

## **The Evolving Priorities of the Israeli Left: From Social Justice to Security and Back<sup>1</sup>**

Ilia Zatskovetsky,<sup>2</sup> Moshe (Konstantin) Yanovskiy,<sup>3</sup> Sergey Zhavoronkov<sup>4</sup>

English by Elen Rochlin

*The present article traces the dynamics of the priorities chosen by leading leftist parties in Israel vis-à-vis the functions of the state. During the period of the British Mandate they, like all leftist parties, maintained anti-militaristic views. Leaders of the Left more than once accused their rightist opponents of militarism and even fascism. Beginning in 1948, Israel's Labor Party members become vividly pronounced "pro-defenders." But during 1977-1982, their views begin to drift toward the original position typical of all leftists: the precedence of social spending and goals rather than defending the country and maintaining the security of its citizens.*

*A study of the motives for change in the leftist stance supports the hypothesis that the period of leftist "patriotic-defensive" priorities depended on perceiving the state as a party-"corporate" asset of the Left; the state needed to be defended in all ways, including defense from enemies from the without. The loss of leftist leadership in the elections was the undoing of this perception of the state, returning the Israeli Left to the classic leftist stance of "Guns or Butter" in favor of social spending. As historical data bear out, mixed public goods and unlimited opportunity for discretionary rule are a priori more attractive for the Left and the majority of bureaucrats than is historically limited spending on the production of "pure public goods."*

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<sup>2</sup> Samuel Neaman Institute for Advanced Studies in Science and Technology, Technion, Haifa, Israel; see [ilia@sni.technion.ac.il](mailto:ilia@sni.technion.ac.il)

<sup>3</sup> Gaidar Institute for Economic Policy, Moscow; see [yanovskiy.moshe@gmail.com](mailto:yanovskiy.moshe@gmail.com)

<sup>4</sup> Gaidar Institute for Economic Policy, Moscow; see [javoronkov@iet.ru](mailto:javoronkov@iet.ru)

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## Introduction

The notion fundamental to leftist ideology of any kind is the idea of care provided to cover all facets of life. This can be translated into the medium of economics as the idea calling for priority funding and primary attention devoted to providing mixed public goods (social needs: education, health care, social care) instead of pure public goods (defense, security, justice).

The special features of implementing this idea in Israel beginning in 1948 (including Israel's wars, the struggle against terrorism, and so on), comprise the principal focus of the analysis in the present article.

The triumph of the notion of care provided "from cradle to grave" has in the last few decades become manifest in the rapid pushing out of defense and security spending from their priority position in the State of Israel and the dominance of "social spending." In the last few

years, a natural sequel to this shift in priorities (Yanovskiy, Shrstakov, Zhavoronkov 2014<sup>5</sup>) has been the trend toward pushing out social spending in favor of settling accounts related to state debt.

### **Box 1. Toward a Definition of a Leftist Politician**

Distinguishing leftist from rightist politicians cannot be reduced to distinguishing the hawks from the pigeons as enemies. In Israel as in other democratic countries, a much more precise distinction rests with the relationship which parties and politicians have to the volume sought of responsibility and authorization, and, accordingly, to the desired structure of the public goods to be provided.

Leftist politician argues for expanding the functions of the state *beyond supplying the pure public goods*. Such a politician considers these new functions (supplying mixed public goods, controlling the behavior of citizens and markets) as the main ones for a modern state. In perspective of the State's priority aims formula coined by W. von Humboldt (1792)<sup>6</sup>, Leftist politician desires to promote happiness eagerly.

Clearly enough, a considerable part – if not the majority – of the politicians identifying as “rightist” (“conservatives”) as per the classification scheme we are proposing are defined as leftists. Fortunately, all the politicians identifying as “leftists” are, as per the criteria proposed, doubtless just that.

