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# opinion דעות



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## Elections 2006



'So I am left with the Likud' Photo: Moshe Milner, GPO



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## Only one real choice

### An 18-year-old Israeli talks about going to the polls for the first time

Netanel Weinstein

Both at school in Jerusalem, as well as at home in the West Bank town of Efrat, the major topic of conversation over the past year has been (and continues to be) the Gaza disengagement. These discussions, as well as the articles I've read in many of the Shabbat magazines that appear in synagogue each week, suggest to me that most of the national religious Zionist community believes that withdrawal from any part of Israel is forbidden by Jewish law.

Hence, their complete objection to any withdrawal is not based on their understanding of reality and political judgment; rather, it is based upon their understanding of religion. Withdrawal, any withdrawal, is prohibited. Period.

The danger in this position is that even if territorial withdrawal from parts of Israel would truly bring everlasting peace in the Middle East, they would still be feverishly opposed – that to me is a fanatic approach to Israeli politics. This is why I will not vote for the National Union/National Religious Party.

I would also stress that, although many people would like to view the issue as black-and-white, it isn't. Many halachic (Jewish law) authorities, including the 20th century American Rabbi Joseph Ber Soloveitchik, argue that questions of withdrawal should be decided by military and political leaders – not by rabbis.

## Looking left

But if the religious right is not for me, what about the religious left? Although it sometimes seems that all religious people in Israel vote for right-wing parties, it isn't true. One group, Meimad, is a religious left-wing party which is now faction of the Labor Party.

But Meimad, along with the rest of the Israeli left, prefers self-delusion to reality. Yes, in some future utopia, land-for-peace would be a legitimate solution.

However, this theoretical position does not take into account the actual reality in which we live. Both the speeches of all Palestinian leaders over the

last decade and the actions of all Palestinian groups suggest they view the "peace process" as a means to further the 1974 ["stages plan"](#) to eliminate Israel. The left has never offered any answers for this reality.

### **Murderous majority**

In addition, the Arab minority amongst us is not simply an innocent, oppressed people. Polls consistently show that a majority (though certainly not all) support and worship murder and barbarism.

Mothers of suicide murderers – obscenely called "shahids", or holy martyrs - walk the streets proudly, knowing their sons are revered by the average man on the street.

Furthermore, I do not believe that the horrifying footage of the lynch of Israeli soldiers in Ramallah was atypical of Arab society. It occurred not in a back alley, but in front of a large, bloodthirsty crowd anxious to take part in the murder.

All this is overlooked by Meimad and the Israeli left. They admit such atrocities are "terrible," but continue to say the Palestinians "deserve" a state.

Consequently, the left is just as blind to reality as the religious right. That is why I will not vote for a left-wing (religious or not) party.

### **Real Jabotinsky**

And so I am left with the secular right. There are three major secular rightwing parties in Israel: Israel Our Home, Kadima and Likud – each claiming to represent the "real" right.

All claim to be the "true" spiritual heirs to Revisionist Zionist leader [Ze'ev Jabotinsky](#) , and given the fact that Jabotinsky's political thesis was very complex, this is quite understandable.

Jabotinsky is perhaps best known for his call to establish a Jewish state on both sides of the Jordan River, but he also called for Jewish withdrawal from Tel Chai.

Most importantly, Jabotinsky's thesis was determined by rational study of the complex political reality.

Avigdor Lieberman, the leader of Israel Our Home, believes his suggestion for "population exchange," in which Israel would withdraw from almost all of Judea and Samaria as well as Arab areas of the Galilee, is in keeping with Jabotinsky's vision of Israel. It is an interesting idea but it seems to me that it is completely unrealistic and would be impossible to actually implement.

### **Problems with Kadima**

Kadima promotes the idea of unilateral withdrawal from most of Judea and Samaria, build a wall, thus establishing two countries for two nations, with the West Bank security fence being the border. In theory, it sounds great.

The Israeli public is tired of fighting and dying. They want a solution – an end to the conflict – now, and Kadima appears to offer them just that.

The main problem with Kadima, however, is that the party's members are a completely heterogeneous group. Avi Dichter says the IDF will remain in Judea and Samaria even after the withdrawal, while Haim Ramon and Dalia litzik say the opposite.

And even without that contradiction, Dichter's got a problem: if the IDF were to remain in Judea and Samaria after a withdrawal, it really would become a foreign, "occupying" army. The absurdity of it all is that we will enable a Palestinian state to rise while simultaneously invading it.

A party should have one, clear political agenda, not many contrasting ones. If it does not, the voter can not know what he is voting for.

### **Left with Likud**

And so I am left with the Likud. The Likud, and especially chairman Benjamin Netanyahu, is the only party which presents a complete, rational political thesis.

Anyone who doubts this should have a quick look at Netanyahu's 1992 book "A Place Amongst the Nations."

There, Netanyahu not only displays a deep knowledge of politics, but unlike his left-wing colleagues, he is unwilling to overlook speeches by Arab politicians in Arabic.

While Israel was under the euphoric spell of the Oslo process and tried hard to believe that Yasser Arafat had in fact embraced peace, Netanyahu warned that it was all a lie.

And he points out that Arab hatred of Jews began long before 1967, and long before 1948. In 1929, Hebron Arabs conducted a pogrom against their Jewish neighbors, killing dozens. One preferred method of killing Jews in that pogrom was to hang them up by their feet and slowly burning them head-first.

### **Prophetic Bibi**

Many on the left object to Bibi's "prophecies of doom," but the unfortunate reality is that his predictions have consistently been on target. In 1993 he warned that Islamic terror would reach the capitals of Europe, America and New York if the west continued its policy of appeasing terror, and a decade

later he was proven right – in New York, Washington, Madrid and London.

Netanyahu rightly claims that Israel, as the region's only representative of peace, justice and morality, is in the midst of a war that it was forced into against evil. He understands the enemy and why it is currently dangerous and immoral to give the Palestinians a state, or strategically important land.

The way to make peace with such an enemy is not by relinquishing land that would consequently endanger the existence of Israel. Netanyahu's solution harks back to Jabotinsky's "iron wall" – we must maintain a powerful army with strong, defensible borders. We should not give the Arabs anything until they become a moral people, worthy of independence.

Until then, we should give them absolutely nothing. This position should not be a quiet sheepish position. I believe the Likud is the only party running that puts forth such a platform. That is why I, as a religious Zionist, will vote for Likud.

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