

Jewish Vanguard

*Journal of the
Jewish Labour
Movement*

Incorporating Poale Zion

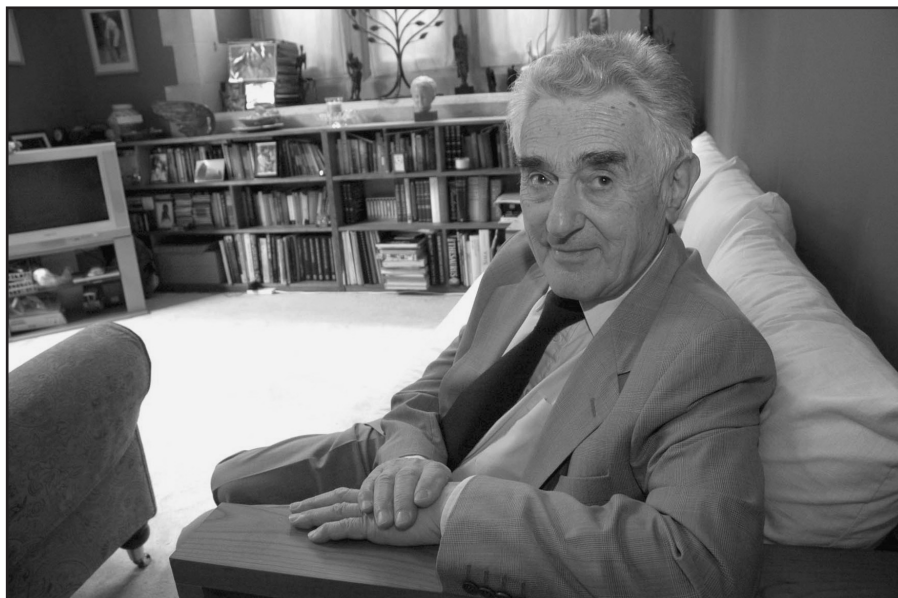
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Reg Freeson 1926 - 2006



Carmen Klanner

**For many years the Jewish Vanguard has been edited by Reg Freeson.
Sadly, Reg died after a short illness on October 9th 2006**

Although slight in physical stature Reg was a huge political presence, rising from a local borough councillor to Labour's front bench, becoming the longest serving Minister of Housing.

The Rt Hon Reg Freeson, Privy Councillor, will be remembered as a formidable politician, an indomitable supporter of the State of Israel, and a fighter against all forms of racism and anti-semitism.

Under Reg's editorship, the Jewish Vanguard has taken a radical stand on the need for an equitable outcome of the Israel-Palestine dispute, with security for Israel and statehood for the Palestinians.

It is our intention to continue to pursue this approach with renewed vigour.

The Jewish Labour Movement is arranging a Celebration of the life of Reg Freeson which will take place at 7.30 on Wednesday 17th January 2007 in Committee Room 10 in the House of Commons. The meeting is hosted by Louise Ellman MP, Those wishing to attend should contact Lawrie Nerva on lnnerva@aol.com

Tributes to Reg can be found on pages 4 and 5.

JLM welcomes groundbreaking Parliamentary Report on Anti-semitism

Lawrie Nerva

The recently published 'Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry Into Anti-semitism' requires our serious attention. The inquiry was commissioned by John Mann MP who chairs the All-Party Parliamentary Group against Anti-semitism. The Inquiry was chaired by the former Minister for Europe, the Rt Hon Dr Dennis Macshane MP and included 13 other MPs, none of whom were Jewish. Its terms of reference were:

- To consider evidence on the nature of contemporary anti-semitism.
- To evaluate current efforts to confront it.
- To consider further measures that might be usefully be introduced.

Since the Report runs to 59 pages, the following represents a summary of some of the major considerations and recommendations made.

The Inquiry stated that just as the problem of anti-semitism was complex and multifaceted, so too are the means by which it should be combated.

It was considered that the solutions lie in a configuration of:

- More comprehensive statistics
- More effective policing and prosecution
- Education and community engagement
- Greater exercise of responsibility and sensitivity in public and private discourse

The Inquiry believes that racism and intolerance must be challenged wherever they exist, that Britain is at risk of becoming complacent in this respect and that anti-semitic abuse, be it physical or verbal, must be condemned in the same unqualified terms as other forms of discrimination.