A peculiar feature of Israel's political history consists in the incontestable political hegemony of leftist parties beginning from the moment of independence in 1948 and up until 1977. Apart from the majority in parliament (the Knesset), the Left controlled all levels and links in the chain of the executive authority (the state bureaucracy), the court system, the police, the mass media, and education. A monopoly of this kind, including a de facto state capture, created an “encompassing interest” with a perception of the state and the country as a species of party

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<sup>5</sup> Unlike defense spending, social spending cannot be held in check – that is, chronic budget deficit cannot be avoided – even in times of peace.

<sup>6</sup> A State, then, has one of two ends in view; it designs either to promote happiness, or simply to prevent evil

(primarily of the Labor Party) corporate asset. Such an asset must be defended not only from enemies from the within (read, rightist opposition), but also from those from the without.<sup>7</sup>

Fittingly enough, a key feature of the political system in Israel, especially during 1948-77 and 1992-until the present time, consists in limited political and media competition. Prior to 1977, this came to the fore in leftist political forces' domination of all types of authority mechanisms; since 1977, the same has been true only of the non-elected agencies.

Ever since the British Mandate period in Palestine, leftist Zionist Labor leaders have "perceived militaristic militant nationalism of the revisionists as fascist."<sup>8</sup> (Aronoff 1989, p. 20)

In 1948-49, the Labor Party and its allies in the leftist camp achieved a near-monopoly of power (the government, the coalition of an enormous majority in the Knesset, the state bureaucracy, the courts, and so on). This is the point at which their position becomes quite comparable in its "militarism" with the position of the revisionists of the Mandate period.

Prior to the 1977 elections, the incentives typical of leftist parties throughout the world to spend on state-supplied butter instead of guns had been practically suppressed in Israel. "You can't go waving two banners at once, both of defense and of social reform," Defense Minister Moshe Dayan was fond of saying in 1971.

On July 6, 1976, in a speech made at the funeral of Yonatan Netanyahu, an outstanding fighter, military commander, and hero of Operation Entebbe, then Defense Minister Shimon Peres said, "This operation necessitated the taking of an enormous risk, but a risk that seemed to be more justifiable than the other one that was involved — the risk of surrender to terrorists and blackmailers, the risk that is inherent in submission and capitulation."

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<sup>7</sup>Yitzhak Rabin, Labor Prime Minister 1974-77, wrote in his memoirs about his rival Shimon Peres:

... Ever since he had lost to me in the [primaries] race for the premiership on April 22, 1974, it was clear to me that Shimon Peres' mind was made up: he and the office of Prime Minister of Israel deserve each other and should not be separated. This indefatigable intriguer relied on one illusion: no barrier but Yitzhak Rabin stands between him and the office of Prime Minister, as the reign of the Ma'arach [Labor Party's name in the lists – M.Y.], once secured, could be taken for granted. (Rabin, Goldstein, 1979) p. 534

<sup>8</sup> In economic terms, they "perceived," or, more precisely, interpreted as "fascist" the idea that providing pure public goods (defense and security for the people) is a political leader's highest priority and responsibility.

The passage cited reflects Mr. Peres' profound understanding of the nature of terrorism. This shows that Peres' subsequent political and ideological evolution cannot be adequately explained by idealist motives or faith in achieving peace by means of concessions and weakness.

Back in July 1982, Peres wrote in support of putting an end to the existence of the PLO:

"Our argument with the PLO is not about the past, but rather about the future. I do not foresee any substantive Israeli mandate being given to anyone in its name, to [accept the PLO's demands of returning to] pre-1967 borders, to divide Jerusalem and to establish a Palestinian state that will attempt to overthrow Israel at one moment, and to take over Jordan the next." (Lord, 1998).

