

# The National Left (First Draft)

by Shmu'el Hasfari and Eldad Yaniv

Open Source Center

OSC Summary:

A self-published book by Israeli playwright Shmu'el Hasfari and political activist Eldad Yaniv entitled "The National Left (First Draft)" bemoans the death of Israel's political left.

<http://www.fas.org/irp/dni/osc/israel-left.pdf>

## **Statement by the Authors**

The contents of this publication are the responsibility of the authors, who also personally bore the modest printing costs. Any part of the material in this book may be photocopied and recorded. It is recommended that it should be kept in a data-storage system, transmitted, or recorded in any form or by any electronic, optical, mechanical means, or otherwise. Any form of commercial use of the material in this book is permitted without the explicit written permission of the authors.

### **1. The Left**

The Left died the day the Six-Day War ended. With the dawn of the Israeli empire, the Left's sun sank and the Small [pun on Smol, the Hebrew word for Left] was born. The Small is a mark of Cain, a disparaging term for a collaborator, a lover of Arabs, a hater of Israel, a Jew who turns against his own people, not a patriot. The Small-ists eat pork on Yom Kippur, gobble shrimps during the week, drink espresso whenever possible, and are homos, kapos, artsy-fartsy snobs, and what not.

Until 1967, the Left actually managed some impressive deeds -- it took control of the land, ploughed, sowed, harvested, founded the state, built the army, built its industry from scratch, fought Arabs, settled the land, built the nuclear reactor, brought millions of Jews here and absorbed them, and set up kibbutzim, moshavim, and agriculture. In short, it was a mensch. What happened? How come that all that remains of the Zionist Left today is an anarchistic group that harasses the Border Police every Friday near the separation fence or at checkpoints and Women in Black?

### **2. The Right**

The Right is the opposite of the Left. A Rightist believes that the sea is the same sea, that what was will be. A Rightist is conservative, a lover of words, a polemicist, and one who opposes -- mainly any change. Ze'ev Jabotinsky was one such. You will read about him later.

The Left believes that you and I will change the world. A Leftist is a revolutionary, practical, a pioneer, daring and victorious. The Right believes that if the status quo continues for ever, we shall all be redeemed by God, or force majeure, or luck. The Left believes that we must redeem ourselves, by ourselves. The Left is the one that turned the fantasy of Binyamin Ze'ev Herzl into reality.

David Ben-Gurion was one such. Of him, too, you will read further on.

Now let's move on.

### **3. The Left, of Blessed Memory?**

The left died when the Six-Day War ended because it abandoned its principles: pragmatism, building up the country at any price, a model society. It stopped dreaming of changing the world and began to rot to the right. All that bothered it after the war was maintaining control, power, and rule! All that bothered it was maintaining the status quo, crowding the ranks, like a true conservative. The Zionist enterprise, which was entirely the fruit of its glorious work, drowned in occupation.

The occupation suits the Right: It continues, is constant, is the opposite of change, transformation, and the Left. In this situation, the Left remained with no air. Only the Right had it,

since the Left needs to be in perpetual movement. When the waters are still, there is an awful stink and the Right flourishes.

#### **4. Us**

We are Leftists. We were born in Israel, we were in youth movements, served in the army, did reserve duty, fought in wars (the older of us), and we think that the land must be divided now -- today, not tomorrow. We are convinced that Ben-Gurion was right -- that we are here because the Bible is our deed of ownership to our beloved country. We despise capitalist pigs; we are moved when the flag is raised and when the national anthem Hatikva is played by the IDF band; we try to be moral and democratic; and we cannot suffer draft-dodgers and Betar Jerusalem soccer fans (sorry -- only a "handful" of them . . .). But in recent years we have not found ourselves at the Left's demonstrations. We look leftward and leftward and do not see any of our friends. It is also never the right issue on which to demonstrate for or against. And who, in any case, are these people alongside us? Where the hell is the flag of Israel? How have we allowed the right to steal the flag of Israel? How have we allowed them to steal the Land of Israel and the State of Israel?

Indeed, the confusion is great. How can it be that a Leftist loves the country? How can it be that Leftists such as us are convinced of our right to this land? And just a moment, what about "the peace process"?

Well, we decided to do a little soul-searching and try to resolve the contradiction, to work out for ourselves what our real opinion is. We admit -- we approached the task with great apprehension. What would happen if we found that our positions are not "Left" and that we are really closet Likudniks?

We decided that the best way was to position ourselves in relation to all the points that comprise the line of separation between the Left and Right.

God help us . . .

#### **5. Instructions for Using This Text**

This is not an academic work. There are no footnotes and there is no bibliography. It is not a complete work, either. We have written here about some of the things that bother us a lot, matters that give us no peace of mind. We ask you not to read this in one go since that is likely to be confusing. Taste it as you would a plate of appetizers, tapas. Take a little bit. Digest it and stop to think, argue, get angry, and if you want to, curse -- feel free.

You can also put it in the bathroom. We will not be offended. On the contrary: There are no cell phones or text messages there, and you can think. Quietly. And read.

This text is not organized by subject because in our opinion, everything is connected with everything else. It is all one piece. It is the complete reality of our lives.

We sometimes repeat ourselves because there is no other choice. Important things need to be said several times and several times more so they will sink in.

This text is also not for politicians or academics, but intelligent people, people who cannot take any more.

After finishing the first draft that you have in front of you, we gave it to some people to read first, and to comment on. They are readers whose opinions are highly regarded -- in our eyes and in our opinion. You can read the comments at the end in the chapter, "Initial Comments on the First Draft."

And last of all, we added on part of a very old article that is more topical than ever, which moves us, written by a very wise man, who saw far into the future and who died too young.

So let's get on with it.

## **6. Peace Process**

The cat says meow.

The Left says "peace process."

We have been accompanying the process for more than 60 years. They told us that Golda Me'ir, when she was still Meyerson and never dreamed of being prime minister, conducted talks with Abdallah, the father of the current Abdallah's grandfather. Well, what came of it? What came of it is that we turned the peace process into our God. As though the people of Israel did not come into being in the Land of Israel except to make peace or have a "peace process."

We are actually not convinced that this is the goal and vision. The goal is entirely different. The goal is to establish the State of Israel as a home for an exemplary society. That is the goal. One way of achieving that goal is through peace. It is one of the ways, but not the only one. It will make it possible to focus on achieving the goal. Since peace is an important condition for achieving the goal, we must act to achieve it. But "the peace process" must not be some kind of "gimmel" permit (for the dodgers among you who aren't familiar with it -- and we will come to you later -- a "gimmel" is a day's sick leave from the army), a kind of exemption from striving for the goal.

Israel should be a model society even without peace. Israel should be egalitarian even without peace. It should be smart, successful, and intelligent even without peace. It should get to the World Cup even without peace. Israel should win the Math Olympiad even without peace. The development towns should finish developing even without peace. The monstrous gaps between the salary of a CEO salaries and a cleaner should be reduced dramatically -- also without peace. Jews of Ethiopian origin should be able to go into clubs in Tel Aviv -- also without peace.

Why? Because this endless "peace process" is finishing us -- us, that is, the Left; us, that is, the State of Israel -- because except for a few righteous ones in Sodom, most of the Left has really forgotten what it means to be Jewish: It does not demonstrate en masse when factories collapse and workers are thrown onto the street; it does not move its ass when the dark-skinned fail the selection process for entry to discos; it does not bat an eyelid when poverty reports are published -- it just waits patiently to promote a "peace process." And that is ridiculous.

It has to be admitted: This peace -- it doesn't only depend on us, as everyone who has been involved in fights with thugs knows. And yes, we know that "peace is made with enemies and not with nice friends," but if the enemy is not willing to settle for the return of territories occupied in the Six-Day War, and is not prepared to live its life alongside us like a responsible entity, it will continue to stand at checkpoints and cry out that we are suppressing it.

So, just a moment, should one go to a demonstration for the "peace process" or not go?

Yes, but not only that, since in a democratic society, one occasionally has to get out of the armchair and go onto the street in order to force the government to achieve the goal. And the goal is, as we have said, a model society. Not a "peace process."

So to go, or not to go?

And how! With an Israeli flag in one hand and a truncheon in the other in order to persuade the government to leave the territories quickly.

And if we leave the territories, will peace come?

Maybe not. But more on that later. On the settlements as well.

## **7. Draft Dodgers**

There are those from the Left and the Right who refuse to do military service; there are citizens who are exempt -- ultra-Orthodox, Arabs who do not have to do it; there are some who are mentally ill and disabled; and there are dodgers.

Those who refuse to do military service are prepared to pay a price for it. They are denounced, imprisoned, and they are persecuted in ways that the government chooses. You may oppose their opinions or you may agree, but one has to admire their willingness to pay a personal price. Those who refuse are not draft dodgers.

The ultra-Orthodox and the Arabs are exempt under the law. For us to become a model society, they will have to do community service for three full years (or two for girls). They are currently exempt. When we talk about draft dodgers, we mean something else.

In every generation, they have a different name and other excuses -- but they have always been parasites. They have a thousand reasons: one announces that he prefers to stay in town and fuck; another says that he finds it difficult to take orders; the third is fictitiously getting married and wanted to pose for Playboy; the fourth dresses up like a Leftist -- like a criminal who grows a beard and puts on a skullcap; the fifth cannot be a soldier in the IDF but is willing to play an IDF soldier in a movie or a Nazi officer on stage. They explain to you at length how important their self-fulfillment is in the long years that their peers are serving in the army. They also show off. So do their parents. They are surrounded by people who accept them, especially when they are young stars, who understand them, and who are careful to back off the issue when they are with them.

We think they are disgusting. We do not think that they should appear before an audience. We look at them and see the stigma on the forehead without any difficulty. Draft dodgers are not Leftists. The truth is that they are also not Rightists. We say they are just assholes, and chiefly do not fulfill their part of the contract.

## **8. The Contract**

If you are an honest guy, you meet the terms of the contract -- the contract that says that if, until now, I have looked after you, now you look after me. It was my turn; now it's yours. This is the contract between a father and son, and a mother and daughter. It is contract between the generations. Living in this country requires a constant protection of the home -- always, even when there is peace. Protecting the home means not only handling weapons -- because there is no room in the IDF for everyone -- but also community service. Community service can range from settling the Galilee in a core settlement group to helping the elderly, working in hospitals, and planting forests. The basis of our society is mutual responsibility, solidarity. Whoever takes no part in the mutual responsibility should leave here.

I do not remember signing this contract, says the draft dodger.

The reason is that no signature is required on such a contract. It's elementary. It's basic. It's natural justice. And if you're not honest enough to understand your part in the contract, the law

will force you. But not only the law -- the radio stations will not play your songs (nor will IDF Radio, which today plays the songs of many draft dodgers and even allows them to broadcast); mayors will not invite you to give Independence Day performances; and your salary will not be recognized as an expense by the Income Tax Authority. At university, you will pay twice as much as someone who has completed his service, who today barely receives a year or so free.

Draft dodging is a betrayal. The draft dodger betrays the society he lives in, that raised him, and that took care of his needs. Avoiding doing the general duty is like stealing from a joint fund, like puncturing a hole in a boat at sea.

The relationship of 18-year-olds is not with the army but with the society that surrounds them. The system of national service should provide an answer to the delicate, the spiritual, artists, athletes, and models. You find it hard to handle orders? It's hard for everyone. You're not cut out for it? No one is. The smell of grease gets you down? Go and clean the homes of the elderly in nursing homes. The question that the draft dodger should ask himself is simple: Would you want everyone to act like you, you shit? That everyone should act like you? That IDF posts should empty out, planes be abandoned, and tanks left to rust? We assume not. We assume that you are comfortable with someone doing the work instead of you. We assume that you choose to dodge not due to ideology. You're just a parasite.

Dude, when you wet your pants in front of the mental health officer, do us a favor and don't pretend to be a Leftist, because the basic principle of the Left is solidarity -- before peace, before the "peace process," before being "green" or "red." The basic principle of the Left is the understanding that you are part of the body, of a society in which all parts are responsible for each other. The strong help the weak, and the weak help the weaker.

## **9. Forgiving the Repentant**

What do draft dodgers do after growing older and realizing that they erred, that it isn't right or nice, not an act of solidarity, and not Leftist not to contribute to the society in which they live when most of those around them have?

They should volunteer for short-track military or civilian service, at the end of which all who look will see that the mark of Cain that was impressed on the forehead for years has gone.

Without a rectification, there will be no pardon for draft dodgers.

The state, which foolishly granted legitimacy to draft dodging, should also be the one to put things right. The state has the duty of creating a civilian framework (not just a military one) that will allow draft dodgers to contribute to the society in which they live, even if they are over the age of 18, and have repented.

## **10. Capitalist Pigs**

The whole world knows that the capitalists are on the Right and the socialists are on the Left, except that here, the pigs are mainly on the Left. Yes, mainly on the Left. Our Left is the only one in the world that handed a bill of divorce to the weaker sectors, the workers, the savers, and the middle-class that makes a living to sustain itself.

The capitalist says: I will make as much money as I can, as much as possible, without any limits, and to hell with the poor and the weak. The Right's ideology agrees with him, but suggests that in order to avoid any trouble with these weak ones (whose votes we need at the ballot box), they should be given a few bones and scraps. The conservative Right hopes that if the rich receive rights and benefits, they will throw crumbs to those below. The Right all over the world thinks that

it is just fine that the bank's owner should earn 300 times what the guard at the bank earns, and that the guard should say "thank you" for having a livelihood, and that if he has questions regarding his rights, he should approach the manpower company that sent him here.

The Left is not supposed to think that way. The Left holds that wealth should be split up because the bank's owner makes his money from production workers, farmers, cleaning ladies, celebrities, radio broadcasters, and journalists -- in short, from all those who are not owners of the bank. The owner of the Dead Sea Works, for example, makes money from the Dead Sea, which belongs to all of us.

The Left thinks the strong should help the weak to grow stronger, and that the strong must help the society in which he works.

We are Leftists. We think that if a company trades on the Stock Exchange and makes a fortune from the public, it must set aside a considerable part of the huge profits and return them to the public in various ways. One way, for example, is for a tithe on the huge profits of (public) companies traded on the Stock Market that would be transferred in its entirety to the education and health budgets and to community policing.

Oh dear, the finance minister would now say: Don't scare those who have capital. Taxes in the country are murder as it is. Now you want a tithe?

Relax, you tell him. They won't run away. They also don't want to be pigs and they are ashamed to be called greedy. They make a fortune. A fortune! You're simply the only country in the Western world that allows the rich to be such unembarrassed, disgusting and greedy pigs. We are not against the rich. We are against pigs, against the ostentatious, against the cows of Bashan. We are against the social democratic party leader, who lives in an apartment worth 40 million, with two pianos, a dry sauna and wet sauna, and who has no problem, rolling his eyes, to declaim against piggish capitalism.

So what now? Back to socialism?

That's the point. Not exactly.

### **11. The Left Hates the Rich? It Hates Money?**

The Left does not hate money and does not hate the rich, and likes the good life a lot. We have said already that the Left hates pigs. The Left hates oppression. The Left hates pigs who dress up as Leftists. How does the capitalist make his wealth? He goes to the Stock Exchange and makes a living from the average guy's fantasies.

The average guy, that is, you and her, hope to buy shares on the cheap and sell at a profit. The capitalist takes the money and turns it into a salary of 1 million shekels per month. When the stocks fall next month, and the average man loses his pants, the capitalist will still continue to take home a salary of 1 million in management fees on your account.

Or, for example, companies that trade in people, working people, who are fired every six months just so that the capitalist who trades in them can evade the law that grants them rights. Forty years' work in cleaning and they don't have a pension, provision for loss of ability to work, or provident fund.

The capitalist says: I will employ cleaning workers in my company. I will employ a manpower company. The manpower company personnel will employ them. So I will not have any economic connection with them. I will not have to pay them what they would be due by law. I will be able to

throw them out when they're old. Actually, it won't be me throwing them out; it will be the manpower company. After all, they are not on my level.

The capitalist says: I do not want any connection with these poor people, who clean my toilets, wash my floor, clear out the garbage, build the building, plant the tree, pick the fruit, do the washing, and paint. They are workers. He knows that solidarity threatens his capital, which is why he strives to keep his distance -- physical, financial, and emotional -- from the worker. Here in the Holy Land, among the pigs of Israel, thank God, the hand is outstretched. And the managers are celebrating. Pigs. We said it before and we won't tire of saying it again. The pigs have no shame left. We, on the Left, want them to have a little shame -- as was once the case. Let a little conscience torment them. We want a model society that is one body, where the head feels the pain of the leg and the heart will hurt if the stomach is empty. We want a society that is empathic and where there is solidarity.

There should be rich people in it, it is pity that there are poor people, but there must not be pigs -- did we make that clear?

## **12. Personal Example, Mutual Responsibility, and Modesty**

Today it is already agreed that capitalism in its monstrous format has collapsed. Apart from the dinosaur Binyamin Netanyahu with his privatization bullshit and his feuilletons about the thin pulling the fat, no one believes in its resurrection. The whole world regrets privatization at all costs. The whole world is full of huge companies now, and America is buying banks and private enterprises and handing them over to public ownership and public control.