The Report recommended, "inter alia",

- That the Prime Minister appoint a special envoy on anti-semitism from among serving parliamentarians who can co-ordinate this work and represent the UK worldwide. Welcome was also given to the appointment of a Special Representative of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe on anti-semitism.
- That both the Home Office and the Department for Communities and Local Government should work together by setting up a cross-departmental task force to combat anti-semitism.
- That a new awareness be developed which includes explaining to school children the history of anti-semitism which would involve the Department of Education and Skills, working with the new Commission for Equalities and Human Rights, updating its guidance to local authorities and place upon them a greater duty to provide anti-racist education.
- That the Foreign and Commonwealth Office examine ways of convincing the governments of countries where anti-semitic internet sites operate to take action to close them down. The US in particular has been slow to take action in this area. It was agreed that a new approach is needed in terms of freedom of expression that allows some limit on the public dissemination on the internet of material aimed at stirring up race hate and anti-semitism.

The Inquiry considered that a discussion needs to take place within the media on the impact of language and imagery in current discourses on Judaism, Zionism and Israel. It called on the media to show sensitivity and balance in their reporting of international events and to recognise that the way in which they report the news has significant consequences on the interaction between communities in Britain.

In conclusion, it was pointed out that whilst many people have pointed out that criticism of Israel or Zionism is not necessarily anti-semitic, the converse is also true, it is never acceptable to make hurtful generalisations by claiming the right to legitimate political discourse.

An inquiry of this nature has been long overdue and the thoroughness of the way in which the Inquiry has gone about its work is impressive, as are many of the ways it recommends for combating anti-semitism.

Certainly every effort must be made to monitor the progress of the Inquiry through the parliamentary programme to ensure it is not allowed to gather dust. ●

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Incorporating Poale Zion

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Jewish Vanguard

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& Neil Nerva

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NEWS ITEMS

First' Lord Speaker' Elected

Baroness Hayman, ended centuries of tradition when she walked the short distance from her seat on the Labour benches to take her new place on the Woolsack as its first Lord Speaker. In a break with protocol, Labour and Liberal Democrat peers broke into applause after the Clerk of the Parliament announced her election to the House and the Lord Chamberlain confirmed her appointment by the Queen. Under the rules of her new office that require holders to renounce party politics for life, Baroness Hayman must now resign her membership of the Labour Party which she joined at Newnham College, Cambridge, in 1968.

JCORE at 30

The Jewish Council for Racial Equality celebrated their 30th birthday with a Conference that attracted a variety of speakers including Lee Jasper, Director for Equalities and Policing in the Mayor of London's office. Broadcasters Clive Anderson and Sue MacGregor chaired wide-ranging discussions on race relations and Doreen Lawrence, whose son Stephen was murdered 13 years ago, called for communities to work collectively to tackle prejudice. Speaking after the event, JCore chairman Jonathan Colman said "We can find common ground and put aside differences. It doesn't mean we have to agree on everything".

70 Years of Fighting Fascism

The 70th anniversary of the Battle of

Cable Street was held on Sunday 8th October. It commemorated the clash between the police overseeing a legal march by the anti-semitic British Union of Fascists led by Sir Oswald Mosley, on one side and anti-fascists on the other. Despite the anti-semitic nature of the B.U.F and the strong likelihood of violence, the government refused to ban the march and a large escort of police was provided in an attempt to prevent anti-fascist protestors disrupting the march. The anti-fascist groups erected roadblocks in an attempt to prevent the march from taking place. Although the police attempted to clear the road to permit the march to proceed, after a series of running battles between the police and anti-fascist demonstrators, the march did not take place and the B.U.F marchers were dispersed towards Hyde Park instead. Eyewitness Jewish Labour Movement member Professor Bill Fishman, 15 at the time of the battle, recalls "I was moved to tears to see bearded Jews and Irish Catholic dockers standing up to stop Mosley. I shall never forget as long as I live how working-class people could get together to oppose the evil of racism".

