

**I**t should be clear from this chart that there is no correlation between an M.K.'s views on social issues and her or his stance on the Palestinian issue. Two of the Labor party leaders, Rabin and Bar-Lev, have personally engineered the government's policy in the West Bank—a policy responsible for documented cases of torture, killing, wounding, and deportation. When it comes to human rights issues in the territories, six of these M.K.s are sensitive, twelve are extremely callous, and the rest maintain righteous sentiments but are unwilling to confront the human rights violations that their policies helped create.

Given the complex differences on economic questions and the Palestinian issue, it is hard to imagine that a group of Labor Doves could emerge with sufficient ideological coherence to challenge the old leadership. Two Staters might be able to win over many of the Doves, but many of these Doves would be unwilling to take steps that would force them to follow the leadership of Two Staters onto social-democratic terrain. Therefore, it is unlikely that we will see a coherent opposition make any serious attempt to wrest power from the current leadership. Peres himself, despite his vagaries, may be able to maintain his position of power precisely by warning other Doves and Two Staters that, without him, power might fall into the hands of the Rabin wing of the party.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that there are six Labor party M.K.s who have demonstrated considerable courage in the present situation. Abraham Burg, Haim Ramon, Ora Namir, D. Libai, Yossi Beilin, and N. Massalha have all shown great sensitivity to violations of human rights, and have spoken out unequivocally in condemnation of the policies set by Yitzhak Rabin. Their willingness to criticize Rabin, despite Rabin's growing strength within the Labor party, has enhanced their stature both within Israel and internationally. These six have become the nucleus of a larger group of Laborite doves who may yet attempt to organize a viable opposition. Indeed, if there is any hope for Labor it will come from those who are prepared to publicly challenge the party's current direction. At the moment there are few indications that these people are willing to mount the kind of public challenge to the Labor leadership that would make it possible to save the party from decline.

Labor, then, is failing in its effort to win public support for its peace politics because it has been unable to communicate a coherent policy that poses a serious alternative to Likud's worldview. Unless it can articulate such an alternative, Labor may find itself a more serious loser in future electoral struggles for power. □

## Shards

*Enid Shomer*

Inside the strict pine  
coffin he is wrapped  
in a cotton sheet  
and over the three  
vanities—the eyes and mouth—  
potsherds have been placed.

All night a vigilant  
Jew sat by the body  
while a candle ate  
into the dark  
and his feet grew rigid  
pointing to Jerusalem.  
Now we cover him

with tidewater clay.  
To slow us down,  
to remind us that grief  
is a difficult labor, we dig  
at first with shovels  
turned over, a trickle  
of red dirt fine  
as hourglass sand.  
Then we are permitted  
grunting shovelfuls, stabs  
that match the cries

of the mourners who watch  
from unsteady chairs  
as we spade respect  
onto the *aron*, Hebrew  
for coffin, for clothes closet,  
wardrobe, chest of drawers,  
that one word conveying  
what we hope against:  
that nothing can contain us,  
that wood itself  
is only soil haunting

the above-ground world,  
ghosts in solid form.  
It is right that burial  
begin at the face  
with earth baked  
into something like a memory  
of itself, so that his  
humanness can be taken away  
from us, so we will not  
picture him about to  
blink or speak, so we  
may begin the leveling  
with small rubble.