So what now? Should we revert to the gay days of the Histadrut, to cooperatives, to the rule of the proletariat?

God forbid. Socialism has to be updated and translated into modern Israeli Hebrew.

The Israeli clone of socialism will have three legs: personal example, mutual responsibility, and modesty.

For example, there is the personal example of those with two passports. And there are more examples. Read on.

## **13. Dual Loyalty**

The Mizrahim don't have anyone to ask for a second passport. Who should they ask for one? Would Syria give it to them? Egypt? Iran? Iraq? Go jump in the lake. For the Ashkenazim, it's in a flash. In recent years, law firms have sprouted up in Tel Aviv like mushrooms after rain, and for a few thousand euros they arrange a Hungarian, Romanian, and Polish passport, just so long as you can find the roots of a third cousin and you are a foreign subject of an EU country or one that will become a member any minute.

In our opinion, this is a really dangerous phenomenon. When a country under continuous existential threat has a thousandth of its population preparing a surfboard to make an escape on a rainy day, or citizens who are hoping that they will be able to hide in one of the embassies in Tel Aviv that will evacuate its subjects, this is a voluntary act of selection instigated by Jews. Therefore, a Leftist who loves this country cannot hold foreign citizenship. A Leftist cannot hold a one-way ticket for any trouble that comes from the direction of Natanz -- because a Leftist who holds such citizenship is living here on his suitcases. When you live on your suitcase, it is etched in the consciousness that the end of the state is nigh and that it is only a matter of time until the

lights are turned out. And if that is the way it is, why pay taxes, why should the child go into the army, and why save water -- let the Kinneret dry up, for all I care.

A Leftist with suitcases is not a Leftist. He's just selfish. So let him go away now, to the place of his new foreign passport, to where he belongs. It will surely be to the place where they remained silent while they incinerated my parents and his parents. Or nearby.

#### **14. The Train**

For a Jew, a train doesn't make him feel good, especially if he is second generation or third generation since the Holocaust. But we Leftists think the train can create social justice. Don't panic, we'll explain.

Israel is a small country -- 500 km from top to bottom and much less across. A high-speed European or Japanese train could do that in an hour, or an hour and a quarter, maybe a little more. From Metulla to Elat! A train that flies cuts the geographical distance and slashes the traveling time from the periphery to the center. In a country with a modern train, the periphery essentially doesn't exist; there are only suburbs. There are no remote development towns -- because no settlement is really remote. Everything is the center; everything is close. Not only will those from Qiryat Gat come to work in Tel Aviv. It also means that those who are squashed together in the elevators of luxury towers will be able to live on the edge of the Ramon Crater and feed the ibexes if they want. A train will make it possible for a senior manager in a three-piece suit to leave the amazing house that he has built in Lakhish region and get to the office extra quick -- no traffic and no sweat. A train will enable the child in Yeroham to study at art school in Beersheba or Tel Aviv, without uprooting him from his family and environment. An advanced train will finally allow the development towns to end their development. Strong and well-established members of the populations will go to live in Sederot, Bet Shemesh, Hazor, and Shlomi. The era of failed textile mills in development towns has ended, as has that of sock and underwear factories that were designed to provide employment for "the locals." If it is decreed that we are to live in a very small country, we should enjoy perhaps the only benefit of a small country: that everything should be close.

The billions that we've wasted on settlements could have been invested in a train. Maybe it will happen one day. Actually, it will happen. Read on.

#### **15. Greater Israel**

We're fed up with living in a country with no borders. Every Israeli has his own formula for the borders of the Land of Israel -- from the Greater one to the lopped-off version, from the Green Line to the purple line. What are mine? To what do I have a right? What can I aim for? What should I make do with?

So first of all, Left or not Left -- I love all of it. I want it all. I don't want to give up Jericho, and I don't want to give up Hebron. It's a real bummer to give up the Temple Mount, and I don't want to get off the Golan. That's the truth; from every point of view -- security, historical, and the Golan Heights Winery. The land of the Bible we grew up on isn't Giv'atayim; it's Nabulus, Bethlehem, King David from Bethlehem, and King Ahab of Samaria. If only -- and we're being serious -- it were possible to live in all the Land of Israel -- from the Tigris to the Euphrates. But it is not. We'll have to make do with the Green Line once agreed on, more or less the one that was outlined at the Rhodes Conference. But with changes, blocs, security guarantees, exchanges of territory, and demilitarization. Yes, demilitarization as well.

#### **16. The Rock of Their Existence, The Rock of Our Existence**

Normandy in France was the rock of existence of the English, actually -- far more than Nabulus,

Hebron, or Bethlehem are for us. William the Conqueror came from Normandy in 1066 and changed the face of history.

The Norman Conquest shaped the English: It established the system of government, created the foundations of the law, and dictated the culture. It was in Normandy that the kingdom was shaped, where monarchs were educated, speaking French in their palaces like a first language for centuries and viewing themselves first and foremost as dukes of Normandy.

And most important: The region was of first-rate security importance to the English island because without it, it would have been open to any occupier. The English fought fiercely to preserve their presence in Normandy and saw themselves as claimants to the French throne until the 19th century. It was, at the end of the day, the bedrock of their existence and security.

There was more than 500 years of occupation and then, one fine day, with one sword thrust, England lost its last bastion, Calais, the closest point between France and England, precisely the spot from where Napoleon Bonaparte would plan to invade one day, and after him, Adolf Hitler. Miraculously, these invasion plans for Britain were to fail.

It was the severing of England from Normandy that defined it as an English state. Its need to protect the sea routes and prevent sea invasion led it to build the world's best fleet that stood any test. The island was never conquered and England became the great British Empire with colonies from India to Cush. And anyone who wants to know more should read "Henry V," a remarkable play that was recently translated into Hebrew, about the greatest king of England who went to Normandy to claim the right of his ancestors.

When you read "Henry V" in Hebrew, you can understand how we will define ourselves anew as a Jewish state precisely when we free ourselves from the rock of our existence. Oh, and we will probably improve our security.

## **17. The Green Line**

In 1947, perhaps because of the Holocaust, the world gave us a gift and offered us the solution of two states of reasonable size for two peoples. We said yes, and we received the slightly larger half (and incidentally, we received this piece precisely because the Leftists from the beginning of the century had settled, plowed, sowed, and reaped there).

The other people said no, and paid the price. There was a war. They tried to throw us into the sea; their friends came to help, but in the end, we won. When they asked for a cease-fire, it turned out that our half had grown a bit more. The cease-fire lines of 1949 were drawn up at the Rhodes Conference with a green pencil. This is the famous Green Line.

Later on, we took all of Sinai in the Sinai Campaign in 1956. The United States and Russia kicked us out after less than six months.

Then there was the war of 1967. We won't argue who started it and why. It doesn't matter now. In the end, we got stuck with Sinai, the Golan, and the biblical Land of Israel.

Apart from a few nutcases and extremist screwballs, everyone was sure we would be out of there quickly.

The question was merely over to whom we should give back Judea and Samaria and Gaza -- to the Palestinians, the Jordanians, or the Egyptians.

At this point, the world again offered an excellent suggestion for us -- recognition of the Green Line borders with amendments as the final borders of Israel (Security Council Resolutions 242, 338). But this time, we said no, and we paid the price. We were busy with victory albums, and took the empire to our lungs. It suited us to be big, strong, conquerors, liberators, victors. We fell in love with the land of the Bible. Besides, there wasn't exactly anyone to whom to return it.

And since no reply was received, we are still there. The nutcases were right. We returned the Sinai to Egypt without arguing. We returned Gaza to the Palestinians. We will apparently return the Golan to Syria.

So what's going to happen to Judea and Samaria? We will return them, and rightly so, because we want a Jewish state with a Jewish majority and which is democratic. Without apartheid. We don't want to be occupiers forever. It is cancerous and sometimes it kills.

### **18. Occupation Corrupts?**

Apparently it does. In 1967, we were a small people with a small country. Suddenly we won the war and we were stuck with a lot of conquered Arabs -- almost 700,000. It was in that decade in America that the racial segregation laws were finally abolished, when the first spacecraft landed on the moon, and when stoned crowds celebrated with flowers, drugs, and free love at Woodstock -- while here, it was back to colonial days. Suddenly, Arabs were working at every gas station and restaurant, washing dishes, scrubbing cars, filling gas, gardening, building, working the fields, and working in industry. At first, it was great. Less than 10 years since the time of austerity, just a little more than 20 years after the Holocaust, it was possible to straighten up and walk about like lords. The conquered Arabs agreed to work cheaply and hardly caused any problems. Each family had its Arab, sometimes two or three. The country prospered, we shopped cheaply in Gaza, ate hummus in Nabulus, and had the car fixed in Qalqilyah -- it was good. We profited a lot from the occupation. We stopped working and became work managers.

It was like Pharaoh in Egypt, just reversed.

### **19. We Were Slaves -- Just in Reverse**

Being a master is like being a slave -- just in reverse. Denying rights to another person is like you having yours denied, just in reverse. Exploiting, enslaving, suppressing -- it's the same thing, only in reverse. So we left freedom for slavery. We went from light to dark. Our children understood that some people are worth more and some aren't worth anything. When their children also understood it, they started to blow up our buses with explosives and timers, and later, filled with hate, empty of knowledge and morality, they exploded themselves on us with their bodies.

For 30 years, not a single industrial plant was built in the territories. To be more precise, not one was built for Arabs. Why should we have done? Isn't it better for them to work here? The Palestinians had no economy, education, or health care system, and they even argued with them about them being Palestinians.

Golda, for example, announced to the world that there was no Palestinian people, while all sorts of experts and Arabists derided their definition as a people. Hundreds of thousands of refugees who fled Israeli territory in 1948 and settled in refugee camps in the West Bank and Gaza could now finally return to visit their place of birth -- as slaves of the new masters.

Dear reader, if you've read up to here and still aren't clear about why the occupation corrupts, you can stop. You're probably a Rightist. Goodbye.

### **20. Price of Occupation -- Closely Guarded Secret**

Occupation comes with a price -- not only a psychological and moral one, but economic as well. And we are not calculating the costs of an occupying army, border police companies, army camps, civil administration, and law enforcement in the occupied territories. In the 40 years since 1967, we have poured between 100 billion shekels and \$100 billion into the territories (according to foreign sources). We repeat: 100 billion. That is the annual budget of the entire State of Israel, from Metulla to Elat. So why don't we know if it is 100 billion shekels or dollars, which is four times more? Because it's the best-kept secret in the country -- more than Dimona and more than the formula of Coca Cola. It's also a great victory for the settlers over us, over the State of Israel. With the help of official collaborators (and MKs, ministers, prime ministers, finance ministers, and Pli'a Albek as well), they stole private Palestinian land and buried the billions in the budget books for years with the help of numbers. Why hide it? So as not to irritate. Because an Israeli who would have found out in real time how they were taking money out of his pocket or cutting his day centers to finance a bypass road in Itamar Zayin would have gone out onto the streets. Thus, by fraud and theft, from the mouths of our children, they financed the shameful settlement enterprise. On what was this huge sum of money spent like water? On bypass roads that will be given to the Palestinians as a gift in the future; on water and sewage infrastructures, lighting, estates; on salaries for thousands of settler families making a living from the public service -- all the security officers, security coordinators, employees of local councils, secretaries of the settlements, and the rabbis -- all the guys who, after the evacuation of Qatif Bloc, found themselves in an occupational and mental crisis because they suddenly needed to really support themselves economically.

The settlement enterprise is an enterprise that produces nothing apart from apartheid and destroys the Israel we knew and loved.

The State of Israel has had apartheid for decades. There are those who are more equal and those who are less equal. The time has come for us to know that our money, that of the citizens of Israel, was pumped to the settlers. We all paid taxes equally and the settlers always received much more than we received -- over twice more: We in Sheinkin Street, in northern Tel Aviv, Yafo, and in Bat Yam and Sederot; we in the development towns in the Negev and Galilee. Why? That's the way it is. Because they were always worth more. As with apartheid.

## **21. Settlement Enterprise and Neighborhood Renewal Enterprise**

It is no coincidence that Menahem Begin slandered "the kibbutznik millionaires with private swimming pools." Being an arch-propagandist, he had to throw a smoke grenade. His new government, elected with the votes of those in the development towns, poured millions into the land of the Bible, spacious villas with red roofs, adjoining courtyards, and swimming pools for those who wanted. To shut the mouths of new Likud voters in the neglected development towns, it supplied them with brushes and cans of paint for a "neighborhood renewal project." Here are the numbers in a nutshell (relax, the figures are not from Betzelem or Peace Now. They all come from the Central Bureau of Statistics and reports by the State Comptroller): Local councils in the territories receive 65% more than those in Israel, and regional councils in the territories, where most of the population resides, receive 165 % more than their stepsisters in Israel.

What does this mean in Hebrew?

While the government invests 8,550 shekels in every settler in the settlement of Ma'ale Efrayim, in Sede Boqer, the government gives a three-finger sign to Ben-Gurion and his vision and invests 1,710 shekels in every resident, and does that with difficulty.

Another example? No need. It's enough, it's clear.

## **22. What Can You Do With 100 Billion?**

You could have a university in every neighborhood, a professor for every child, a policeman for every thief, a reduction of taxes for every pocket. With 100 billion, you set up solar networks in the Negev to generate electricity and we finally do away with the problems of fuel. With 100 billion, you desalinate seawater and put a stop to the drying up of the Kinneret. You turn the basket of medicines into a medicine chest, and you make it possible for the previous generation to live in dignity. You develop laser systems to intercept Qassam and Katyusha rockets without abandoning the south. With 100 billion, you shut down poverty. You raise the poverty line heavenward. There won't be any more "Vicky Knafos" [Knafo walked from the Negev to Jerusalem to protest measures against single mothers] because Knafo won't be going on foot to Jerusalem to demonstrate, but on an air-conditioned express train traveling from Mizpe Ramon in order to work in Tel Aviv, or to visit her daughter at university or the Rimon music school in Ramat Hasharon.

But the money is not there -- Left-wing and right-wing governments stole the money from us and poured it into the territories. Perhaps the only serious enterprise set up in the territories and which supports Jews and mainly Palestinians is that they built the settlements and paved the roads. And in the future, very soon, all this will be theirs.

And the flowers will go to Domba [Aharon Domb] and his settlers.

## **23. Domba, Wallerstein, Zambish & Co**

These are not the owners of a Tel Aviv law firm, but lords of the land -- they and their settlers. They are real lords, not pioneers and not noble, not a copy of the tower-and-stockade pioneers or the Zion Mule Corps fighters. They didn't plant a tree and didn't build a house. The Ahmads did all the work for them. They have been collecting the Palestinians from the checkpoints for more than 40 years, and driving to the magnificent industrial area in Barqan, for example, which the state established at the expense of the citizen in Sederot, and does not even pay them the minimum wage. Because they are just "dirty Arabs," Israeli law does not apply to them, and if it does, who enforces it? A Golani platoon patrols the plant. Ten miles away, in Netanya, people are looking for work.

Say thanks to Domba, Wallerstein, and Zambish. Through conspiracies, sleazy deals, lies, pressures, and threats, they turned Israeli governments down the years, both Left and Right, into contractors of the Yesha Council. If this is not stopped and right away, then within a few years the genetic code of the state that we set up will be swapped and we shall all be declared as one big settlement -- a few Jews, and lots of Arabs.

The settlers have been making us build the future Palestinian state for many years -- at our expense: bypass roads; sewage, water, electricity systems, and energy systems; and what not. In the end, the Palestinians will take it all -- free of charge. Domba & Co oppose the idea of two states for two peoples. They want one big, binational one. If it were up to Domba, Wallerstein, Zambish & Co., the Palestinians would get citizenship, the right to vote, and the keys to the state. If Domba, Wallerstein, Zambish continue to hold the country by the balls, the Palestinians will name a street after them as a mark of gratitude for their many years of activity in building the Palestinian state with Jewish money.

Zambish Street, on the corner of Haj Amin al-Husayni -- is there a driver available?

## **24. The Left and the Settlers -- Love at First Sight**

The Israeli Left loved the settlers. The Left's leaders, the tanned members of MAPAI, the doers who made things happen, the energetic, with their open-collars and white cloth kerchief between them and their necks against sweat, looked upon the enthusiastic young people emerging from the high-school yeshivas, and wet their pants. They remembered how they were in their glorious youth, how they outfoxed the British, how they established the tower-and-stockade settlements, and conquered dunam after dunam. The excited religious youngsters dancing the hora, songs sung hoarsely, reminded the founding generation of Deganiya and of the cowshed of En Harod Ihud or Me'uhad. The Left's MAPAI members, Ahdut Ha'avoda leaders, and even Hashomer Hatza'ir heads, took this new Zionist breed to their hearts. They liked them more than their own sons.

This was an era when the kibbutzim lost their glamour. The kibbutz members got involved with female volunteers from Sweden and discovered grass, shifted Hebrew agricultural work over to Arab labor, and gave up on solidarity and pioneering. The generation of the founding fathers did not care for this. In the eyes of Yisra'el Galili from Na'an, Golda from Rehavya, and Shim'on Peres from Alumot, settlers were the new salt of the earth. The new settlers did not look like their fathers, the relaxed bourgeoisie from the Mizrahi movement, Yosef Burg and Zerah Warhaftig; they were more on the Arik Sharon and Me'ir Har-Tziyon model. With sandals, a flannel shirt, knitted skullcap on the side of the head, they took the place of the sabra -- the Zionist ideal.