Multicultural Trade Union Struggle Commemorated

The 30th anniversary of the Grunwick Strike was commemorated on Sunday 17th September with an exhibition, speakers and films at the Tricycle Theatre in Kilburn. The strike was supported by many prominent national and local Labour and trade union figures of the day. The strikers, especially the women, all of them completely new to the Trade Union movement and overwhelmingly of East African, Asian and West Indian background, wrote an important page in the history of the Trade Union movement. For courage, sacrifice and perseverance, there have been few Trade Union struggles to compare with that at Grunwick. The cry "Black and White United and Fight" was a living reality. The Grunwick Strike was a landmark in Trade Union history and a future issue of The Jewish Vanguard aims to give greater coverage to it.

JLM at the Labour Party Conference

Vice Chair Neil Nerva was JLM's delegate to the Annual Labour Party Conference in Manchester last

September. He won applause during Conference's foreign-affairs debate when he told conference that it was "tragic" that "members of the left marched through London chanting: 'We are all Hezbollah' "Do they know what Hezbollah is? Do they know what it stands for? Do they think such behaviour aids the peace process? ". "Hezbollah launched rockets into civilian areas from civilian areas. Communities in both northern Israel and southern Lebanon found themselves spending a month in bomb shelters".

The JLM also held a highly successful Fringe Meeting during Conference week on the subject of: "Hope not Hate: how Labour can halt the advance of the Far Right".

Jewish Labour Movement Meets With Arab Labour Group

Members of the executives of both organisations met recently over a meal and agreed to work on building a set of common values of importance to their members. The respective chairs, Louise Ellman MP and Atallah Said have subsequently met to begin work on a set of common values, such as working to promote anti-racism, equality, social justice and efficient public services. It has also been agreed to host a joint fringe meeting at next year's Labour Party Conference in Bournemouth.

News About JLM Members

Dr Dianne Hayter is serving as Vice Chair of the Labour Party in 2006-7. We look forward to having her as Chair at a later date.

JLM Vice Chair Neil Nerva has been elected to London Travel/Watch. This is the official "watchdog" which represents transport users in and around the capital and promotes integrated transport policies and presses for better public transport.

Lawrie Nerva, a past chair of Poale Zion, was presented with the Regional Merit Award to honour excellent service to the Labour Party. The presentation was made by Alan Johnson MP, Secretary of State for Education and Skills at a Brent North function on 13th December 2006. ●

TRIBUTES TO

Searchlight

“The story I hold most dear about Reg is from his days in Willesden after the war when he was always being attacked by the many Polish anti-semitic émigrés in the local Tory party.

He was speaking at an open-air election meeting when a Nazi shouted out an anti-Jewish slur at him. Reg jumped from the platform and chased the man for about 8 miles before the Nazi collapsed from a mixture of fear and physical exhaustion to receive a slight chastisement from Reg. Salud comrade.”

John Lebor, former Mayor of Brent

“Reg Freeson was a renaissance man. He loved the theatre, the arts, cinema literature – he was very well read. He was modest, shy, principled and honest. If he lacked one characteristic of a politician, particularly perhaps in comparison with Ken Livingstone who deposed him, it was raw naked ambition.

But myself and many friends wondered why he never was given a peerage. He certainly deserved it, For the few who knew him intimately, he was the most honourable of men.”

The Daily Telegraph

“Reg Freeson was a Housing Minister in the Labour governments of Harold Wilson and James Callaghan and an indomitable campaigner for the state of Israel, for peace in the Middle East and against racial injustice; a self educated journalist, he led Willesden council before serving as a local MP for 23 years, 14 of them on Labour’s front bench.

In Willesden he became a community activist, with forays to the Continent to work in refugee camps. He was elected a councillor in 1952 and an alderman three years later; in 1958 he became leader of the council.

In the Commons Freeson opposed the Vietnam War – once storming out of the Chamber – but concentrated his heaviest fire on racial discrimination and the perceived upsurge of neo-Nazism, earning a death threat from the Klue Klux Klan. One speech in 1965 against the government’s “repugnant and shoddy” Immigration White Paper filled 22 columns in Hansard.”

