

The public must protect its gatekeepers

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Power struggles between politicians and the professional ranks, along with fruitful cooperation, are not foreign to any governmental system. The ideological and personal agenda, and the political plans of the elected representatives, often encounter the constitutional, budgetary, political, security and social constraints imposed by the gatekeepers of Israeli democracy: the heads of the civil service, the judiciary, the heads of the security establishment and the media.

In recent years, these struggles between the two spheres have been taking place over the future of the West Bank and the conflict with the Palestinians, and over the Israeli society and government, in three domains: the political-security domain, the legal and the social. The gatekeepers are now threatened, in contrast to the past, not because of professional disagreements, but because they are the last obstacle to the collapse of Israeli democracy and the loss of a Jewish majority in the State of Israel as we know it.

In a war that was enforced by ministers and MKs from the coalition, the Israeli public is absent in most cases, and has seem to have forgotten Plato's ancient warning: "The price people pay for their indifference in public affairs is to be governed by bad people."

It is unnecessary to overstate the prime minister's war on the gatekeepers, as it is based largely on his agenda of political survival, which is threatened by corruption, and which the police saw fit to recommend for prosecution, causing Netanyahu to launch an unprecedented attack on the police commissioner. The prime minister's damage to Israeli democracy is that he himself is a partner and a coalition sponsor to the most dangerous threats on Israeli democracy; Those who try to defeat the gatekeepers by replacing them with "their own people", and if they do not succeed, then by a system of denial, bribery, incitement and defamation that is well orchestrated and uninhibited.

In the years 2011-2016, six chiefs of staff, six Shin Bet chiefs and five former heads of the Mossad declared in various interviews that separation into two states was a critical interest to the future and security of the State of Israel, and warned against Netanyahu's

policy. The response came from the chairman of the coalition at the time, David Bitan, in the "Shabatarbut" panel on June 25, 2016, who "explained" the reason, while sparing no personal defamation: "Over the years, Shin Bet chiefs and Mossad leaders have become leftists. Former head of the Mossad, Meir Dagan was an extreme right wing, and after he served in the Mossad, he came out the opposite way. Dagan overstepped his authority". He continued to "explain" the change in the views of defense ministers as well: "Who do you want me to believe, Ya'alon?" Two months ago, he said that the Prime Minister is good and excellent, and today he is changing his mind. Barak was a failed Prime Minister, he was a political Chief of Staff, he lives in New York, comes here and runs his mouth. Gabi Ashkenazi wanted to be prime minister back when he was Chief of Staff".

The insistence of Netanyahu, Lieberman and Bennett to present Mahmoud Abbas as fulfilling their claim that "there is no partner" and that he is a "terrorist" during the political mission of US Secretary of State John Kerry in 2014 was categorically denied by the Shin Bet chief, Yoram Cohen, who told the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee that the chairman of the Palestinian Authority "does not encourage violence" and "does not want terror" and "does not lead to terror, nor does he do it under the table." Recently, in November 2017, at a closed conference in Doha, Kerry completed the picture of truth when he stated: "The Palestinians did a great job and remained committed to nonviolence. In fact when the Intifada started, they did not use violence in the West Bank. The public ignored it. He does not discuss it. Why? Because most members of the current cabinet of the Israeli government publicly declared that they would never be in favor of a Palestinian state".

In the summer of 2017, the Shin Bet recommended removing the metal detectors placed on the Temple Mount following the murder of the two police officers in order to calm the Arab and Muslim street to avoid changes in the status quo on the Temple Mount. Bennett saw this as a "diplomatic-security weakness." He recommended "removing from the table plans of easements and carrots for the Palestinians and instead present operational plans for thwarting terror, because "they smell weakness - they raise their heads". Bitan summarized by calling the Shin Bet "cowards" and "in all their recommendations they just want to return home safely". This month, Defense Minister Lieberman chose to "correct" the chief of staff, who relied on detailed reports from the

Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories and others, and warned that the Gaza Strip was on the verge of collapse. "There is no humanitarian crisis," Lieberman said. "We are witnessing the flow of a lot of information, especially disinformation to all the media outlets regarding the Gaza Strip".

The struggle against IDF commanders was not only fought in the political-security domain, but also in the domain of values. When Netanyahu spoke about Elaor Azaria, he said: "We are now investigating what happened there and maybe we will discover new things. It's not hermetic, Chief of Staff Eizenkot did not remain in debt. In the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee he said: "The recent statements made on operational issues under investigation in the IDF's command and legal system are not desirable", and continued: "Many statements were made without the knowledge of the facts, in order to promote agendas that have nothing to do with the IDF. We want the IDF to operate according to orders, fire procedures, the spirit of the IDF and IDF values. If someone wants the ethos of a gang, let him say".