The first model of the sabra, the prototype of the new Israeli who replaced the Diaspora Jew who appeared in the cartoons of *Der Sturmer*, was strong, just, and free of inhibitions. He was forgiven his lack of complexity. He was forgiven the shallowness, superficiality, and ignorance that he displayed in the sources of Jewish culture. He was the "Messiah's donkey," a bridge to Judaism's future health. He was Tarzan, and he was expected to be king of the animals. The sabras indeed fulfilled their part -- with their own hands, they won the War of Independence, established a state, and became the best army in the world and set up the most outstanding agriculture on the face of the planet.

At the end of the 1960's, Tarzan was in the trees, stoned, or had left the country. The end of Zionism was in sight. It was the end of the Zionist ideology. It was a ballad for a person leaving the kibbutz. It was the generation of the Carmel Ducas [1960s Israeli car] and swimming pools. Now the stage was vacated for new stars. And they took it.

## **25. Who Are These People?**

The Left did not understand the phenomenon. To this day, it has no idea who these people in the settlements are, or what motivates them. From the start, it was clear that they were driven by another kind of fuel -- but they didn't understand which.

Well, this fuel is called messianism. Messianism is a strong sense of the coming of redemption. It is a feeling that any minute now, the Messiah will arrive, that there will be redemption, and that things will be great. First prize in the lottery -- that's what a messiah means -- the apex of cool; the end of all ends. The Jews have always been great believers in a messiah, in a rosy future, mainly because the present was always gray. Faith in a messiah kept the Jewish people alive. Sometimes it burst out and nearly finished the Jewish people off -- as with the false messiah Shabtay Tzvi and others. Messianism is a nuclear fuel, a dangerous aphrodisiac, a spiritual Viagra.

Until the Six-Day War, the national religious felt spurned, mere addenda, dosim [disparaging slang for Orthodox Jews], nerds, and like the rejected children of Israeli society. While the kibbutzniks were going to the elite Sayeret Matkal unit and to the Air Force, the dosim were going to the IDF Rabbinate and serving as kashrut inspectors or choirboys. Later, they became lawyers and doctors. Their bourgeois parents preferred them to get involved in the traditional Jewish professions. Their skullcaps grew increasingly smaller with their self-image.

## **26. The Lord's Big Comeback**

But now, in 1967, there arrived the great miracle of the Six-Day War, which stunned everyone -- the dosim more than anyone. In one go, their God suddenly appeared and defeated his enemies. The whole world stood and cheered the God of Israel, who had made a great comeback. After his blunder in the Holocaust, after his absence at Auschwitz, he had come back big time. The miracle of the Six-Day War was so great, so sweeping, and so categorical, that it was impossible to ignore him. The dosim of the NRP, high-school students, and hesder yeshivas, overnight became the most popular in class, social leaders, mentors in the victory experience. Nablus? Hebron? Bethlehem? These are after all biblical landscapes, and the Bible is, after all, that of the dosim.

## **27. Supermen Wearing Skullcaps**

An emotional sense of mission now started to beat in young religious hearts. Their teachers hinted that the messiah was at the door, that it just depends on us, and that salvation is in our hands. A great tension built up in them, waiting to burst out. Then came the Yom Kippur War and the terrible results. While all Israeli society was licking its wounds and shaking the government, a different recognition was growing among the religious Zionists. They were convinced that disaster had come upon Israel because they had let it down and had not done what they had to do. They understood the blow of Yom Kippur as a punishment for their inaction. The messiah standing outside the door and waiting to be let in had been disappointed and had gone away only because of them, because they had not answered the call. Now, in 1974, Gush Emunim was established and the messianic tension of the religious sector erupted like a volcano.

They emerged from the high-school yeshivas and swooped on the areas of Judea and Samaria and Gaza with a messianic fervor that could not be extinguished. They did not give a damn about the government and army, which tried to stop them, mainly because no one really wanted to stop them. Peres helped them. Yitzhaq Rabin, who was then a young prime minister, helped them a little less. Galili worked for them. The ideologues of the Left admired them. None of them understood that the demons of messianic madness had settled in the "new pioneers." Think of horror movies. Think about brainwashing, hypnotized zombies. Think of gangs of randy youths going to screw the country. That's what it was. They did not recognize anyone's authority to stop them. They were ready for anything.

## **28. Jeremiah's Tears**

Within a few years, with amazing speed, dozens of settlements were set up in the territories occupied in the Six-Day War. A settlement momentum swept the land of the Bible, and all the Zionist energy flowed there. Private land was grabbed from Arabs, and first caravans, then houses with red roofs, sprouted like mushrooms on it. Like Tuscany. The Israeli security and judicial establishment were harnessed to the mission. The theft went full steam ahead with winks, fraud, a closing of an eye, and notes passed behind backs.

When the Right came to power in 1977, the ground was already prepared. The new Israeli prime minister, Begin, immediately announced after being elected that "there will be many more Elon Mores." Within a short time, when the pool of religious settlers began to wane, the area began to fill up with the secular who were looking for quality of life. Now, the government took the initiative to guide its citizens toward areas that the partition resolution -- to which it had agreed -- had designated for the Arabs of the Land of Israel. At the exhibition grounds in Tel Aviv, housing fairs were held at which buyers were offered villas in the territories for nothing, with huge, nonrepayable loans. Those with doubts were persuaded with new cars tied with pink ribbon. Bulldozers straightened out the hills and set up new settlements -- Ofra, Imanu'el, and Betar Ilit.

The people of Israel went to live "five minutes from Kefar Saba" -- the crazy and burning messianism of Gush Emunim brought about the growth of land and slave dealers.

Because the villas were built by those from whom the land was stolen. As in the darkest of occupation regimes, the Palestinians would go out every morning from the miserable Palestinian villages in Judea and Samaria and Gaza to build the villas of their new conqueror neighbors. How sad. How miserable. How un-Jewish.

Jeremiah, Elijah, Isaiah -- you can almost see them on the hills of Samaria, crying out against this injustice. And crying.

### **29. The Avshalom Kor Generation**

The media spokesmen of religious Zionism can rattle on endlessly about the quality of their youth -- innocence, devotion, willingness, loyalty, and values. The truth is the exact opposite. Apart from a few here and there, this youth, which has come through a religious education system, youth movements, and high-school yeshivas, is mostly racist. It is conservative and embarrassingly narrow-minded, evangelistic, and unethical. Its way of thinking is shallow and simplistic, chiefly lacking the Jewish complexity of the parents, the Burgs, the Warhaftigs, those in the NRP of once upon a time, especially when compared with their contemporaries in Jewish communities in the wider world.

Secular youth is ashamed every time it is compared with those who have been in Bene Aqiva. Relax. The successful third of religious youth renounces and takes off the skullcap. The rest remain riveting and full of humor, such as Avshalom Kor with his linguistic witticisms.

Every now and again, they throw the percentage of their recruitment in combat units in our faces. It really is impressive, but it does not make them better. We welcome the passage of religious youth in recent years from the military rabbinate to combat units, elite units, and the Air Force. It's good that they are coming now. The Leftists from northern Tel Aviv and the kibbutzim were there for many years, almost alone -- in the wars as well. And in the cemeteries.

### **30. The Hilltop Criminals**

The hilltop criminals are the cherry on the cake. The hilltop criminals are Zionism's nightmare. They are the Golem of Prague. They are the Golem that has turned on their creator and over whom no rabbi has control.

Jewish boys who are capable of beating an old Palestinian woman who is trying to harvest the olives in her family plot as her ancestors did for hundreds of years have lost their right to be called Jews. There is no difference between them and the anti-Semitic bastards who cut off the beards of Jews in pogroms throughout history. They burn a Palestinian's crops, cut and pull up olive trees, beat and shoot children and the elderly -- and they do all that on Shabbat. You look at them and do not believe it. You hear them and you shudder. You turn aside and try to ignore it because this terrible sight is unacceptable. You console yourself with the thought that they are only a few and that they will grow up in the future. You are wrong.

Their parents established the settlements in the same way. As they always say of the secular -- you can only learn this in the home. Four decades of robbery, extortion, hatred, and violence have yielded this poisoned fruit. Let's make no mistake -- they are part of us. They are our relatives: nephews, cousins, and the children of friends in the army.

If your soul thirsts to know the spring from which they derive inspiration, then go to the Merkaz Harav yeshiva in Jerusalem, to the high-school yeshivas, to rabbis' sermons, to the mad visions

of redemption, to the rabbis' rulings permitting "moral" insult of the non-Jew, the Arab, and the Palestinian, as though no man was created in an image.

If there is one reason not to return the West Bank, then it is the fear that the hilltop criminals will return home to us, to the Green Line, with their Amalekite cruelty.

### **31. Settlers Against Their Will**

There are messianic settlers and there are those who are seeking "improved housing," those who have gone to look for a dirt-cheap villa, free view, and great air. Their bedroom is in the territories and their hearts are in Tel Aviv, or Jerusalem. The center of their lives is there as well -- their livelihood, their family, and their friends. They are conditional, temporary settlers -- against their will. Many of them are Center Left in their world views.

They went out onto the ground when the government sent them and will return home when the government decides, immediately and with no argument. Therefore, the government should decide first of all on an updated evacuation-compensation law so that the scandal of the treatment of some Qatif Bloc evacuees does not repeat itself, and then signal to them with the finger: left and straight on. And they will return leftward to the Green Line. Like soldiers sent into battle and returning to their loved ones when everything is over.

### **32. The Great Demonstration of the National Left**

The great demonstration of the National Left will be a founding event.

There haven't been any big demonstrations by the Left for many years.

We don't mean a musical event that the annual memorial to Rabin is called, which always includes a right-wing speaker -- one who stood under the balcony in Zion Square [in Jerusalem at anti-Rabin protests] (or in it), and Sarit Hadad and Aviv Gefen.

The great demonstration of the National Left will deal with one issue alone -- the very existence of Israel.

Thousands of blue-and-white flags will be raised there, and it will start with the singing of Hatikva and Eli, Eli, Shelo Yigamer Le'olam [Holocaust resistance song].

The main message at the rally will be the division of the country and right away as a condition for the continued existence of our beloved country.

Only members of the National Left will make speeches from the stage in Rabin Square.

This is what the first speaker will say: "Israel is a democratic Jewish state. If we remain in the territories, we will have to choose: either Jewish or democratic. It won't work together, because in a democracy the majority rules and soon they will be the majority between the Jordan and the sea. If we want to remain a Jewish state, we will have to deny the rights of the majority and we will turn into an apartheid state. If we insist on remaining democrats, an Arab prime minister will soon be elected by a majority of votes."

The second speaker will not talk about the future. He'll talk about our present moral state as a society, nation, and state. He will describe the wild growths that have sprung up in the hills of Judea and Samaria. He will quote the prophets of Israel and the founding fathers and describe the point that we have reached. He will outline the vast distance between what we think of ourselves as a society and what we truly are. He will explain that we cannot ignore the fact that the settlers and disturbed hilltop youths are part of our face, an infected organ, malignant,

requiring immediate attention, possibly amputation.

Then someone will come on to sing: Gidi Gov maybe, or Barry Sakharof, or perhaps Rami Fortis. It will be someone who did not shirk doing military service. Or maybe Yuval Banay or Ehud. We will see.

The third speaker will talk nitty-gritty -- numbers. Everyone will understand what he says. He will describe what we could have done with the monstrous, fantastic, unthinkable sums of money that have been pumped into funding settlements instead of making Israel bloom.

The third speaker will be a frontline professional, a former finance minister perhaps. He will enumerate each of the national projects that have been shelved in order to finance the national madness of the settlement enterprise. He will speak to each one of us -- the salaried, the laborer, the self-employed, the student, elderly, and pensioner -- and reveal how much money was stolen from his pocket and transferred to the territories.

At this point, the atmosphere will not be an easy one. Anyone who has returned home and discovered that his home has been broken into and his house emptied knows the feeling. Anyone who has been cheated or exploited knows what we're talking about.

The last speaker will talk briefly. He will describe the State of Israel two years after leaving the territories -- two years after surgery. Those who took part will begin to slowly leave the square because the last speaker will be a bit boring -- he will describe a state that is normal. At last.

### **33. No One To Talk To**

Perhaps there really is no one to talk to. Perhaps there is no one to make peace with. The other side is a dimwit or wants too much and there's no way that we'll give it all it wants. We haven't gone mad.

Now, you can continue to sit in the territories, control 1.5 million occupied Arabs in a regime of apartheid (or annex and give them citizenship, and then they will be in the majority here) and continue to pay the price of the occupation (without the profits because now our workers will be from Thailand). We can also continue to be the leper of the world. Then, in a few years, the Jews will be a minority between the Jordan and the sea.

There is also another option: to get up and go. It involves telling the settlers that their pioneering-messianic mission has ended, and saying nicely to them: Thank you and come back home; evacuate to the large blocs and leave the army in the territory until the world comes and takes the area -- as a mandate. In the same way that we were until 1948. Until peace comes, if it comes.

Then, the Jews will remain a huge, absolute majority between the Green Line and the sea -- there the State of Israel will extend -- forever and ever.

So, is there anyone to talk to?

### **34. There Is Someone To Talk To**

We won't let the Palestinians turn us into an apartheid state or take over the government here with an Arab prime minister. We will decide our fate. If they don't want to stop fighting, there's no need. Let them jump in the lake or go to hell. So if there is no one to talk to, there is someone to talk to. We'll talk to the world.

How do you do this? In 1947, we received the go-ahead to set up a state here (yes, we know we are a chosen people, that it comes to us, and who is the world to give us permission, but still. . .).

In 1967 (Resolution 242) and 1973 (Resolution 338), we received approval from the United Nations for permanent borders. So we do have someone to talk to -- the world. And it turns out that the Saudis agree with this and so do the Gulf states, Jordan, Egypt, and Europe, Russia, and of course America.

So we will get up and inform all these friends that in two years' time, say, we are going to leave the territories, and that they have until then sort things out and guarantee our security and train a police force and army and multinational force -- whatever is necessary.

Then, after two years, we will get up and go just as the British left in 1948, and taking our place will be -- the British, the Americans, the Russians, and the Japanese.

The Iranians will remain in Iran. We will not repeat the mistake in Gaza.

So: Should we get out with an agreement, or without one? An agreement with the world.

Oh no, but we won't be able to visit Hebron!

And we do visit Hebron now?

But how will the other side respond?

What interests us is how the third party will react, that is, the world, and what happens here.

What about the settlements? Will we continue to keep them?

No. The residents of the settlements will evacuate to the big blocs.

Will they be paid anything? Compensation?

Yes, they will, under the evacuation-compensation law, which is ready to be passed in the Knesset. It was ready long ago.

If there is a law, why isn't the government passing it?

Ah. This is the \$100 billion question. According to the proposed law, a resident of Judea and Samaria can today return to the big blocs or the Green Line and receive compensation, according to the parameters of the evacuation of Qatif Bloc. But the government is afraid that the response might be too overwhelming. If too many settlers return to Israel, the area will empty and we will be weakened in the negotiations. It's absurd.

Call it leaving, convergence, disengagement, capitulation, withdrawal, flight -- a striped giraffe with a crest on the head -- call it what you want. Whether you are sorry or happy about it, in the foreseeable future, there is no other Zionist -- or Jewish -- option.

There is no partner among the Palestinians. Maybe there won't be. Those who talk to us don't represent them, and those who represent them are not talking to us. Since we don't want to control them and don't want the occupation to control us, we need to get out and finish with it. And erect a very high fence. We'll get to that, too.

### **35. If We Get Out of the Territories, the Missiles Will Reach Tel Aviv**

Yes, we know that missiles are likely to reach Tel Aviv. We know they are likely to reach Ben-Gurion Airport and Dimona, too. The thing is that in our last little war, Gaza Mark 2, they already reached Gan Yavne and it's only a few kilometers from there to Ben-Gurion Airport, which is

another 100 grams of explosives in a missile. For anyone who is getting a little forgetful, missiles have already reached Haifa, Hadera, Tel Aviv, Beersheba, and they almost reached Dimona in the first Gulf War. The whole country is within range of the missiles, and has been for a long time, years, and while we've been in the territories. So missiles are no reason to hold onto the territories. If we leave the territories, there is a chance of missiles reaching Tel Aviv. If we don't get out of the territories, there will be no Israel.

And when we leave, we will fight the ones firing Qassam rockets and mortars from the moment they begin -- more than we did with Lebanon, and more than with Gaza, without letting the rockets rust, without waiting for seven years. On the spot, with power, and a lot of it. Because the fact that I'm a Leftist doesn't mean I'm a sucker. It doesn't mean that I'm Yosi Beilin. Did you understand that, Barukh?

### **36. The Fence**

It is ugly, it spoils the landscape, and it does a grave injustice to the Palestinians in a few places. It reminds one of the Berlin Wall and the Great Wall of China -- it's all true. But it is succeeding in almost completely preventing terror and infiltrations. And that's what counts. So everyone can go and take a running jump as far we are concerned. No neighbor will tell us whether or not to put a fence up between us. Sit on your side, if you'll excuse the expression, and leave us in peace.