Cllr Ann John former Brent council leader

“The people of Brent have lost a great champion and everybody who knew Reg will feel bereft. He touched the lives of so many and in such a positive way.”



Reg in campaigning mode – 1983

Rabbi David J Goldberg, Emeritus Minsiter of the Liberal Jewish Synagogue

“For an orphan sent out into the world at 15 and largely self-taught, Reg Freeson had an astonishingly wide range of knowledge and an abiding love of literature. His powerful logical intellect made him a formidable adversary, whether debating a political issue or arguing a writer’s merits. Friends for 35 years, we spent a tense three days in Beirut in 1982, when I grew to appreciate the strength of his loving but critical feelings about Israel. A modest, unassuming man of utter integrity, he never flaunted his position and was utterly committed to the well-being of his constituents.”

REG FREESON

The Guardian

“Freeson was a left-winger with a classic record of supporting Irish unity, resisting racism – he edited the anti-fascist magazine Searchlight from 1964 to 1967 – opposing the Vietnam war and championing the underprivileged.

Freeson’s intellect was never in doubt. At 14, he astonished his teachers by filling an exercise book with a “plan for Britain”; he followed this up with an essay on the case for agnosticism, and by 16 he was in the Marxist study group at the Unity Theatre.

Freeson’s election in 1952 to Willesden borough council gave him a local focus for his enthusiasms and in 1958 he became council leader of an area, later renamed Brent, where Irish, Jewish, African and Caribbean immigrants made up three-fifths of the population, mostly living in rundown properties. His greatest contribution was to help resettle them in council houses and to be part of the process by which a tolerant community was knitted together and raised culturally

He was an evolving socialist, even in the revisionist Blairite days and his Zionism moved on, too. As political secretary of Poale Zion-Labour Zionists, in 1998 he urged an independent Palestinian state embracing the West Bank and Gaza. In 2002 he became a councillor in Brent again, only losing his seat last May.”

Eric Moonman, former MP

“Reg Freeson was shy and often withdrawn in the various enclaves of the House of Commons. Yet at the despatch box, he was strong, robust and challenging. He had a mastery of his brief and, in political exchanges across the floor, took few prisoners. But to his friends he was loyal and caring. When an opposition member pointed out the contradiction in his character, he replied it had “something to do with a Norwood start in life”

Rt Hon Paul Boateng, High Commissioner to South Africa and formerly MP for Brent South

“Reg Freeson as councillor, council leader and Member of Parliament, devoted his whole life in public service to the people of Brent. He was one of the outstanding Housing Ministers of the post-war era and, as a colleague and friend he was a constant source of generous advice and support. He will be much missed”

The Times

“The peak of Reg Freeson’s career began in the autumn of 1974 when Harold Wilson appointed him minister in charge of housing and construction in the new “super-ministry, the first Department of the Environment, whose Secretary of State was Anthony Crosland.

Freeson was a master of minutiae. He had the intricacies of planning regulations, whether for drains or department stores at his fingertips. That won the respect of MPs and his civil servants. So did his tireless work and patent conscientiousness.

Other former ministers with Freeson’s length of frontbench service have almost habitually been offered a life peerage. That offer was never made to Freeson either by Mrs Thatcher or by Kinnock, who as the Leader of the Opposition, had the right to nominate regular lists of peers.”

The Jewish Labour Movement

Reg was an indomitable campaigner for the State of Israel, for peace in the Middle East and statehood for the Palestinians. He edited the Labour-Zionist Jewish Vanguard, the journal of Poale Zion, that later became The Jewish Labour Movement. He was briefly Director of Labour Friends of Israel.

Reg’s last editorial in the JV headed “A wicked summer too far” dealing with the Lebanese war was a classic example of his keen analysis of the complexities of the situation in the Middle East.

He was instrumental in the creation of the Martyrs Memorial in Gladstone Park in Brent in conjunction with the sculptor Fred Korniss who produced the evocative figures.

The Jewish Labour Movement mourns the loss of a fine socialist, a distinguished politician and a good friend who will be sadly missed.