The deputy chief of staff, Yair Golan, chose to give up the clichés and present a true mirror to Israeli society and said at the Holocaust Remembrance Day ceremony that he "now identifies processes that took place in Germany 80 years ago". Netanyahu and his colleagues did not waver to portray Ahmadinejad and Arafat as Hitler, compare the Oslo accords to the Munich agreement, the Bush speech to the Czechoslovakia speech and Obama's speech to the Chamberlain speech, but in Golan's words, Netanyahu saw "an injustice to Israeli society and the trivialization of the Holocaust". Netanyahu, the king of falsifying reality, ruled that "Golan statements are fundamentally baseless". That in turn enabled his veteran shofar, Culture Minister Miri Regev, to call for the removal of the general from his position.

MK Bezalel Smotrich called the Chief of Staff's words on the joint service of men and women in the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee "slogans". In response to the IDF Spokesperson's Office, he wrote that the latter was conducting a campaign against elected officials: "an orderly announcement of the media, a timed embargo, a provocative headline and mainly lies. What great democracy". The Supreme Court is the preferred target for attack by members of the Jewish Home Party and their likeminded members in the Likud, supported by members of the national-religious

divisions at the center committee of the party. These are the products of "Gush Emunim" through all its year, for which Yitzhak Rabin has written in 1979, the warning that resonates even more today: "In Gush Emunim, I saw a very serious phenomenon – a cancer in the body of Israeli democracy - against their basic concept, which is contrary to Israel's democratic basis, was a necessity to wage an ideological struggle that exposes the true meaning of the bloc's positions and methods of action".

These individuals repeatedly charge the Supreme Court with a wide verity of accusations that are liable to prepare public opinion for the support of laws that will undermine its status and powers, and to motivate individuals to engage in violent action against judges. In 2014, after the Supreme Court rejected one of the most stringent versions of the Anti-Infiltration Law, Zeev Elkin claimed that "the Supreme Court preferred the benefit of illegal infiltrators over the safety of hundreds of thousands of law-abiding citizens in Israel", and Yariv Levin determined that the judges gave "a kosher approval for terror". "The Supreme Court has trampled the legislative branch", added Ayelet Shaked and Moti Yogeve summarized: "The intervention of the Supreme Court is a serious violation of the principle of the separation of powers and the democracy in Israel".

"The place of the trial is where evil resides", tweeted Yinon Magal (while still an MK) following the Supreme Court's decision to evacuate the Drainhof project in Beit El while his fellow party member, Yogeve tweeted: "The time has come to put the judicial authority in its place and show it who is the sovereign"." On another occasion, Yogeve ruled in a post on Facebook that the security of Judge Uzi Fogelman was increased due to his own deeds as the judge has "put himself on the enemy's side" and Regev had already prepared the indictment: "If the Supreme Court does not allow us to strengthen our deterrence and severely punish the murderers, it will bear the responsibility for the continued wave of terror (after delaying the demolition of terrorist's home). Last, the Jewish Home party member Smotrich, after the decision to demolish a synagogue in Givat Ze'ev, stated that "it is unfortunate that the court has given a shot of encouragement to the Arab enemy and to the terror machine it is using against us".

These public officials "know" exactly why this happens: the Supreme Court is anti-Jewish, anti-Zionist, supports terrorism and undermines the security of the state - simply because it is "leftist". Just as the heads of the Security establishment were "accused" by Bitan. Levin said that in the Supreme Court of Justice, "there is a strong foothold of the radical left - not just the left - that behaves in court as if it has a state and not the other way around." Smotrich added that "the Supreme Court is being consciously and willingly used as a punching tool by extreme left-wing organizations".

Therefore, "the time has come to restore the Supreme Court to its original place and function", suggests/threatens Smotrich. Bennett proposes a version aggressively implemented by Justice Minister Ayelet Shaked: "We will act to curb this activism". Levin also proposes "taking action in order to change the method of judges' selection to ensure that the composition of the Supreme Court is balanced and pluralistic". And he detailed "It is time to fundamentally change the method of selecting judges so that people who sit on the seat of judgment will be committed to the State of Israel and to the Zionist idea ".

In overcoming the media, Netanyahu conducts the orchestra. "Israel Hayom" newspaper, his alleged moves with Noni Mozes of Yedioth Ahronoth, his wife's comment on the "Walla" website, the plot to dismantle the Broadcasting Authority, the announcement of his activities to close Channel 10, and more, led to the creation of the atmosphere suited to the phenomenon of appeasement by the media personal, to aligned themselves with the clear messaging, as Regev well concluded: "What is the corporation worth if we do not control it?"

The Israeli public must understand that it is the gatekeeper as well as the guardian of the other gatekeepers of Israeli democracy, of the future and security of the State of Israel, its identity and its character. The mobilization of the public in the social protest of 2011 and its struggle against the phenomenon of corruption that pervades every corner of the spheres of our lives is important but not sufficient in order to protect the State of Israel from the fulfillment of the warning of Lord Nathaniel Rotschild, who wrote to Herzl in August 1902: "Dear Mr. Herzl ... I shell tell you with absolute sincerity: I will view as appalling the establishment of a Jewish colony in the full sense of the word. Such a colony would be a ghetto, with all the prejudices of a ghetto. A

small Jewish state, petty, observant and non-liberal that would reject the Gentile and the Christian".