None of this means that there is no validity to the claims of residents of Bil'in. If land was stolen from them and transferred to the settlement nearby, then the fence should be moved immediately. But a fence has to be there and it should be made higher and deeper, and those who approach it, after the withdrawal, or try to dig under or climb over it -- their blood will be on their own heads. But it must be a truly firm Zionist act and without the blah-blahing that followed the flight from Lebanon and the disengagement from Gaza without an agreement.

### **35. Separation**

The Moledet movement of Rehav'am Ze'evi-Gandhi once had a slogan: "Us here, them there." Meretz once had a slogan: "Separate from the territories for peace." In fact, it is the same principle. We and they have had enough opportunities to make peace. We did not do so. Once because of them, once because of us, once because of the weather -- what does it matter now? If they don't want to, then don't. We will separate from them and from the territories. We will live alongside them in rivalry or peace, in war or a cold peace, but alongside them, not among them, above them, or below them.

The Palestinians are big boys now who are responsible for their fate. They have a president, parliament, billions in international assistance -- get a move on, leave us, get off our backs. If they don't like what HAMAS is doing to them, let them rise up against it. In more frightening totalitarian countries, people rebel, demonstrate, and are killed fighting for their right to freedom and another leadership. We will come back to this.

### **38. And What About the 'Right' of Return?**

In Arabic, it is called the right of return. In Hebrew, as proposed by Attorney Ram Kaspi, it should be called the demand of return. A right is something that is deserved and should be given. A demand can be rejected and should be rejected because it isn't a right. In 1947, the United Nations offered them and us a country, one each. We took ours and they did not take theirs. And they started a war. So we fought. And we won. Terrible things happen in war. Innocent people are killed. People are expelled or flee the areas of fighting. Both these things happened. Now it is impossible and unnecessary to turn the clock back. We will not return to the 1947 lines. We will go back to the Green Line (with modifications and exchanges of territory), plus-minus, and there will be a fence where the border runs. Those living here will continue to live here, and those who

fled and live there will continue to live there. "There" -- means that Palestinian refugees will be able to exercise their demand for return in the territories, in the West Bank -- in short, in the Palestinian state that will be set up. Not here, not in our country. They will have a Law of Return to Palestine, and we will remain with our Law of Return. There won't be any compromises, any blinking, and any stutters. There will be no family unification. And there will be a greater "no" to realizing the demand for a return to the State of Israel. That is right, moral, wise, and Jewish.

And if they do not want peace because of this, let them go jump in the lake.

### **39. Jerusalem at the Forefront of All Our Joy**

We get excited as we enter Jerusalem, when we approach the Old City and the Western Wall. Our heart begins to pound. Here on the Left, the modest First Temple built by King Solomon, and the ostentatious second, built by Herod, were destroyed. Here, our David had a few drinks and did a few things, and they were all were struck dumb by King Solomon's wisdom. And this is not forgetting the prophets, wars, destruction, and our soul. It was always the city of our God.

In 1947, we agreed to the partition plan, which turned holy Jerusalem into an international city. We agreed to it. Not just Ben-Gurion: Begin also supported it. Hapo'el Hamizrahi also raised a hand in support.

And that's exactly what should be done today. Return to that agreement. Anyone who really loves holy Jerusalem and is umbilically tied to it must keep it whole and forever united, and should act in the same way as the biological mother in the judgment of Solomon. Because Jerusalem is ours, it is to where Jews have prayed three times a day for thousands of years, and is also a city holy to Christians, for Jesus lived and died there, and is also the third holiest city in Islam. What are you going to do, then?

For most generations it was not under our political control. Others always held sway over it as well -- in the future, too. It will always belong to us, but also to others. So we need to share it together, as once before. The sovereignty will never belong to the Palestinians. The sovereignty will be international and its religious management will be by a council of faiths, which will be especially established and comprise all the representatives of God on earth: the chief rabbis of Israel; the Pope; and the heads of the Muslim Waqf. They will manage the City of God, jointly.

Decisions will only be made in it when white smoke emerges.

### **40. Just Before the Hangover**

Levi Eshkol grasped the moment, for a moment. Three days after the cease-fire, he took a gulp of victory and did not get drunk. He summoned to his home Moshe Dayan, Abba Eban, Yig'al Alon, Galili, and Yiga'el Yadin, in order to finalize the price of peace. A few days later, at the cabinet meeting on 19 June 1967, in which, Begin, the NRP leaders, and the leaders of the General Zionists also participated for the Right, the government decided that the future of the "West Bank" was connected with peace agreements. In Hebrew: The national unity government headed by Levi Eshkol-Begin basically said "yes" to negotiations on the return of most of the territories occupied during the Six-Day War in exchange for a full and durable peace with Arab countries. In short, the Bible was deposited for peace.

Then Eshkol grew weak and stuttered, and on 27 September 1967, a convoy led by Hanan Porat, a prince of religious-messianic youth, made its way to Etzyon Bloc. Like the Pied Piper of Hamelin, more than 300,000 men and women have followed in his wake since.

We all drank in the empire to the point of intoxication, and woke up to a hangover that has lasted more than 40 years.

#### **41. Movement for Dividing the Land**

The new patriotism is to set up a movement, "Israelis in favor of dividing the land." This is the National Left. That's also what we need right now.

That is what will win the next election.

And if the movement isn't large enough to establish a government under its leadership, it will block any government that does not divide the land, because the land must be divided. Not because of the Palestinians. For ourselves. Our children will be the chief beneficiaries of this. An act in the Ben-Gurion spirit is needed immediately. Like that time on Friday, at 1400, on 14 May in Rothschild Boulevard in Tel Aviv.

Has anyone seen a Ben-Gurion in the vicinity?

#### **42. What Would Ben-Gurion Do If He Were Alive?**

He would do exactly what he said on the TV program Moqed in 1970, when he was alive and kicking, and what he said on Moqed then should be quoted verbatim, because only Professor Yesha'yahu Leibowitz was talking that way at the time.

Interviewer: "How should we treat the national aspirations of those in the West Bank today?"

Ben-Gurion: "I will tell you: If there is peace, then they will live in their own country."

Interviewer: "In their country!?"

Ben-Gurion: "In their country!"

#### **43. 'In Their Country'**

They will live in their country, and we will live in ours. And in the middle will be a green line and a border, as in any normal country. And between us will be a fence which will be supervised on the other side by an international force until they internalize the fact that the blows are over. And if there are missiles, they will get it, with no mercy, as in Lebanon and Gaza. And as a lesson from Sederot -- on the spot.

#### **44. Who Loves Arabs?**

The Left loves Arabs?

No (in general).

The Left hates Arabs?

Also no. The Left hates ruling over Arabs. The Left hates ruling over another, whoever it is.

Does the Right love Arabs?

It seems to be the case, because it actually wants a lot from them, as much as possible. That's why it does not want to divide the country. So it is pushing for an apartheid regime although no

such system in the world has lasted. And thank God it hasn't. The Right is doing all it can so that Israel will have an Arab prime minister in our day. God forbid. The Right dies for Arabs and wants us to die with it.

#### **45. Israel -- Whole or Divided?**

Let it be clear -- whoever wants Israel to be whole, fat, big, and biblical wants an Arab majority in Israel. It is simple mathematics. It is only a matter of time and birthrate. The problem with this problem is that however you try to attack it, you get the same results: an Arab majority in Israel.

Correction: All of this holds true for a democratic country. Of course, you can give up democracy. It will be a whole but undemocratic Israel. It will be an ugly Jewish state. In fact, it will be an apartheid state and will never be able to be a Jewish state. It will be a state in which a Jewish minority controls the Arab majority.

Even if it is theoretically possible, the intifadahs have already proved to us that it is not practical. When they don't want something, they don't want it and they resort to violence, take up weapons, send out suicide bombers, and it hurts and blows up in your face. It is hard to live under an occupation regime and checkpoints -- it is oppressive. It is oppressing for the oppressor, too.

If Israel remains an occupier, it will not remain a Zionist state. It will be full of Palestinians and most Israelis will flee from here.

Then, one day soon, the State of Israel will look like Jerusalem: Orthodox and Arab. That's what will remain here to mark 100 years of Zionist enterprise and the third kingdom of Israel.

#### **46. Al-Nakbah**

Al-Nakbah day falls on Independence Day, and by no coincidence. The day of our liberation is the day of their tragedy. Yet we insist on celebrating our Independence Day and to rejoice a great deal. And rightly so.

In 1947, the United Nations decided to partition the land into two states -- one for us, one for them -- almost equally, but with a little more for us. We agreed and went to dance in the streets. They attacked an Egged bus next day and killed five civilians. That, in fact, is how the War of Independence began, and we won. In 1949, they asked for a cease-fire and the war ended. When the smoke cleared, it turned out that 700,000 Arabs remained outside. Why? There are all sorts of reasons and versions, but one fact is clear: There was apparently no organized plan to expel Israeli Arabs. An Arab who insisted on not fleeing remained here, to this day. Some of the Arabs, for example, are in Akko, in Jaffa, Haifa, and the Galilee.

And yes, there were soldiers and commanders who frightened them and made them flee. There were those who were deported from here to there; some army companies destroyed entire neighborhoods, as in Lod, and there was Dayr Yasin -- because that's war. There are horrors, mistakes, injustices, deaths, and deportations.

As human beings, we need to apologize and express regret for the injustice caused to individuals, and be ashamed. But as a people with leaders and policy and a will of its own -- they brought Al-Nakbah upon themselves. We could have lived in peace, side by side, for over 60 years -- two states for two peoples. We could jointly have hosted the World Cup and Olympics long ago. As with the World Cup in South Korea and Japan 2002, so in 2020 there could be an Olympics in Israel and Palestine. God willing.

#### **47. Arrogance of the Left**

The Small-ist, unlike our Leftist, treats the Palestinian with arrogance. He treats him like a minor who has no opinion, a kind of undeveloped Golem with whom he is allowed to do everything. The Small-ists will give you explanations as lawyers do who appear on television alongside the most contemptible rapists saying that "my client is innocent," that they had a terrible childhood, and that "my client is not fit to stand trial." The Palestinian suffered, poor thing, and we should consider him and forgive him. And why be smart against kids (even if they are holding Molotov cocktails and wearing explosive outfits). The Small-ist will cast you a wink when you become annoyed with Palestinian terror, and will tell you: Come on now, how old is he? You're older than him, act your age. The Small-ist views the Palestinian as a retarded child.

We do not. We are Leftists give the people next door all the respect due to it. It is adult in our eyes and it is responsible, and it has an elected leadership team and always did, and cannot be exempted from the responsibility for what has happened and is happening. The Palestinian chooses his own future on his own, and we treat his choice with all due respect. We also demand that he should bear the consequences without whining to a judge. Unlike the arrogant Small-ist, we do not think that we are the only responsible adults who are capable of standing trial. So are our neighbors.

#### **48. Arafat**

He was not Anwar al-Sadat, nor King Husayn. They can love him as much as they want, but he was the one who led their disaster and ours for decades. A contemptible rogue, ridiculous clown, a vile murderer who robbed billions donated by the world to the Palestinian people and who deposited it in the private accounts of his antipathetic wife. Yasir Arafat was a cynical man for whom nothing was sacred. He was the total opposite of noble. He was a man who gave the Palestinian national struggle a bad name. For more than a generation, the Palestinians allowed this troll to lead them by the nose, and they were portrayed in his image for all that time. We Israelis can hate Hasan Nasrallah, Bashar al-Asad, Mahmud Ahmadinezhad with no holds barred, but none of them provokes such deep contempt as Arafat. Shaykh Ahmad Yasin, Isma'il Haniyah, and Khalid Mish'al may be far more evil enemies, but they are far worthier ones than the abiding grotesque that Arafat was -- in his life and in his death.

#### **49. Oslo Criminals**

History is decided by individuals. If Ben-Gurion had not declared the state on that Friday afternoon in Tel Aviv, the mandate (or something like it) would have continued until today. When Rabin decided to go with the Oslo plan and shake hands with Arafat in Oslo, he made an entire nation cross the Rubicon.

What happened in Oslo? Two peoples, Israelis and Palestinians, recognized each other and decided to end the violence and again proceed toward dividing the country. To understand the magnitude of the act, we must remember that only two years before Oslo, in 1991, Abie Nathan had been sent to prison for 15 months -- not for rape or theft, but for shaking hands with a member of the PLO. Two years passed before Rabin met Arafat on the White House lawn. The whole world saw his face twist in disgust as he shook Arafat's hand. All of Israel realized at that moment that even if your enemy is a vile man, that is what there is, and for the sake of future generations, you make peace with him.

Today, when Abu-Mazin [Mahmud Abbas] greets the Israeli prime minister at Pesach, it merits a single line on *Ynetnews*. When they meet and agree on things, there can't be any certainty that they will invite a photographer to record it. When peace comes one day and there are two states here living side by side in peace and tranquility, it will be thanks to Rabin, who signed the Oslo Accords.

Rabin was a man of honor. He saw Arafat at his real level -- a brutal and uninhibited killer but the

leader of the Palestinian people. That is why he shook his hand and tried to reach peace with him.

After Rabin, the prime minister's chair was occupied by a number of dwarf-like leaders who preferred to imitate Arafat's rejectionism instead of learn from Rabin. First it was Netanyahu, then Ehud Baraq, both amateur statesmen. Each one in turn threw Arafat matches and he lit up the region with them, as he liked to. They drained the Oslo Accords of their life. They caressed them until they melted, obstructed and hindered them, constantly winking slyly to the people of Israel. And it worked because nothing could be easier than obstructing peace agreements (when that was what Arafat wanted and was looking for an excuse to do), and nothing could be harder than maintaining them, certainly when the partner was Arafat.

So if someone is looking for the Oslo criminals, some of them are today sitting at the Israeli cabinet table.

Yig'al Amir, may his name be erased, knew very well what he was doing. If Rabin had not been murdered, it is by no means certain that there would have been peace, but apparently there would have been a settlement and order here. Arafat would have signed -- and how -- because Rabin would not have given him a morsel of an excuse. And if Arafat would not have signed, Husni Mubarak would have barked at him: "Sign, you dog, sign." And he would have signed, as he signed the "Gaza and Jericho First" agreement on the dais in Cairo, the dog.

#### **50. 'We Brought Them Here Too Early'**

It was in a memorable conversation in the early-1980's, in the Begin days, the days when tomatoes were being flung at Shim'on Peres in Bet Shemesh and Petah Tiqva, and the song "A Flower in My Garden" -- and the MAPAI Leftist was shocked. He looked around his beloved country that had been taken over by the blacks, the "suntanned," Mizrahim, Sephardim, the shvartzes [Yiddish derogative for Jews hailing from Mideast countries], and said: "We brought them here too early." The speaker was the salt of the earth, from the Third Aliyah, the labor battalions, a man full to overflowing with socialism, Zionism, and love of Israel (and a relative of the older one of us). It was with sadness and a sense of missed opportunity that he said: "We brought them here too early." It was a short sentence which distilled the pathological mental condition of the secular, Ashkenazi, MAPAI Left, which had been the ruler since the 1930's and which had suddenly been robbed of its state.

Now, as we do with the Haggadah at Pesach, we will take the sentence apart and understand it word by word.

"We brought" -- We, the Zionists who built the country and brought "another goat, another dunam," expanded the wall and set up a tower, dried up swamps until our balls were dry, battled malaria, and expelled the British -- suddenly we were outnumbered. Our human reserves in Eastern Europe were drained in the Holocaust, the Arabs increased like the sand on the beach, a war started with them, and we had to quickly import Jewish workers and soldiers from the granary and the winery. This is the meaning of "we brought."

"Them" -- The polar opposite of unzere, which in Yiddish means "one of us." It's what Moroccans call "min dialna" (except that Moroccans from that period still don't talk). "Them" are all those who do not speak Yiddish, and who can be thrown into the development towns and transit camps in huts and tin shacks (because the immigrants from Poland and Germany cannot be housed in the desert). "Them" -- A body that can be transported and is mobile, that can be roused, and turned on; and if they aren't convinced, Jewish Agency activists can create provocations, as in Iraq, and they will fly to Israel with great joy because the white-haired messiah has arrived, the one born in Plonsk and called David (Ben-Gurion). No one really intends that they should take part in the leadership. They need to fill the depleted ranks -- in factories, the army, the fields, in construction.

The government seats can wait a bit. Just be grateful for the representative seat that was given in the Police Ministry and High Court. No one thought that the Mizrahim would dare raise their head and really want to exert an influence.

"Too early" -- Well, the plan was completely different. The plan was to first establish a society of sane, civilized, and enlightened socialism -- well, European. The intention was to proceed step-by-step, to build the bridgehead and basis for the idealistic Zionists from the towns we left in Eastern Europe. Nothing was urgent for us. We thought of the Jews who were in Yemen, Morocco, and Iraq as we think today of the Jews of Ethiopia. No one really saw them as real partners in the Zionist revolution of breaking the Diaspora and changing the Jewish image. We did not paint the image of the sabra in black and brown, but in blue and blonde Aryan. God's children born in kibbutzim were supposed to erase the shame of the nose, the low stature, and the Semitic genes. But Hitler, the bastard, spoiled everything, and he was followed by the dirty Arabs, who rose up against us. We had to come up with a Plan B fast, and bring here what there was -- Iraqis, Yemenites, and Moroccans. So that is what happened -- they came and voted for Begin. They came and now, instead of saying thank you, they throw tomatoes at Shim'on "Peretz" and the Labor Alignment.