GMB – Britain’s General Union



IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY
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Construction & Furniture Workers

Sends its greetings to the Jewish Labour Movement & support for the Labour Government

Jack Elliott (Branch Secretary)

The fight against fascism 70 years ago

Colin Shindler*

“I came to Spain because I felt I had to ...When Hitler became chancellor of Germany...what could we do? Although we tried to help and sympathize – it was their problem and wouldn't affect us... I took up arms against the persecutors of my people, the Jews, and my class, the oppressed.” The author of this, an American Jew, Chaim Katz - and his brother, Joseph - were killed fighting for the Republican cause in Spain shortly afterwards. The Spanish civil war commenced exactly 70 years ago last summer and 8,000 Jews heeded the call to join the International Brigades and fight fascism.

Over 200 British Jews fought, yet Jews were only 0.65% of the British population. In the United States, the pattern was repeated. And 300 Jews and Arabs came from Palestine. Most were working-class Jews who had joined the Communist Party because it seemed that only the Soviet Union in the mid-1930s was actively standing up to Hitler. Quite often they were indifferent to ideology and knew little about Stalin's methods, but believed in a fairer society and a better world. For many decades this disproportionate contribution of the Jews was deliberately overlooked. The Communists, adhering to the Leninist line that the Jews are not truly a nation, regarded them as unidentified internationalists. Jewish communal organizations, in contrast, viewed them solely as Communists.

Many Jews served under assumed names. The highest-ranking American, Lt.-Col. John Gates, was born Sol Regenstreif. The Italian commissar, Commandant Carlos, was a Jew, Vittorio Vidali, as were the Soviet advisors sent by Stalin - Gen. Kleber (Lazar Stern) and Gen. Douglas (Yakov Smushkevich).

Special Brigade Formed

In December 1937, a specifically Jewish company of Polish Jews was formed called the Botvin Brigade. Naftali Botvin had been executed by the Polish authorities in 1924. The orders of the day were issued in Yiddish, and they published a newspaper in the language. Many of them were killed in the Ebro campaign. An eyewitness recalled the scene 50 years later in London. "They had 40 batteries to our four. It was overwhelming, we had no chance. They concentrated on the positions where the Botvins were situated. It was intense, the dust joined the sky. Then suddenly as the dust began to subside, the Spanish Foreign Legion overran them. Over 100 Jewish boys perished there."

The Communist Party for many working-class Jews was their university and the Left Book Club, their library. Matty Steigman was the youngest of four brothers who helped their immigrant parents run a kosher bakery in London's Last End. Steigman was intelligent but his parents, versed in other traditions, refused to allow him to go to university. He earned his living from selling bagels from a stall. His intellectual thirst led him into the Communist Party and to volunteer for Spain. He was killed at Jarama two weeks after his arrival. Phil Richards (Caplin) was a well-known featherweight boxer. He was killed at Brunete. Many young men did not inform their parents of their intentions. Basil Abrahams' brother discovered his whereabouts on seeing a group of captured brigaders in a newsreel at a local cinema.

Spanish 'neutrality'

Franco, of course, gently rebuffed Hitler's entreaties to join him.

He was the great survivor and, indeed, began to help Jews once he saw which way the world war was going. He authorized the Spanish Legation in Budapest to provide protective passports for Hungarian Sephardim during the period of Wallenberg's heroic exploits in saving Jews from the hands of the Nazis. Yet in 1939 Franco was quite content to praise the expulsion from Spain in 1492. "Thanks to God and the clear vision of our Catholic king and queen, Ferdinand and Isabella, we were once freed from such a dangerous burden as all those speculators attached to earthly gains."

The Spanish church was no better. 48 out of 51 Spanish bishops signed an appeal to clergy in other countries asking them to support Franco and the nationalist cause. Cardinal Goma, the primate of Spain, explained in a radio broadcast that the nationalists were fighting "the Jews and the Masons, who had poisoned the indigenous pueblo with Tartar and Mongol ideas and who were erecting a system manipulated by the semitic international."

The local nationalist paper in Burgos called for the reintroduction of the Inquisition. Phalangist posters utilized anti-Semitic cartoons from "Der Sturmer" as part of their propaganda campaign. Inhabitants of Catalonia, the stronghold of the republic, were often referred to as "judeo-catalanes."

