one of the great centers of the world.