Yes, yes, sighs the uncle from the Third Aliyah: "We brought them too early."

## **51. The Development Towns**

So where will they live? With us? In kibbutzim? On Dizengoff? God forbid. Someone has to sit on the border, settle the Negev, and populate the abandoned Arab villages and neighborhoods. Someone has to pick tomatoes and plant trees in the Galilee kibbutzim. So that's how the development towns were set up. The founding fathers, the heads of the economy -- all socialists, European, and good -- sent the new immigrants to sit in neglected towns close to places of work in the kibbutz, close to the borders that were infiltrated, very far from the General Council headquarters on Arlozorov Street in Tel Aviv. The main reason was that they did not understand Yiddish. They were sent to act as the separation fence between us and the Arabs, because essentially they are half-Jewish and half-Arab, after all. They speak Arabic, love Umm Kulthum and Farid al-Atrash, play backgammon and cards (not bridge) and eat spicy, red-hot food. In their honor, a department was set up in the Histadrut called "The Department To Supply Religious Needs," which handed out ritual articles to the primitives and religious objects to various ethnic groups. None of the children in development towns was supposed to study in high school and finish with matriculation or be accepted by university. They called it creating separate tracks -- that contemptible MAPAI patent of "getting the young people off the street youth and training it for integration in society." They sent all of them off "to learn a profession" in professional training schools -- carpentry, welding, and hairdressing -- so that there would finally be the proletariat that Dov Ber Borochov dreamed of. Their masters were the socialists from the Left. Here, in the days of the state's establishment, the strange paradox began to take shape: the strange and unique distortion of a Left without justice, equality, and brotherhood. Here, the socialist idealists from Europe turned into steadfast shields of the control of the means of production and centers of power and capital. And so it has continued to this day.

## **52. When Will the Development of the Development Towns Finally End?**

For the core of Israeli society, the process of the periphery's development is similar to a belief in the coming of the Messiah. "And although he tarries, I will nevertheless wait for him every day to come" -- in other words, tomorrow and next week we will continue to wait and the Messiah will apparently not come, and nor will the process of development reach its end. And in the same way that it is not possible to expedite it, we will also let this happen naturally. From time to time, they appoint a Negev and Galilee development minister, and his budget is enough to buy half a kilo of pistachio nuts for Shabbat. No one wants the development to end. The development of the development towns never became a national project. Apparently, no one wants the periphery to

come closer to the center.

### **53. The Rabin Lesson**

Like Ben-Gurion, Rabin was a true Leftist. He was a revolutionary who spurned conventions. Until he was elected, it was clear that there was no one to talk to, since the PLO was a gang of terrorists. Then, Rabin grasped it and agreed that Peres should continue flying to Oslo.

Like the real Left, he spurned the obvious and paved tens of kilometers of roads and built interchanges and bridges so that the south and the north would be closer to Tel Aviv. He proved what the Left should be. With a sweep of the pen, he moved billions from the budget clause called "territories" to the clause called "rectifying injustice." From that moment, everything changed, albeit not sufficiently, nor at a perfect rate, but exactly as an enlightened, egalitarian, just, and wise Leftist should make happen. Suddenly, it turned out that with proper management of the budget, the gaps of decades were closing. Suddenly, these people who had been screwed and who could only be welders without a high-school diploma were finishing matriculation easily and getting into university without difficulty. Then Rabin was murdered and Bibi came to power.

What is the lesson for the Left? The lesson is that it's possible to change things, that it needs to change, that it must not stand on the spot, and that the Left needs to be in perpetual motion; that it is not the elections that are to blame and not the officials; that instead of whining, it should lead; that the earth can be shaken and that it is possible to create tectonic shifts within a few months; that Israel's priorities must be different, and that it is possible to move money from a place with no present, such as the settlements, and direct it to where it is really needed -- to the future, the children.

### **54. Education, Education, Education**

Rabin was not the only one to invest in education, and a lot. Ben-Gurion was the one who started it, and not only that.

The year 1949 was a crazy year. Only a madman like Ben-Gurion could have kept control over the steering wheel on the slippery slope. The War of Independence had just ended, and the newly formed state was already struggling with Hamlet's choice. Ben-Gurion chose to be. The economy was on the verge of collapse. Hundreds of thousands of immigrants, most of them dirt poor, had immigrated or were brought to Israel and doubled the number of Jews in one go to almost 1.5 million. The long war of independence had destroyed almost the entire budget. There wasn't a cent to buy weapons, inflation was sky-high, and there was no food and a lot of people were hungry.

Without a cent on him, Ben-Gurion goes out of his mind, and makes two decisions -- the opposite of each other. Something on the lines of tightening the belt to the last button, and going out to a three-star Michelin gourmet restaurant. That is, introducing a policy of rationing and austerity, and legislating a law on "compulsory education" -- for free.

You will understand what "the daily food basket" was that a citizen was entitled to buy with a "points book" (not including what he bought fraudulently on the black market): Plain bread; 60 grams of corn; 58 grams of sugar; 60 grams of flour; 17 grams of rice; 20 grams of beans; 20 grams of margarine; 8 grams of noodles; 200 grams of thin cheese; 600 grams of onion; and 5 grams of biscuit.

The meat ration was 75 grams per person per month! (half a children's hamburger).

And what he had saved from the mouths of the adults, Ben-Gurion gave straight to the children.

He passed the Compulsory Education Law "(you know it as the "free education" law). The state undertook to provide free education for every child in Israel from Grade 1 to Grade 8. Free!

What have the prime ministers done who have followed him, since when the economy has been prospering?

Virtually nothing.

Oh, in 1968 the Compulsory Education Law was expanded to Grade 9.

That's it.

Since then, education has deteriorated, thousands don't matriculate, winning the Math Olympiad has become an old dream, and the universities are collapsing. The Compulsory Education Law may have been expanded on paper (and in the hollow election promises of leaders) from Age 3 to Grade 12, but will never be implemented in real life. Why? You guessed it. "There's no budget."

Well, there is a budget. Or more correct, it's a pity that Ben-Gurion isn't alive, because if there was a leader of his mettle around today, he would look Finance Ministry officials in the eye and bark: "There are allocations for the devout, right? And for the fat in the defense establishment? And the settlements? So 80% of the people will finish univer-sity!"

Like that.

"I want a national project!"

Imagine every person completing army service with a first degree. That's a revolution that is reminiscent of the revolution of 1949.

Populistic? Demagogic? Irresponsible? Superficial? Instant? Call it what you want. That's the way the old man established the state.

Without a cent and with a lot of vision.

### **55. Religion, Religious, Ultra-Orthodox, SHAS, Ovadya Yosef**

The Israeli Left customarily despises religion (if it is Jewish), the religious (if they are Jews), the faithful, the ultra-Orthodox, Ovadya Yosef, the beard of Ovadya Yosef, anyone who kisses Ovadya Yosef's beard, and in general anyone who insists on fasting on Yom Kippur and not celebrating with secret rooftop parties in Tel Aviv, or holding a feast of pork sausages in beer stew on the beach at En Gev.

The Israeli Left made no more critical mistake than this mistake. What is more, it reserves this contempt for the Jewish religion, of course. For other religions, pastors, imams, Buddhist monks, coffee-cup readers, the Israeli Left has respect -- a lot of it.

This contempt for Jewish tradition, customs, Mizrahim, everything that isn't secular, that isn't Tel Aviv, and that isn't white, is one of the main reasons why only steam remains of the Israeli Left and of what was the party that set up state, and why there are three guys in the Knesset.

The Israeli Left is the only Left in the world that the people do not support, that the people hate more than they hate the police, the media, and income tax. So there's no way in which a traditional Mizrahi will vote for the Left since the Left despises the father of the traditional Mizrahi. When the Mizrahi goes to the polls, his father speaks to him and he hears the insult.

## **56. The Berkowitz God and the Mizrahi God**

There is a big difference between Ashkenazim and Mizrahim regarding God, religion, and tradition. The God of the Ashkenazim betrayed them and allowed them to die in Auschwitz. And this happened after a long tradition of divine betrayal in pogroms, torture, and cruelty by the gentiles. When Zionism came along and created a secular revolution, it annulled the belief in God and invented a new religion, one of a religion of work and a new messiah- -- Herzl.

The Mizrahim, on the other hand, have only respect for God. He did not betray them and did not violate any loyalty contract. Their tradition is also gentle, relaxed, and tastier than the tough Ashkenazi religion. The God of the Mizrahim is a great and merciful Father. The Mizrahi doesn't understand why the secular Ashkenazi hates God and despises him. He does not understand and he is offended, because he is sure that the Ashkenazi actually means to despise him, the Mizrahi. He does not understand that it is an old, ancient hatred, past accounts that do not concern him.

The Ashkenazi Zionist, the Left-wing Zionist worker, threw out the tradition and God so that he could build this country. It was an act of heresy, rebellion, and great faith. The Mizrahi came along later as a new immigrant. In addition to the normal alienation felt by the immigrant, he also encountered an Ashkenazi disgust of his God. The Mizrahi was swept toward Zionism because of the messiah. He saw Ben-Gurion as a kind of messiah and Israel as the beginning of redemption. For him, the end of days had arrived and the prophecies of Isaiah had been fulfilled. He arrived in Israel and did not understand why there was this hatred of everything that recalled tradition, or Judaism.

## **57. Begin-Begin, With God's Help**

Begin did not need much in order to win the heart of the Mizrahim: here and there, "with God's help," an occasional donning of a skullcap, a verse from the Bible, and mainly a lot of respect for tradition -- respect and acceptance of difference and the person different from him. Begin looked at the Mizrahi Jews and saw a brother, not a subject; a friend -- not someone requiring fostering. This began in the days of the underground, in the Irgun. The Left was in Palmah, Hagana, and the Jewish Agency. The Mizrahim went to the Irgun and LEHI. Begin, perhaps the most Polish leader who arose here, the most Ashkenazi, the leader least from the common people, the one with the mentality most typical of the Diaspora, found a way into the hearts of the people because he did not reject the people and did not despise the people. And he never related to the people in an arrogant way or gave it the feeling that he was worth more.

At the Left-wing rally in the early-1980s, the Mizrahim were called "chahchahim" [ethnic slur for riffraff]. Who called them that? Dudu Topaz, one of the most grotesque and violent entertainers to appear here. Next day, Begin went on stage and avenged their honor. Begin won the elections in spite of the fact that, apart from making peace, he failed in office on almost everything he touched. Because Begin gave respect -- to everyone.

And bombed the reactor.

## **58. Kiss for Uncle**

The secular Ashkenazi sees the Mizrahi kissing the hand or beard of Rabbi Ovadya Yosef, and is disgusted. The secular Ashkenazi is prepared to accept with understanding triple French kisses for life, Polish hand kisses, the caresses of men and women who have just met, pats on the back, pats on the shoulder, Japanese bows -- but a kiss by a defense minister of Kurdish origin on the beard of the generation's Torah sage, who is of Iraqi origin, drives him crazy. One miserable left-wing politician even used this photograph in his propaganda campaign for prime minister (10

minutes before running to kiss Ovadya Yosef's ass).

And now a few words about Exalted Rabbi Ovadya Yosef.

### **59. Ovadya the Stand-Up Comedian**

Whether we like it or not, the man is the greatest Jewish ruler on Halakah of our generation. Period. You've heard about the Rambam [Maimonides]? About the Shulhan Arukh [codification of Halakah]? About Rabbi Aqiva? About the Mishna and Talmud? Well, Ovadya Yosef is on that scale.

Not convinced? Open *Wikipedia*, that will be enough for you; they'll tell you there. How is it that you don't know about it? Because the disgust blinds our eyes; because it does not interest us.

What is this "greatest Jewish ruler on Halakah"? And what's it got to do with me, a secular Leftist? "Greatest Jewish ruler on Halakah" means, for example, that when he says that it is forbidden to vote for Peres or Baraq or Bibi, none of the tens of thousands of his admirers will disobey him. "Greatest Jewish ruler on Halakah" means deciding whether or not a woman may wear trousers or a wig, or whether it's permitted to return territories -- and that's what the people will do, because for more than 70 successive years, Ovadya Yosef has built himself a universal name with his humane rulings, his consideration, and moderation.

What do we know about him? What we want to know about him. That is, nothing. We lie in wait every week for his fall in his Saturday night sermon; our ears are sealed to his problematic sense of humor, his crazy and absurd slang, his stinging comments, and the dumb ones too (you'd think that Professor Leibowitz never used obscene language); we stand in front of him and don't understand the phenomenon. So we despise him. Fools like us, ignoramuses like us. A generation of the Israeli Left has missed out on the Jewish genius Ovadya Yosef, lost out on his moderation, his love of Israel, and his halakic rulings that make it possible to return territories and make peace.

Only when it's necessary to get his political support do they go crawling to him, bending the knee before him. But Ovadya Yosef is no sucker. He understands why they come. He understands that they despise him in their hearts and are trying to use his influence. So he uses them for his needs, moving them like pawns on his chessboard.

### **60. One-Time Left Miracle**

Only once in the history of the Israeli Left has it had a leader wise enough to unite forces and connect Ovadya Yosef with the kibbutzniks of Meretz and Hashomer Hatz'air on a single list. It was Hayim Ramon in the 1994 Histadrut elections. In a moment of grace, we were able to see what political wisdom was and what could have been accomplished if it had not been for the secular Left's foolish contempt for the traditional Mizrahim. The "New Life in the Histadrut" list defeated the musty functionaries of MAPAI who had controlled the Histadrut for more than 70 years. This unified list of those with a common interest was a list of the real Left, as in the larger world.

### **61. Hapo'el Versus Betar**

Ask them to tell you how it was once upon a time.

Once, Hapo'el always used to defeat Betar [in soccer]. It also used to take the championships in a row. The Hapo'el of the Left was set up by Ben-Gurion's Histadrut. Betar is the youth movement founded by Jabotinsky. Betar is the acronym of "Brit Yosef Trumpeldor."

Jabotinsky, like a true Rightist, was a polemicist, the greatest of Jewish speakers. He opposed everything that symbolized the Left. He supported the relentless and lasting settlement of the Land of Israel, one dunam after another; another worker, another farmer. He wanted everything, with everyone, and now -- if not all, then nothing. He opposed the defense of Tel Hay, where Trumpeldor fell, because it was a little dot, weak and far away. And he, Jabotinsky, was not ready to give up the whole. "Let the law move the mountain if necessary," and when the few faced the masses at Tel Hay, he believed in withdrawing. Trumpeldor (the socialist) and his friends, fortunately believed in making do with what they had and making a stand with that, even if they fell.

Jabotinsky chose to fight against the whole world and to die in the Right. In New York.

He rejected the Peel Commission report, which proposed a kind of two-state solution in 1940, and died of a stroke. If he had been alive in 1947, he would have opposed the partition plan. If he had been alive on 14 May 1948, he would certainly have tried to prevent Ben-Gurion from declaring such a small state "to be known as the State of Israel." He is survived by his books, translations, articles, speeches, and Likudniks. He was right in his prediction of the Holocaust and was in wrong in his outline of the revival.

Ben-Gurion was an activist and he left a state after him. He regretfully accepted the Peel Commission report, regretfully agreed to the partition plan, and declared the establishment with a wooden mallet although America was threatening him with a gun drawn. Ben-Gurion was a true Leftist. He was a revolutionary, a person who changes the world. Jabotinsky was a perfect Rightist. If it had been up to him, the British would still be here because a true Rightist such as Jabotinsky was not going to emerge as a sucker and would never in his life have agreed to declare such a small state. He envisioned a state from the sea to the Euphrates and Tigris. In short, he was living in a movie.

If they were both alive today, Ben-Gurion would accept the division of the land and declare the final and historic victory of the third kingdom of Israel. Jabotinsky would be continuing to deliver speeches and write another book.

Well, it's clear why Jabotinsky was wrong and Ben-Gurion was right, and why Hapo'el always defeated Betar.

Too bad it's only soccer today.

## **62. Why? Because the Left Is Stupid**

Why is the Left stupid?

Because there are Leftists in the Left.

In the 1960's, Major General Shmu'el Gorodish was asked why the armor was bad.

He answered: Because Armored Corps soldier sit in tanks. Put paratroopers in there. Then you'll see.

When the Left's ranks are filled with Israeli patriots, Russian immigrants, religious youth, students, workers, people who live in Bat Yam, Sederot, Shlomi, Umm al-Fahm, and Tiberias, Rahat, and the Tiqva neighborhoods -- and not just those living in three streets with private homes and little traffic in central Tel Aviv -- the Left will have changed its appearance to a "National Left."

The Left is now weak, satiated, depleted, sleepy, and not a patriot. It is foreign to the interests of

those who need it. Apart from the elites and pigs, no one supports it, and certainly not the middle class. It's not Left -- it's "Small."