The break with Communism

From within the hypnotic embrace of Communism in the 1930s, a large number of Jews tried to make a stand when others refused to contemplate the impending horror and hoped that it would pass. As the Soviet writer Ilya Ehrenburg commented, "For some people the world was split in two on September 3, 1939." Events such as the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact in 1939 and the Doctors' Plot in 1953 caused a mass Jewish exodus from Communist parties worldwide. Some remained committed to social democratic ideals. Others dropped out of politics altogether.

A few weeks ago, I was in Barcelona and located a field at the very edge of a Catholic cemetery. At one end was a monument to the Holocaust. At the other were numerous monuments and graves of the international brigaders. One, unveiled by President Chaim Herzog in 1990, was dedicated to the Jewish volunteers. Not holy ground in the conventional sense, but sacred nonetheless. I placed a stone on the monument, said Kaddish silently, and remembered. ●

**This is a slightly abridged version of an article which appeared in The Jerusalem Post on Aug. 14, 2006*

Give Peace a Chance

Paul Gross

When an Israeli leader talks of negotiations, or “steps towards peace”, it is normal that his remarks be met with scepticism or scorn by commentators both inside and outside the country. Since the hopeful days of the Oslo Accords, the prophets of peace have merely welcomed one false dawn after another. And the current situation seems far from propitious. In the aftermath of last summer’s conflict with Hizballah, public confidence in the government has plummeted; Prime Minister Ehud Olmert has resorted to inviting the ultra-right-wing Avigdor Lieberman into his cabinet to shore up his shaky coalition; whilst in Gaza, anarchy reigns supreme.

And yet, there are signs of genuine optimism in the speeches of Israeli government ministers at the moment. The truce agreed by Hamas and other Palestinian factions guilty of terrorist attacks on Israel was matched by a speech by Prime Minister Olmert, the importance of which should not be underestimated. The speech – made at the graveside of Israel’s founding father David Ben Gurion – reiterated statements made by Olmert three years earlier, at the same venue. Then, as Vice Prime Minister, deputising for the unavailable Ariel Sharon, he quoted from Ben Gurion, speaking to the Knesset in 1949:

“... when we were faced with the choice between the entire land of Israel without a Jewish State, or a Jewish State without the entire land of Israel – we chose a Jewish State without the entire land of Israel.”

The speech was meant as a trial balloon for Sharon’s announcement a month later that he intended to withdraw all Jewish settlements from Gaza. Olmert was not simply an acolyte of Sharon’s, doing his master’s bidding. He was, even then, a genuine convert from right-wing ‘Greater Israel’ Zionism, to the belief that holding on to all of the occupied territories was untenable. As with Sharon, this conversion was not born of a newfound empathy for the national rights of the Palestinians but rather a belief that the answer to Israel’s perennial security question had changed.

“Unorthodox” Warfare

In the days of orthodox wars with neighbouring states, maximum territory equalled maximum security. Now, the threats to Israel’s security had changed. Olmert saw – and sees – the greater danger facing Israel as the ‘demographic timebomb’; the widely accepted prediction that in a matter of years, there will be an Arab majority between ‘Greater Israel’ – the land between the Mediterranean Sea and the River Jordan. Israel would either become a de facto apartheid state, or else they would be forced to grant full citizenship to the Palestinians, who could then wipe out the Jewish State at the ballot box. In addition, the occupation was increasingly viewed as placing too great a burden on Israel – not least in its undermining of Israel’s moral capital with the international community.

The original plan favoured by Olmert – and Sharon – of unilateral withdrawal, has been dealt a fatal blow. Both by Hamas, who responded to Israel’s evacuation of all its settlers and military from Gaza by firing a daily barrage of Qassam rockets on Israeli towns within range; and Hizballah, who spent the six years since Israel’s withdrawal from Lebanon rearming with the help of Iran and Syria

until they had 15,000 rockets pointed at Israeli civilians – a danger Israel hopes has been severely blunted by its military action and the establishment of a beefed-up international force in southern Lebanon.

Do we have a partner?