The National Left must develop a real and strong backbone, a national one, a sane one, a practical one, and not act patronizingly or arrogantly. It must be a national and human Left that loves a person whoever he is.

Did we say national?

### **63. 'Our' Arabs**

We didn't come to a country that was empty. There are Palestinian Arabs here and there are "our" Arabs, "Israelis." The Palestinian Arabs are those who have lived outside Israel since 1948. "Our" Arabs are Israeli citizens like us. Their anthem includes lines such, "As long as in the heart, within, a Jewish soul still yearns." Their flag is the blue and white with the Star of David in its center-- the Zionist symbol par excellence. Their school curriculum includes Hayim Nahman Bialik and the history of the people of Israel. They live with us, alongside us, and work with us. When there is a terrorist attack, they feel uncomfortable in our society, and when the Air Force crushes Gaza, they go nuts.

The Arabs who live with us are also not "our" Arabs -- some of them are sons of families that were here even before Zionism. A large number of them are sons of families that emigrated to the country after the British occupation of 1917. They arrived from Egypt, Sudan, Hauran in Syria, Lebanon -- from all over the region. The Arabs living with us are those who did not flee from here in 1948 and who were not deported. They live in villages, towns, and mixed cities. The people of Israel generally know them through the prism of hummus and racist jokes. It is afraid of them and suspects them. The fuel of this fear of "our" Arabs drives the Right's engine. We think that we have no reason to capitulate or apologize to them about the Jewish state we established here. But we have much to apologize for when it comes to the stupidity that we have demonstrated in the relationship with them since the state was set up.

### **64. Zikhron Ya'aqov and Furaydis, For Example**

Zikhron Ya'aqov and Furaydis ("little Garden of Eden") sit alongside one another separated by less than half the length of a cigarette. Although Zikhron Ya'aqov is two years younger than Furaydis, it is prospering 100 times more. Don't compare the services received by residents of the two neighborhoods. Don't compare the state of the roads, sidewalks, sewers, commercial life, infrastructures, culture, places of entertainment -- don't. It's a waste of time. One look and one deep breath will do it.

When you stop your car at the entrance to the village to buy hummus for a picnic or fish or meat for the barbecue in the forest nearby, nothing will pull you toward entering the village. Nothing will attract you to climb the alleys to the top of the hill. It's not a village in Tuscany, the Alps, or one of the villages around Lake Atitlan in Guatemala. You know very well that you will be greeted at the top of the hill by sewage flowing downward, unpaved roads, and nonexistent sidewalks -- it is not interesting. It doesn't capture the heart. Like the future of the young people in the village. And it's not in the territories; it's in the heart of the country. Look around -- it is actually Tuscany. There are vineyards, hills, green trees, and the sea nearby, and the Carmel range starts its rise to the north and east of Furaydis. It's a lovely place but you still won't get past the hummus-ful-masbuha line at the entrance. Keep going.

You and the residents of Furaydis have equal rights in the State of Israel. Yes, perhaps in the Declaration of Independence. In real life, you are first class and they are third class (the Mizrahim from the development towns are in the middle).

But you are Left wing and this situation is not good in your view. So what the hell do you do? What do you do to overcome the fear of them, the foreignness and hostility? How do you achieve an identity of interests between us and Arabs in Israel, so that they won't envy us, won't bear us a grudge, and we won't fear them and suspect that they are going to stab us in the back?

### **65. Quick Sift**

First of all, a quick sift -- If you are hoping that one day, someone will load them on trucks going in the direction of the border or port, or "encourage" them to flee, as in 1948, we're not talking to you, you are here by mistake. You are right wing. Go away.

If you think, under the skullcap on your head, that this country was personally given to you by God or the devil knows who, and that the Arabs in Israel are Amalekites, Jebusites, Philistines, do us a favor -- go.

If you are sure that every one of them is hiding a dagger and waiting for you to turn your back, and if you do not trust them but hope that things might change one day and we will all live under the vine and fig tree in peace, you are the ones with whom we want to talk. You are, after all, not naive. You certainly understand that there is no way that a third-class citizen will not hate a first-class citizen in a state where, according to the law, everyone is equal. You do realize that it is hard to be an Arab in a state of Jews. You do realize that no matter how national you are (we are very national as well, incidentally), that we came, we settled on them, and we control them, and that this is a situation that no one likes -- neither the child whom the fat kid in kindergarten sits on, nor the woman whose husband beats her, or the worker whose boss chokes him. Surely it's clear to you that until Citizen C does not become Citizen A, there won't be quiet here. And between ourselves, privately, without them hearing -- they behave really well compared with the fat kid sitting on them.

You are, after all, very afraid of their nationalist violence and passing them by, and when, by mistake, you hear someone speaking Arabic near you, you get flustered and are sure they are going to stab you any minute. But look at the statistics -- statistics which, in this case, tell the truth: They are far, far less violent than what you might expect. Okay -- now you remember: What about that one from Galilee and those who murdered Dani Katz, and the one who carried out the stabbing at the Damascus Gate. So that's the point -- you remember that these cases are isolated, exceptional, throughout the state's 60 years.

If you were in their place, think what you would do.

Baraq has already told us.

### **66. They Aren't Zionists, and It's Annoying**

They don't like the flag of Israel. They do not sing the anthem. They are indifferent to Holocaust Memorial Day. They do not cry on Remembrance Day and anger those who cry one day later -- on Al-Nakbah, which falls right on Independence Day. And that annoys you -- a lot. It really pains you that Ahmad does not sing "a Jewish soul still yearns." It really stings you that the Zionist Star of David does not move him. It pains you that it pains him on Remembrance Day that his uncles fled from here, or were driven away, and that his grandfather's village was destroyed and is today called Megiddo (Al-Lajjun) or old Ramat Aviv (Shaykh Munis). You will admit that it most hurts you that he is not like us -- him and his annoying identity.

So that's it -- he's just like us. We went around for 2,000 years in exile with the memory of destruction and a virtual homeland in the heart. It is the right of the refugee, the right of the occupied, the right of the minority, the right of every person to miss and love what he wants and does not have. You're just afraid that in the same way that we established a state after 2,000

years of hope and longing, the same will happen to him and at our expense. You begrudge him his sadness. You want him to be happy on our Independence Day. You're not ready to grant him his right to sadness and melancholy, the right to mourn his loss. And, of course, it's not human. Come off it! It's not Jewish and this is a Jewish state after all.

It annoys you a great deal that the Israeli Arab feels Palestinian. It greatly annoys you that he does not participate in the storm of euphoria of the beginning of IDF operations. It annoys you that he has relatives in Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria and that he cries when relatives in Gaza are bombed by the Air Force. You have the right to get annoyed. But we want to deal with ways of minimizing the resentment between us and them -- ways of reducing the foreignness, alienation, and hatred. Why only "reducing"? Because it will not disappear completely until there is a historic reconciliation between Jews and Arabs in the world. But reducing it is possible.

You ask: Why doesn't an American Jew have a problem of loyalty to America and Americans? Why doesn't a British Jew? Why can a Jew in New York salute with his hand on his chest when the Stars and Stripes is raised? Why does the British Jew stand to attention to the cross on the British flag and sing "God Save the Queen," and not complain that it's a Christian context? The difference is clear. Britain is not fighting the world's Jews. The world's Jews are not fighting against America. In contrast, most Palestinians are fighting Israel. Most of the Arabs are in conflict with Israel. The Israelis and the Muslims have been fighting each other since the beginning of Zionism. And the Israeli Arabs are Muslims and Palestinians. It's not going to be easy.

A lot of nonsense has taken place in the State of Israel in its relations with its Arab minority, a lot of injustice, endless oppression, and deprivation and denial of rights.

And for that stupidity, we need to repent.

So do we need to fix the "Jewish soul"? No. We need to correct injustices, and wisely. Not the anthem.

## **67. Sewage First**

A village without sewage is a village that is humiliated. When this happens in the 21st century in a modern state such as Israel, it is doubly humiliating. When the shit floats in your village streets and the unbearable stench makes its way into your wedding bed, you hate the person responsible for it. So to start correcting the historic injustice there will be a national sewer project. Yes, no less -- before a computer for every citizen, before more Arab judges in the High Court, and before we ask them to sing ""Hatiqva" with all the heart, we will give them the right to a cistern, however much it costs; and then the right to electricity and running water; and then the right to sidewalks, roads, schools, sports fields, community centers, and libraries. Then, when a neighborhood in an Arab village looks like one in Rishon Leziyyon or Holon -- when the educational system produces the same number of matriculation graduates as Ra'ananna -- we can start talking to them about obligations.

Democracy in Israel is not just an election once every few years. Democracy and equal rights manifest themselves primarily in the state's equal investment in its citizens. Equal -- meaning the same for everyone. Everyone -- meaning the Arabs as well. It hurts you to hear this, we know. But that's what has to change: An Arab can and should work in the Electric Corporation and Bank of Israel.

When the equality project is at its peak, when the television broadcasts report an upward wing in development, and when the government publishes tenders for infrastructure work in Arab communities, then will be the time to launch a project that equalizes the obligations of the citizens of Israel.

## **68. Covenant of Rights and Obligations of Israeli Citizens**

There is no obligation to sign such a covenant, but the state's citizens will be obliged to honor it.

It includes one simple principle -- all citizens without exception accept all the rights and are bound by all the obligations.

The rights and obligations constitute the Israeli law.

All citizens must carry out the law and are entitled to all the rights it confers.

That's it. That is the covenant. That's all.

## **69. Is That All? What About Loyalty to the State?**

Professor Leibowitz was apparently the smartest Jew of the last century, at least in Israel. When asked about the belief in God, he agreed to talk only about "Avodat Hashem" [man's purpose in the world and obligation to his Creator]. Don't baffle me with spiritual chatter -- just keep the commandments in the Shulhan Arukh.

If you fulfill commandments, then it seems that you are a devout Jew. And, figuratively, if you fulfill your duties to the state, you are apparently faithful to the state. If the state fulfills its obligations to you, then apparently it deserves to be called a state and deserves your loyalty.

A state cannot demand loyalty from you if it is betraying you. And we are not talking here about your subjective sense. The only real question is whether the state fulfills what it promised you in the contract with you.

For example, you are entitled to equality under the Basic Law: Human Dignity and Liberty. If you are a young Jewish couple, you are eligible to purchase an apartment wherever you want to. It's just a matter of a mortgage, and the state will also help there.

If you're an Arab, a mortgage is your little problem. I simply have nowhere to live. In the village or town of your birth, you will not find housing for young couples. No. They don't build. So what if 20% of Israel's population is Arab? How much space do they need? At present, they only have 2.5%. No one is demanding the right to daycare, an apartment, or a house. No one is demanding the right to "natural growth." The attitude of Israeli governments for generations has been -- fend for yourselves somehow.

Okay. So they get along somehow. They build without a license, illegally, without planning, without sewage, without roads, without sidewalks, without health, educational, and without cultural facilities. Then the state sends in the bulldozers and demolishes the house and creates another loyal and supportive family.

So it cannot go like this. It may be exotic to eat hummus or repair the vehicle there, but it's bad, ugly, and dangerous. And worst of all -- it's not democratic.

Anyone who wants loyal citizens is invited to approve building permits for them.

Anyone who wants to talk to them about national service should hook them up to a sewage system, fix the lighting, eliminate the drug trafficking, and give them hope of finding work and completing high school. Those who purport to be the only democracy in the Middle East should stop messing about and begin to meet their obligations toward their citizens.

## **70. Compulsory Military Service in Israel (IDF 2)**

In order for there to be compulsory national service here, along with military service without the dodgers, the IDF needs to open its doors and first of all to change its name from the Israel Defense Forces to the Israel Duty Force. The initials can remain the same. A new civilian national service wing should be set up, and headed by a civilian, or civilians. If Ahmad or Tom wants, he can volunteer for military service. If he chooses not to, he will be duty-bound to volunteer for civilian service. This also applies to the frail artist from Tel Aviv. Continue.

## **71. Will the Battalion Commander Be Called Ahmad? Or Shimmele?**

Yes, if he wants. If he does not want to be a tank commander, he could be a teacher-soldier or a military photographer. And if he chooses not to wear olive drab, he will be a member of a civilian organization, with discipline (not as in the army, relax, but as in the police or fire department, or theater or dance band), and his commanders will be called Ahmad, Muhammad, Layla, Shimmele, or Rivkele. This large organization will be built like an army and take care of the sick, the elderly who are in nursing, the disabled, and the handicapped. It will consist of army companies that will work with youth at risk and youth in need of special education. There will be platoons that will see to improving the city, platoons to fight road accidents, prevent violence in schools, and for the war on drugs. It will have companies for those who are restricted in movement, the disabled, those with hearing problems or who are blind, and they will serve as switchboard operators, give technical support, help ERAN [national emotional crisis hotline], or women in distress. In short, the excuses have run out. It will be an army of citizens with brigades of Arabs and companies of Jewish pacifists. It will have an ultra-Orthodox civilian division and a director called Muhammad, Sergey, Menahem Mendel, or Aziza.

Graduates of this organization will receive grants in the same way as those who complete army service -- in higher education, housing, and finding work.

Anyone who doesn't find his place in the army or this civilian organization, and anyone who dodges three years of service for the people and the country, will lose his rights and be sent to prison -- with a legal mark of shame. That's how you set up a model society.

## **72. What Is 'Losing Rights in the State'?**

Simple -- it is the loss of the right to a free education, public health, a mortgage, national insurance, personal security, unemployment allowance, voting in elections, and a passport. In short, it means being a second-class citizen, like a client with a restricted bank account because he refused to meet his commitment to the state and earned his mark of shame honestly. He will not get a job in the civil service, and his salary will not be recognized as an expense of his employer. He will not enter into our flock in the biblical sense of the phrase.

Sounds extreme? It is, very. Since when has granting rights been tied to meeting obligations in a democracy? What, a draft dodger who arrives at hospital injured shouldn't receive treatment? This is the point: Israel is not a democracy like others. It is a Jewish and democratic state. That's to say: It is a special democracy, a type of democracy that has to defend itself perpetually, and especially one that has to water itself every day in order to stay alive.

And yes, there's also a compulsory draft here. It is unique in the world (yes, yes, Switzerland also has mandatory military service. We know about that. But it's not really an army. It's hardly a pocket knife). Here, at the age of 18, young people detach themselves from their dreams and disappear for a few years, the magical ones in their lives, in order to serve us. Some don't return, either. And when a significant number shirks this, making it legitimate, an army will remain here in which the only recruits will be immigrants from the former Soviet Union, Ethiopian Jews, and

Israelis who are the children of foreign workers to look after all of us. Then, the dream of Ahmadinezhad will have been fulfilled and we will not be here anymore. Because when a man does what is right in his eyes, men will swallow each other alive.

Israel needs to again become a society that recruits, for the army and the community. Yes, for the community, because only if we are responsible for each other will we survive as Jews in a sea of Arabs in the Middle East without drowning.

The situation in which a small part of the population bears the burden and all the others shirk must end at once. And for it to end immediately, radical steps are needed. An emergency situation calls for emergency treatment. So will a draft dodger receive treatment in the emergency room? Yes. At full cost, in the same way as an Israeli, who is injured in Central Park in Manhattan, and who is taken to hospital. It will be at the expense of the Israeli insurance company.

### **73. So What's the Chance of It Happening?**

We are confident that citizens with equal rights will agree to be equal in obligations, as a principle, as a way of life, and as an expression of personal integrity. If not all of them, at least most of them.

We are sure that respect, loyalty, and concern for the citizen will meet with the same degree of loyalty from him, at least from the majority.

As the cliché goes, respect brings respect. It's as simple as it sounds. There will undoubtedly be exceptions. We were not born yesterday. But when the norm in society is that a sucker is someone who does not serve, the finger will be pointed at the exceptions.

### **74. You've Found a Sucker, Fine**

For something to get moving here, we need to go back to the beginning. Once, the most important thing was for us to be moral. We were always proud to say that New York has better restaurants and that Paris has cheeses that you yearn for, but that only "in Israel," when someone drowns in the Yarqon River, 100 jump in to save him without thinking twice. There, too, we've gone wrong.

Generally speaking, it was Judaism that invented morality -- the rights of a slave and a convert; the day of rest; tithes; fair justice. We have forgotten everything. Our memory is weak. Now we are not interested in being Jews. All we are interested in is not to emerge as losers. That is the God of the Israelis. From not wanting to give way and wanting to win from a position of strength, we emerge as the biggest losers in the world.

### **75. Agenda Required**

As we mentioned, we have demonstrated for too many years for the Palestinians -- at the Cinemateque, in squares, at checkpoints, the separation fence. Enough. It's over. We have to make a U-turn. We have already said that the Palestinians are big boys now, and that they can fend for themselves. If they don't like living in the dark shadow of HAMAS, they should take to the streets against it. If they want peace, they should take to the streets for it. It's dangerous? Very. But it's more dangerous and more frightening to demonstrate in Tehran.

We have done our bit. From now on, Rabin Square will host demonstrations for Israel, for the future of our children, for the National Left, with hundreds of blue-and-white flags and banners that "the right path for Israel is left and straight." And if that also helps the future of the Palestinians, let it. And if they decide to stay as they are today, then let them do that, too -- but

behind the fence, when Israel has been divided, and at one.

## 76. Leader Required

The left-wing camp is battered and humiliated. It expects the government of the right to collapse with a great din and the people to choose a leadership from the Left. So let's say that this day arrives. Suppose the Right collapses. Suppose that the United States makes an offer to this people that cannot be turned down, and that the Right collapses under the pressure. Suppose that the elections get closer and we have to put someone at the head of the list. We need to decide who will lead the camp -- that of the National Left. We look left and left again and can't identify anyone. Maybe it's because we are constantly looking for the wrong person.

We are looking for a great statesman, an experienced prime minister who has already failed, a socialist revolutionary, an analytical party activist and former chief of staff all in one. And it should preferably be a complete person.

So there's the rub: There isn't anyone like that and it's also not right. We just need a wise man, one who is smart, primarily. He might be managing a high-tech company at the moment. He might be a mayor or a high-school principal. He might be your best friend who never thought of going into politics. He might be standing next to you now or he might play basketball with you every Friday.

So let's try to do it the other way. We will try to describe the qualities and skills required of a leader of the National Left. We will try to create a template, a glass shoe of Cinderella, and try to match it to a suitable candidate.

Our leader must have done full military service. The designated leader must possess management skills. The designated leader must be an educated man, a man of the world and of the little man. He must be able to open a Siddur prayer book, be called to the reading of the Torah without getting confused, and quote Solomon Ibn Gevirol, Natan Alterman, Jabotinsky, and Karl Marx. The designated leader must be a subscriber to *Twitter* and *Facebook*, be an indefatigable SMS-er, and a permanent resident of Internet society. He does not need to be lead guitarist or a plastic artist, but he must have his finger on the pulse of the era. The designated leader must be a human being -- the old lady lying in the corridor should not star in his campaign slogans -- it should prey on his conscience. The leader could be a well-established and successful person, but not a pig.

The designated leader of the Left should have a son in an elite unit, and if not, he should feel that he does have or that he will have in future, when he struggles with the decisions of war and peace or whether it is worth bringing back Gil'ad Shalit. The designated leader of the National Left should have empathy for the sorrow of others, and he should avoid injustices, such as that of the separation fence in Bil'in. He should allow those who were uprooted from Iqrit and Bir'am to return home. His circle of friends should include human beings, not men of wealth. He needs to talk to us, not only with his advisers. Our leader needs to shed a tear when the flag of Israel is hoisted and when "Hatiqva" is played by the IDF band. When he enters the gates of Jerusalem, his heart should beat. He should be brave, able to make decisions, and have a rare ability to identify national opportunities and exploit them. He must be a friend. He has to lead -- not be led. He must fire his polling adviser, who helped him get elected, right after he is elected, since it is now necessary to restart the Bible group of Ben-Gurion and the monthly meeting with intellectuals. His regular talks on television should be peak viewing because he says important things to each of us. The designated leader of the National Left should be Yitzhaq Rabin. What a shame he was murdered. It's too bad that he cannot lead us. There is no other choice -- it's time to find someone else.

Young.

## **77. So What Do We Do?**

What don't we do? We do not sit with our arms folded. That's for sure. Nothing will come from heaven, and the Right will continue its historic mission of throwing us into the sea. This will happen for sure if we continue sitting like potatoes on our chairs, or sit drinking Espresso at a cafe near the 4x4 jeep that we have parked on the sidewalk, blocking parking spaces for the handicapped or a pram.

So what then? It's a good question. Something has to be started. For example, if you think like us, look left and left again and you will find another 10 people who think like you. And the one who thinks like you needs to find another 10 people who think like him. And when the dozens find hundreds who find thousands who find tens of thousands, there will be a longer human chain than the one on the right. When we are there, we will have a sense of power again. Wow, it's a long time since we had that feeling. And when we have that feeling again, we will take power. Then, it will be possible to change things. Big time. As Ben-Gurion did. As Rabin did. And go back to living as we did before 1967, with the commonsense of the 21st century. It will be a National Left, as we once were, with changes and improvement, and modernizations.

Then, we will divide the country immediately, and we'll declare victory in the war of independence, and trick history. We will prove that the third temple will last for an eternity, longer than the first and second, because we learned a lesson. And the people of Israel live!

**(Shmu'el Hasfari, Eldad Yaniv, 2009)**

## **78. Initial Comments on First Draft**

Enough. Now we must let others speak. Here are the first comments, in alphabetical order.

A. This is a general document but one that is accurate, painful, amusing, and with much charm. Its authors find it hard to believe in peace but are determined to end the occupation. Even though they are suspicious and unilateral regarding the Arabs, they remain open and multilateral in relation to the world. They are aware that ending the occupation will bring peace, perhaps -- more than perhaps -- and if not, it will prepare Israeli society for trials of strength and other tests that are expected.

The authors mourn the desertion the State of Israel for the state of Samaria. They demand, and rightly so, that everyone should do service: military service for Jews and anyone who wants; and another service, civilian, community, for Arabs, because a decent left-wing person knows that there is such a thing as community and that a state in general and Israel in particular is not just a collection of individuals. Each should give according to his ability, and each should receive according to his needs.

I wish I could be sure that giving equal rights and investment to the Arabs of Israel would ease their problem and our problem. Cruel experience teaches us that murderous terrorist attacks, from the night of the hang-gliders at Gil'ad, to the attempt to blow up a post office while national insurance payments were being paid out, and the lynching at Tel Barukh, were carried out by Arabs of economic standing and income.

In the same way, I am not convinced that the mocking section dedicated to Yasir Arafat, is absolutely necessary. Arafat is a national symbol. Sublime or ridiculous, he should be left alone. He is the Palestinian leader who adopted, albeit in speech (in English, not Arabic) and not the heart, the principle of two states. Give him the due he deserves. That is, ignore him.

In conclusion, this is a characteristic, national Israeli composition, comprehensive yet concise,

witty and clever, suitable for everyone. Are you sure that the term "Left" is vital? That it doesn't force you to immediately add and position the term "national" next to it? Your observation point allows a sharp and clear view; your ideological position is balanced and fair; your intentions are worthy. Are you sure it would not be worth giving up the term "Left," for tactical, marketing, and electoral reasons?

**(Amnon Abramovich, journalist, Channel 2 newsmen, and jurist, 2009)**

B. Since the Camp David conference in 2000, the Israeli Left has been spinning in a crash vortex. Ten years after Ehud Baraq offered Yasir Arafat a Palestinian state based on the 4 June 1967 borders and received an intifadah in reply, the political Left has been treading and sinking in an electoral quagmire, stuck in a depressing circle in which it is defeated and confused, split and weakened.

The interestingly thing is that while the parties representing the Left have been undergoing an erosion and absorbing blow after blow, their ideas have actually been spreading at the expense of classic Israeli right-wing and Likud perceptions. The latest example of this is the speech at Bar Ilan University by Binyamin Netanyahu, with its clear agreement to setting up a Palestinian state. If you add to that the known positions of Avigdor Lieberman, you get a political map that recognizes, often with gritted teeth, that there is only one solution to the conflict: two states for two peoples. This is a resounding, sharp, and piercing victory for veteran supporters of territorial compromise. It is sometimes hard for us to grasp, but the truth is that history has already judged: There were those who were wrong and who misled, and those who were right in the argument over the division of the country.

Still, the Left consistently loses the elections. The positions that the Center-Left puts forward are consistent with the classical pragmatic Zionism from the school of David Ben-Gurion, Levi Eshkol, Menahem Begin, Yitzhaq Rabin, and Ariel Sharon, and they are the ones that etch Israeli policy. But the parties whose genetic codes carry these tenets are fading.

The text at hand is an attempt by Eldad Yaniv and Shmu'el Hasfari to define this paradox and resolve it. From the dark night of the Left, they try to formulate a rescue plan to reinvent their camp. The Israeli political system tends to reflect -- belatedly, of course -- the politics of the great ally, the United States, and the attempt by Yaniv and Hasfari to shape what they call a "National Left" is clearly influenced by the way in which Barack Obama has reinvented the Democratic Party as a body that can produce unifying political initiatives that are ostensibly supra-political, those that take into consideration and work with a pragmatic Republicanism.

Yaniv and Hasfari are people who have no official party. Their work is not a piece of academic research. For the suspicious among us: To the best of my knowledge, they do not have a candidate for prime minister hidden under their jacket and do not intend to whip it out, equipped with their text, of course, just before the next election. What we have here, it seems, is a political manifesto, a call for change through a percolation from the margins of public activity into the heart of practical politics.

Yaniv and Hasfari have the right experience to write such a text. Yaniv was the strategic adviser of Prime Minister Baraq in his first term. He experienced the days of the withdrawal from Lebanon and the disastrous conference at Camp David. Afterward, he drew up and carried out Baraq's return to political life as chairman of the Labor Party and defense minister. Yaniv's public senses are sharp and quick; few men have his political skill. Hasfari is a playwright and screenwriter, whose piercing work needs no introduction. His work has for decades been shot through with a powerful political statement, from the play "Tashmad" to the television series, "Polishuq." Hasfari is the one who wrote "Winter 73," a song that regularly arouses the anger of the Right because it gives expression to a provocative demand for effective action to achieve peace.

Their platform offers an interesting mix. They want to return to the basic ideals of the labor movement, those that looked forward to a "model society." The Left, they say, does not hate anyone apart from "capitalist pigs." They argue for a unilateral **declaration** on leaving the West Bank, but insist that it should be a **statement of intent**, which would be followed by negotiations with the world, followed by the division of the country. The attack by Yaniv and Hasfari on the settlers is blunt and aggressive, almost unrestrained. However, they adopt a soft and embracing approach toward Rabbi Ovadya Yosef and religion in general -- in complete contrast to the current Israeli Left, which they attack throughout the entire book. Furthermore, they remove themselves from the liberal Left by their position on national and military service by proposing a link between civil rights and obligations and the denial of civil rights to those not doing service. However, they also declare that it is impossible to demand that the Arabs of Israel perform all their obligations before the state halts the discrimination against them.

Like any self-respecting manifesto, this is a provocative and abrasive text. Yaniv and Hasfari say that Israel cannot be frightened by missiles as an argument against withdrawing from the territories: "The whole country is within range of the missiles, and has been for a long time, years, and while we've been in the territories. So missiles are no reason to hold onto the territories. If we leave the territories, there is a chance of missiles reaching Tel Aviv. If we don't get out of the territories, there will be no Israel."

Their book is a several-stage attack on the failures of the Israeli liberal Left -- from its arrogance toward Mizrahim to the betrayal of social principles. They despise the admiration for Ze'ev Jabotinsky and the revisionist jargon, love Ben-Gurion and Rabin, and admire the MAPAI activism. There is a very patriotic, almost nationalistic, aroma in their definitions. These do not suffer from excessive diplomacy: draft dodgers are assholes; young people in Judea and Samaria whom Israeli politicians on the Left and Right like to praise, are "mostly racist, conservative, and embarrassingly narrow-minded, evangelistic, and unethical." The hilltop youth, specifically, is anti-Semitic. In general, they have a short fuse when it comes to the Right. If you are on the Right, as they say at one point, you can stop reading now.

This pungency is an attempt to revive not only the political justification of the Left, but also, and in particular, the sentiment behind it. After 2000, the Israeli Left suffered brain death, but its heart had stopped working that fall night at Malkhey Yisra'el Square five years earlier. In his achievements and his image, and even his shortcomings, Rabin symbolized the emotion of the Center-Left. The fervency and the spirit -- the essential components for confronting, carrying support, rising above petty considerations, and victory -- were lost on the night of the murder. This book is an attempt to insert a large syringe containing adrenalin into the cold heart of the Israeli Left in the hope that it will awaken from its coma and start beating. Yaniv and Hasfari call this syringe "the National Left."

Yaniv and Hasfari asked me to read this draft. I told them right away that it is hard for me -- as someone who defines himself as being in the center of the political map -- to agree with them. Some of the things that they have written made my blood boil and will certainly have the same effect on quite a few other readers. But let's be honest: There is something refreshing about this blood boiling. Thousands of hours of covering coalition negotiations brought it home to me, for example, that their diagnosis of the Left -- which needs constant and revolutionary movement in order to exist, and which withers in times of stagnation and occupation -- is a distilled diagnosis that the Labor Party and its partners forgot long ago.

Perhaps the most significant contribution of this text, which they cleverly call a "first draft," is their proposal to the Israeli Left to adapt itself and not wait for history's verdict of acquittal. They are challenging the next leader of the Center-Left to adopt opinions that are less routine, sometimes more extreme or abrasive, and sometimes those that are completely devoid of different agendas. They want the Left to upturn tables, kick pigs, propose changes, plan and implement changes, fly the flag of Israel, and recreate itself. They are saying: The current situation is the refuge of the Right; action redeems the Left.

More than being a manifesto, this text is a statement against the rotten culture of unity governments, moldy politicians clinging to their armchairs until retirement, Polishuqs, fatal voter indifference, senile public memory, cliches, and the leveling debate to that of talkbacks. In a shallow political system like ours, Yaniv and Hasfari suggest that we all -- Rightists, Leftists, and Centrists -- start arguing about the important things, and now.

**(Nadav Eyal, 2009. The bold is in the original)**

C. Tel Aviv swelters in August, and in the terrible heat, Eldad Yaniv and Shmu'el Hasfari have written a manifesto with the aim of recapturing "the Left." And how will they do it? They will try to reinvent it with a chilly 20,000-word breeze, one that caresses and cools, but which also pierces, fascinates, annoys, disturbs, intrigues, chills, and shakes the head leftward -- and leftward.

Yaniv and Hasfari target the illusions and false visions of a new Middle East. They do not yearn for a third kingdom of Israel, but nor do they dream of eating hummus in Damascus. Most importantly, they try to find a cure for the trauma of the Oslo Accords that the Left has still not recovered from -- a new left-wing Israeliness, ready for action; a Zionist, patriotic, and National Left in place of the ruins of the old, sinking Left.

One can argue with them. It is both desirable and necessary. And there are subjects to argue about. But "The National Left" is a brave attempt to deal with the painful and repressed question of what happened to the Zionism of the Left and why the blue-and-white flag today distances so many young people, chiefly from the Left.

Their discussion is not exhaustive, but it opens a window wide for public discussion. It is by no means certain that the answer they arrive at -- "Leftist national patriotism" -- is the medicine. Patriotism is too charged and dirty because the messianic Right has appropriated it exclusively.

Perhaps the prescription is a fresh formulation of left-wing patriotism: no to right-wing nationalism and liberal individualism from the other side, and yes to a new spirit on the Left, with a soul, a deep sensitivity to the rights of minorities, one that preserves human dignity, imparts a dignity and purpose to words, and one that is young, sparkling, and loves life. And a divided but united Israel.

If you want to reinvent the Left, you have to take women into account -- women in particular. But the chauvinism, machismo, and sexism also have to be thrown overboard. In short, Obamanism should be adopted and translated into Hebrew.

Yaniv and Hasfari should take another step forward, go the necessary extra mile. More than 50% of women -- fuel for a revolution -- slammed the door on Ehud Baraq in the last elections when he called Tzipi Livni "Tzippora," and they ran away from Binyamin Netanyahu when he said, "it's too big for her." That is why 55% of Qadima voters were women.

On the Left and the Right, women preferred female solidarity over the old party voting patterns. Men also preferred the feminine political outlook to the arrogant and rash military focus. They felt ashamed that the leaders of their parties treated with rough chauvinism anyone trying to bring in the game rules of a different politics. Men and women gave vent to a protest that, in America, while women are holding their heads high -- thanks to Barack Obama, who is not afraid of smart, strong women (he is married to one, Michelle, and appointed another, Hillary Clinton, as secretary of state), we are going backward. Baraq prefers Yvet Lieberman, and there is not one woman in a senior position in Netanyahu's bureau.

"Let me be clear," said the US president solemnly, in his speech at Cairo University in June this year, "issues of women's equality are by no means simply an issue for Islam. In Turkey, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia, we've seen Muslim-majority countries elect a woman to lead. Meanwhile, the struggle for women's equality continues in many aspects of US life, and in countries around

the world. I am convinced that our daughters can contribute just as much to society as our sons. Our common prosperity will be advanced by allowing all humanity -- men and women -- reach their full potential."

When the Left says this in Hebrew, when a leader is born -- a man or woman -- to whom this comes naturally and with intent from the mouth and the heart, it will be possible to complete the revolution.

Yaniv and Hasfari are barely halfway to victory. "The National Left" is formulated as a "first draft." In the manifesto they have created, women are mentioned only twice. And on one of these occasions, it is as "women in black," in a disparaging context.

When the updated second draft is hopefully put out and when the text of Yaniv and Hasfari speaks to both sexes together, we will know that their revolution and ours has got underway.

**(Maya Bengel, 2009)**

D. Here is a paradox: On the one hand, before the last elections, Meretz carried out a survey. Only 7% described themselves as "left wing." Only 7%! Another 13% or so defined themselves as Center-Left. That is very little, the least in the last 20 years.