And so, the speech made by the Israeli Prime Minister on the anniversary of Ben Gurion’s death, was surprising in its clarity. The offer to the Palestinians was unambiguous - a return to negotiations in exchange for the establishment of a Palestinian government that recognised Israel and kept the truce going. But much more than that, the carrot being dangled was “... *an independent and viable Palestinian state, with territorial contiguity in Judea and Samaria – a state with full sovereignty and defined borders.*”

Crucially, from an Israeli perspective, he insisted that the demand for the ‘right of return’ of Palestinian refugees be relinquished.

At the time of writing the ball is in the Palestinians’ court. A thousand and one things can go wrong before the stage of meaningful negotiations is reached but Israel is serious in its intention to get there as soon as possible.

And as Golda Meir once said: “Pessimism is a luxury that a Jew can never allow himself.” ●



COMMUNICATION WORKERS UNION

- **Fighting against anti-semitism, racism and Islamophobia.**
- **Supports the anti-British National Party campaign ‘Unite Against Fascism’.**
- **Greetings to readers of *Jewish Vanguard*.**

Billy Hayes
General Secretary

Andy Kerr
President

150, The Broadway, London SW19 1RX

Yitzhak Rabin Memorial Day

Every year Israel and the Jewish people focus on memories of assassinated Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin and every year, we ask ourselves whether Israeli society has drawn all the lessons which need to be learned from this terrible event.

To mark the eleventh anniversary of the assassination it is appropriate to recall the very moving eulogy delivered by His Majesty King Hussein, the late monarch of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, at Yitzhak Rabin's funeral. This concluded:

“He was a man of courage, a man of vision and he was endowed with one of the greatest virtues that any man can have. He was endowed with humility. He felt with those around him and in a position of responsibility, he placed himself, as I do and have done, often in the place of the other partner to achieve a worthy goal. And we achieved peace, an honourable peace and a lasting peace. He had courage, he had vision and he had a commitment to peace, and standing here, I commit before you, before my people in Jordan, before the world, myself to continue with our utmost, to ensure that we leave a similar legacy. And when my times comes, I hope it will be like my grandfather's and like Yitzhak Rabin's.

The faces of my country amongst the majority of my people and our armed forces and people who once were your enemies are sombre today and their hearts are heavy. Let's hope and pray that God will give us all guidance, each in his respective position to do what he can for the better future that Yitzhak Rabin sought with determination and courage. As long as I live, I'll be proud to have known him, to have worked with him, as a brother and as a friend and as a man, and the relationship

of friendship that we had is something unique and I am proud of that.

On behalf of the people of Jordan, my large Jordanian family, my Hashemite family, to all those who belong to the camp of peace, our deepest sympathies, our deepest condolences as we share together this moment of remembrance and commitment, to continue our struggle for the future of generations to come, as did Yitzhak Rabin and to fulfil his legacy. Thank you”

Are We Betraying Rabin's Legacy?

If we fast track from 1995 to 2006, any analysis of today's event must result in deep sadness at the deterioration in the moral stature of the present Israel government. In his first interview as the new Deputy Prime Minister, Avigdor Lieberman said that in order to obtain true peace and security, Jews and Arabs living west of the Jordan river must be separated. He continued that even those Arabs who are citizens must be separated from Jews.

Israel's Constitution reads “The state of Israel will foster the development of the country for the benefit of **all** its inhabitants, it will be based on freedom, justice and peace. It will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants, irrespective of religion, race or sex.”

The JLM expresses its deep concern at the inclusion of Lieberman and his Party, Israel Beteinu, in the governing coalition of Israel. We agree with the “Jerusalem Post's” editorial assessment that Lieberman is a politician “with little relevant experience and radically anti-democratic ideas” and the position taken by Ameinu, the American Labour Zionist Alliance, that “if Lieberman is unable to abide by the coalition's agreement which calls for the removal of illegal settlements, talks with the Palestinian Authority and pursuit of a social agenda for all of Israel's citizens, he should be removed from the government”.

We cannot allow expediency or desire to remain in government to betray Israel's ideals and values.

LMN

Jewish Labour Movement

Annual Conference and AGM

Sunday 4th February 2007

Guest Speaker

Rt Hon Hazel Blears MP

Chair of the Labour Party

(11.30 tbc)

For further information

Telephone 020 8621 4574