On the other hand, every survey conducted in the last 20 years has found 40-60% support for the political settlement that the Left has been preaching for decades. And not just preaching: This is the political settlement by means of which the Left defines itself -- a Palestinian state based on the 1967 lines, including a division of Jerusalem, but after a Palestinian concession on the right of return.

So here's the question that is tormenting the last remaining Leftists. How is it that we completely won the ideological argument but lost the political power struggle? How has the common expression, "the Left," become a derogatory nickname, a disease, something that sticks to your shoe and which you wipe back onto the road? The answer of Shmulik Hasfari and Eldad Yaniv to these questions is clear: the patriotism of the Left was taken away from it. If we aren't certain that the Leftist is first and foremost interested in the existence and prosperity of the State of Israel, and only after that in anything else -- Palestinian justice, achieving power, and love of the world -- then we do not want to be Leftists.

A quarter of a century ago, one wise campaigner appropriated to the Right the word "national" and it has remained the Right's ever since. The truth is that the Left did not even put up a fight over the word. It happily agreed to its appropriation to the Right. It suited it that the Right should be the "national camp" and that we Leftists should be the "peace camp." National is a kind of nationalist, with the fascist odor of former times, and anyway, in today's global world, who wants to be "national"? Yet in the course of this happiness, the "peace" tag has become synonymous with naivete, stupidity, and Yasir Arafat, while "national" has remained "national" -- not someone who knows what is brilliant or trendy, but someone who is very patriotic. Yet at the very end of the day, under the pile of cynicism, we are all patriots in our souls.

I do not agree with many of the positions of Yaniv and Hasfari, but I have to admit that they are on to something. The ideas are not essentially new. We have heard most of them before; they are scattered in almost all the political parties, except in people who define themselves as liberal Leftists. Even more importantly, a political current must first distinguish itself from the other streams. And this is what Yaniv and Hasfari have done: They have packed a narrative with a beginning, middle, and end into a National Left. And you won't believe it -- but it's without a Palestinian state as a necessity, and without peace now.

What is good about their National Left is that you know what it is. You can guess the position of someone who describes himself as "National Leftist" on any of the issues of the day, including those that Yaniv and Hasfari don't refer to. That is no small feat, by no means. Can anyone guess what the position of the Labor Party will be on any of the issues of the day? Senior Labor Party members opposed Binyamin Netanyahu's land reform. Deputy Defense Minister Matan Vilna'i even locked himself in his Knesset office so that they would force him to vote. They argued that it was "privatization" and contrary to "Labor Party values." The reform was not "privatization" in the sense that it is opposed by the Labor Party (a public service going over into private hands), and it is definitely not contrary to the values of the Labor Party, but who knows them these values are today?

Ah, yes. And in the end, these same seniors voted in favor of the reform, of course, because the actual values of the Labor Party are -- we were chosen to be in power.

It is often difficult to know what Meretz's position will be on a relevant issue, and no supercomputer has been invented that is capable of guessing what Qadima's position will be on a concrete issue unless it is fed with Netanyahu's position beforehand. There will also certainly be areas in the "National Left" where there are blurred positions and where it is difficult to formulate a position, but the basic principles are clear.

For example, Yaniv and Hasfari make a clear choice on the social-economic issue. They are on the side of social justice. The Left's main target audience is bourgeois plus. It has no problem with "social justice," but part of it tends to oppose limiting the salaries of senior officials or linkage between the salaries of senior officials and the salaries of cleaning workers.

Shinuy was a left-wing political party diplomatically and right wing economically. The Labor Party presents itself as left wing economically, but its social-economic policy when it was in power was right wing. Ehud Barak, it should be recalled, was more Beiga than Beiga (according to Beiga's Shohat's testimony) when it came to a restrained fiscal policy, and Yitzhaq Rabin canceled the stock market tax that he himself had initiated.

When this social democratic party put Amir Peretz at its head, he was like a bone stuck in its throat. Eight or nine seats fled -- of voters who were afraid of a socialist policy, and with a mustache into the bargain.

I wish I had a shekel for every conversation I have had on the death of the Left and the Right way to revive it. I would not need my maligned talent salary on Channel 10. The overwhelming majority of these conversations become involved with the mechanical political structure of the "new Left" that will be set up, not its rebirth: Should "they" split from "him" or should "he" lead "it."

Besides this, there is the obsessive preoccupation with the dramatic question of what the party should be called. Ofir Pines-Paz was not prepared to hear of leaving the Labor Party for Meretz the moment he realized that Hayim Oron would not give up the name, Meretz. That's the way it is with our Left. And after we solve the problem of the name, we will be preoccupied for 1.5 million years with the ultimate deus ex machina -- which stars should be added from outside. Maybe there's a left-wing general who is about to leave the army, someone with a truncheon in his hand and an olive leaf in his mouth (such as Rabin, with his sparkling eyes)? Maybe some media person is prepared to abandon his cynical and comfortable position and come to us? Have we tried Ilana Dayan? Yes? What about Ya'ir [Lapid]? What do you mean, what Ya'ir?

I'm not disparaging these questions, but I always thought it was much more important that the Left should reinvent itself, and that it should bring along new ideas to light us up. Peretz did that, which is why he got 8-9 new mandates for Labor, in place of those who left with Shim'on Peres for Qadima. Ronald Reagan was able to do it for the US Republican Party. Tony Blair did in Britain, and brought Labor to power for successive terms following years in the wilderness. Lula Da Silva did it in Brazil, Nicolas Sarkozy did in France, and Barack Obama did it with the

American Left, the dismantled Democratic Party. I have no idea whether this document will do it for the Israeli Left, but at least it tries. And that is quite something.

In fact, it's much more than existing left-wing parties have done until today, while they die their death.

**(Raviv Drucker, 2009)**

H. Even without agreeing with every detail in the analysis of Shmu'el Hasfari and Eldad Yaniv, I have no doubt they are mainly right in their analysis of the problem. Even more than that: They point out the correct way to start a reawakening. In two words: a National Left.

We know what the main problem is: Nothing endangers the enormous achievement of Zionism -- state and homeland -- as much as the settlement enterprise. Nothing has corrupted democracy more than the settlements. Nothing blocks the road to social justice more than the settlement enterprise.

Although all this is clear, not only to the Left but to most Israelis, we are all steeped in a kind of dazed paralysis, walking and being dragged into the abyss, as if we cannot avert the disaster.

The important insight in this document is that this state of hallucination-trauma, which affects the forces on the Left (and Center), is due to the rupture between the patriotic sentiment (which still beats), and the vague feeling that nationalism belongs to the Right -- that being nationalist means not being Leftist and that the flag was given to the Right.

We also know how this happened to us: The occupation made short-sighted Leftists view their country as loathsome, and this Left became addicted to narcissism in place of activism. The Leftist loves himself and therefore hates Israel. He likes to tell himself how different he is from the vulgar, nationalistic masses who make barbecues on Independence Day.

There is no greater nonsense than the opposition between Left and nationalism, politically, first and foremost. Love of the homeland, Zionism, and patriotism are the most powerful instruments that we have to finally end the occupation. If we don't take our flag from the settlers -- our flag! -- we will not get anywhere. The sages of the extreme Left, with their disgust for the flag, their contempt for Israel and Israelis, their foolish claims that "Jewish and democratic" is an internal contradiction (as though we are the first nation-state in the world), all weaken the most powerful force, perhaps the only one, from which it is possible to stir the courage to perform the surgery that will save the patient: dividing the land. It will be good, apparently, even for the Palestinians, but first of all, it will be good for us. A true Israeli patriot, a true Zionist, has to wake up in order to arouse the forces that love the homeland because without a separation from the occupied areas, we will not have a homeland. It is the Left, not the Right, which represents the national interest. Only the Left is truly national. The Right is so national that it is binational. It is the end of Zionism.

So the title, "National Left," goes down well with me. But there are also other reasons for siding with the Yaniv and Hasfari document. These are to do with the level of distributive justice, of preventing piggish capitalism: A true Left depends for support on solidarity, brotherhood. We began to identify the Left solely with liberalism, that is, with individual rights, due to a US distortion (liberalism is the worldview of the free market, for those who have forgotten. Do you remember that there was a free-market party here called the "Liberals"?).

We are making a mistake if we think that the Left can be reduced to the legal rights of individuals. A world where the only moral horizon is individual rights is a world in which there is nothing connecting us to one another, and no mutual responsibility. It is a right-wing world, literally. Is a world of separate legal entities floating around side-by-side and taking care of one another. The Left not only can but must be national, because it understands that emotion bonds people, not just a contract. Emotion holds the contract together. This emotion is called patriotism, or a

national sense.

Where isn't there a National Left? There is no National Left in books, or in countries where the Left is impotent. Wherever the Left has power, it is a National Left because it must rely on a sense of mutual responsibility. It must create emotions that create a bond between the textile worker and the tycoon; it must rely on threads of empathy, not on the growing indifference that we call by the flattering title of tolerance.

So this is the direction. And it's time to replace the pathetic irony and pseudo- sophistication of all the know-alls from the media with the real thing. The real thing is the courage to say "national."

**(Dr Gadi Taub, 2009)**

I. This "National Left, First Draft" is a difficult paper. Its terms are tough, and its conclusion is tough. It was written and published at a time when the Leftist camp had already lost the country, and the first voices of fascism were filling the void. It is a bad time, the time of beasts, let's call it; the language is changing; the shared code has been forgotten; and the basic principles of the Left are only remembered by those aged 40 and upward. Hence, this is a last call to the flag, at the last minute, a wake-up call for those who have fallen asleep. "To awaken my brother, that is my purpose" wrote Yosef Hayim Brenner on the cover of his newspaper, *Hame'orer*.

The proposed platform of Eldad Yaniv and Shmu'el Hasfari for a "National Left" refers to ideology and practice, thought and in deed. Thought transforms the world; the deed presents its usual difficulty. The platform speaks and is aimed at the Israeli Left, but actually seeks to build a new camp: a "National Left no less, a blue-and-white Left, a commonsense Left, an updated and upgraded one. Why build a new camp? Because the old one has expired, gone, evaporated, abnegated itself to death, so that there is no one to awaken any longer. As an act of grace, the remains of the destruction should be gathered, like abandoned eggs, and new supporters should be assembled. There's a need to teach, impart, guide, and cherish, until a camp is set up. It is an arduous task. Therefore, Eldad and Hasfari should be congratulated on making their voices heard in these days of desolation and silence, voices of protest, in order to remember the path, to recall that there used to be such a path here, one of natural kindness, of integrity without reflection, of commonsense. This straight path indeed attracted hundreds of thousands of people, and also brought about a great creation, the third sovereign state, the freedom to decide for ourselves where we are going, and what the hell we want from our existence here.

In 2005, historian Robert Paxton, author of "Anatomy of Fascism," found the "Chosen People" beginning to sound like a "master race," claiming that it had "a special purpose in the world," demanding the "vital space" needed, comparing the enemy to the devil (or a virus -- R.T.) inhibiting the mission of the people, while gaining the necessary "power" to achieve these goals. The chosen people, of course, are us.

We haven't had a Left in Israel for 10-15 years -- not in the behavior of the Left, the thinking of the Left, the equality of the Left, the actions of the Left, and especially the "heart" of the Left; nor with respect to the poor, aliens, the other, the widow, the one far away, the resident of the country, or those coming to it to find something to eat. There are a few nonprofit organizations. There are youngsters bustling with activity who are perplexed. There are thoughts. There are social arts. And there are semi-official bodies that are supported by foreign money. There is no camp. Although there is often a broad common denominator, there is no camp. If I have correctly noted in my diary, there has been no Left in Israel since the late Yitzhaq Rabin came to power in 1992. Simply none. We saw the Left betray itself three times during the reign of Rabin, once after the other, within 24 months: first, with the ouster of Minister Shulamit Aloni from the Education Ministry; second, with the murder of the leader, and the piercing fact that clung to the murder -- that the Left did not protect its leader; and third, with the Left's loss to the Right in the 1996 elections, and Binyamin Netanyahu's victory over Shim'on Peres right after the murder of the leader. Why isn't there a Left? Because there isn't. What happened to it on the way? What

happened to our young people, our school, and how did it skip from one position to another? This isn't the time or place for a careful examination of the circumstances and conclusions. Hasfari and Yaniv understood this. And for that reason, they want to move forward, and escape from the avalanche while on the move.

To this end, Hasfari and Yaniv present the option that precedes all others, the only one that we know works: back to square one, going backward many years to the basic concept, and only from there marching forward again. This is the path used by navigators and those seeking their way, who have got lost in the wilderness or forest, by the light of the sun or the moon: tracking back over their footsteps to the last place where things were known; taking a step backward, or a few steps, or going a good part of the way, or taking a voyage to the reference point that is clear to all of us, and from there, from this crossroads continuing onward.

The proposed specification is quite full. It is relatively comprehensive, interesting, generates a commendable debate, clashes with fixed ways of thinking, mocks the "Small" as necessary, adds nationalism without fear, in my opinion needs several omissions, and rests primarily on two cornerstones: pulling out of the occupied territories immediately, and the case of the person who evades doing service for the nation. My emphases are different. First and before anything else, "you shall have one law," all of you, secular and religious, Jewish and Arab, rich and poor, old-timer and new immigrant, all constituents, if we want to become a nation one day. This is the leading commandment. This is the first commandment that was imposed on Moses our teacher and the masses of slaves who grabbed the edge of his shirt, immediately after completing the crossing of the Red Sea. "You shall have one law," and from this all the rest is derived: equality, service, obligations and rights, occupation, gaps, religion, etc. But these are only emphases, changes, and additions, and it is still too early to detail them.

The call by Yaniv and Hasfari for the reawakening of the Left, for it to rise up, to clarify its new position, is defined as a draft, a proposal for open discussion. If a discussion is held, a camp will also be set up. Will it be set up one day? Will these dry bones really live? The prophet said yes.

**(Rino Tzror, 2009)**

## **79. Last**

". . . For I am a little scared. I'm afraid to encounter them on the roads and bump into them as they drive their lean flocks, and on the approach of my car, they raise their eyes towards us and out of them comes a burning hatred. . . I am scared to look in their eyes, since I am ashamed. They, this human dust, are the only people in the world whom I cannot look straight in the eye. I'm not ashamed to fight them in battle. I am not ashamed to be an enemy to them, or defend myself before them; I'm not ashamed to be a rival, persecuted, or a scrounger, or anything. . . but a **thief** -- I don't want to be a thief in the night.

"I am not afraid for my skin, we have power. Our car will drive past them proudly -- they will move aside, submissively. Everything will go as it should. The little there is. The operation will succeed, and everything will be recorded in the books of assets as a law in our name. . .

"But -- this is not the end of the act, it is the beginning. The great conflict with them does not end there; it has just started. And the agitation is only just beginning. And I greatly fear for you, my daughter, because I'm afraid that if you grow up, it is you who will pay for all these things. I do not know when, I do not know how. It may only be in money. Perhaps, God forbid, it will be in blood, in you going forth to battle, in your son going forth -- it may be sooner, it may be later. It is hard to guess. This east is dormant and is slowly awakening, and surprisingly. But at some time, in one form or another, it must take revenge. There are reparations in the world; there are nations that are forced to come one day, burdened with sin and stained with blood, to admit and to pay. . . there are ministers, who are forced to sign formal contracts: we are guilty, have sinned, and this

is our penance. . . we, in any event, believe in that; we are the people who gave birth to the idea under these skies that the fate of the country is but a mirror of its righteousness, because it is according to the justice and law within it that it either thrives or is destroyed. . .

"And we know that this is the test: the attitude to the weak in its weakness. We ourselves have seen this, over thousands of years, as the mark of the maturity or rottenness of a state: if it uses the force of its rule to steal the prized possession of **the stranger, the foreigner**.

"If we are sued on the seat of history over our attitude to the neighboring Arab countries, we will have an answer. And if it is over our attitude to infiltrators and security measures, including those that are excessive, and the military government and restrictions on movement, we shall have an answer ready. We will be able to stand in front of everyone, our heads upright.

"But if we ask: Why, in this great country, with all its deserts and the few Jewish parts in it, did you need to fail in all the oaths that you took upon yourselves and before the committees of nations; why did you have to betray all the prophecies of your prophets and all the laws of your learned men and the teachings of the later generation of those who foresaw the nation's revival in its return to the land -- why did you need to violate the respect for every law and justice in order to snatch a few thousand dunams from a bunch of poor Arab villages?. . .

"When we ask **that**, we shall not be able to lift our heads.

"Come, my daughter, to one of the farms on this stolen land. Come to the house of culture named after one of our first pioneers, who came to this nation bearing the flag of fellowship of nations. In the evening, they will lecture there on a subject that is more popular than the one chosen today by your father. They will talk there about a play by a daring writer, who has raised his voice in his country against black oppression by whites, though he himself is of white race. And they will talk in high tones against racial superiority and against the theft of natives' land in far-off Africa. . .

"And then stop listening to all that lofty talk, and direct your ears to the land of your beloved country, about which all these speeches are being made.

"Listen -- and you heard: Our beloved country is also crying.

"And you grew up -- and corrected the injustice -- and silenced its cry."

**(Dr Azri'el Carlebach, 1953, from "Cry Our Beloved Land." Emphasis in original)**