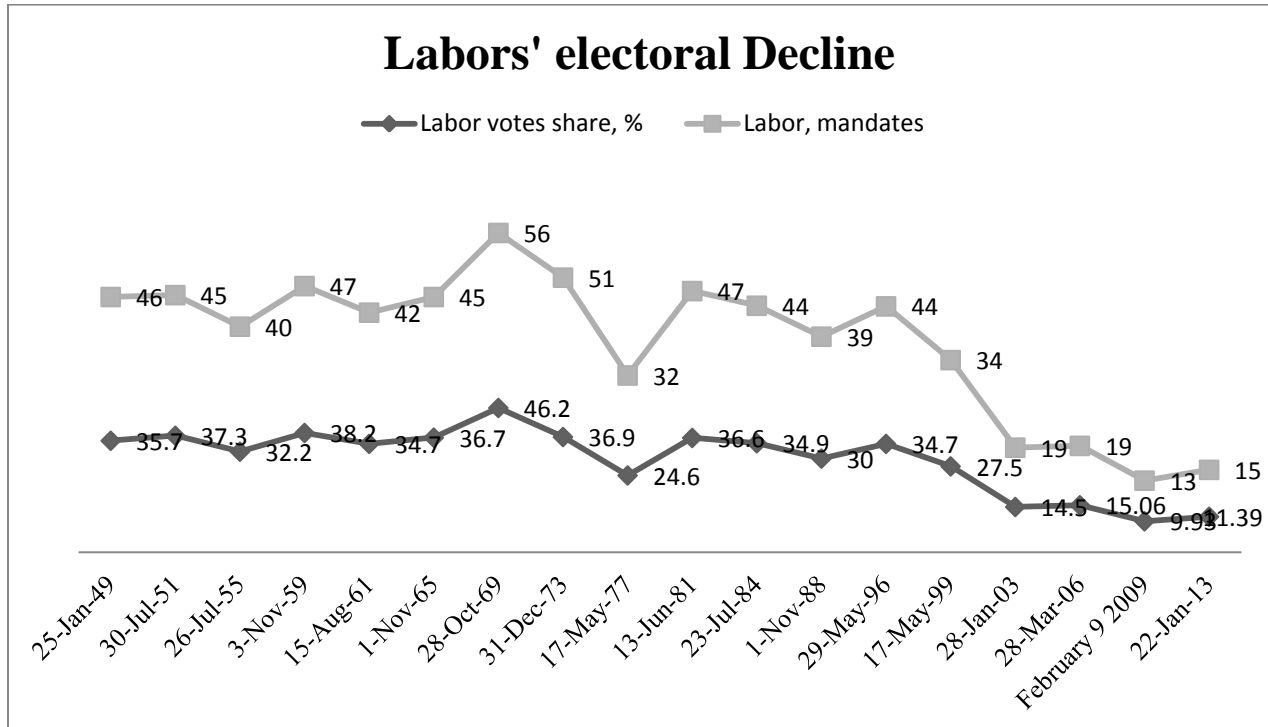
Actually, in 1982 Peres endorsed Ariel Sharon's view that PLO forces must be swept out of Beirut. He lauded the IDF's successes: "The IDF accomplished its immediate mission: to release northern Israel from the threat of PLO terror." (ibid.) The leader of the mainstream Left joined the campaign against the First War in Lebanon, taking part in a demonstration of the extreme leftist organization "Peace Now" in Tel Aviv in September 1982 (ibid.). The demonstration not only marked the Labor Party's U-turn against its initial position in support of the operation in Lebanon. It also marked the beginning of the process of gradual return by the Israeli Left to the choice generally part of leftist traditions overall: "state-provided butter instead of guns."

The Labor Party back in 1982 still had considerable voter potential at its disposal. At the same time, Labor ideology was becoming less and less useable in mobilizing a motivated group of activists. A renovated ideology must be able to ground the choice made by an activist (voter) as an ethical one which demonstrates the voter's moral advantages (expressive voting, Hillman, ).

Among rightists, settlers were the ones with potential of this kind. As a demonstration held in September 1982 showed (Lord 1998), among the Left, potential of this kind was displayed by representatives of the extreme Left (Peace Now), who made the point that it was not they who had joined Labor, but Labor that had been compelled to join them (ibid.).

Thus the demand for seizing "values" capable of giving voters a sense of moral advantage provided yet another stimulus for Labor's shift to extremist stances. The new stances erased the former clear boundary between members of the Labor Party and extreme leftist groups. At the same time, however,

judging by voting history, they also partly restored the potential for expressive voting for nearly 20 years.<sup>9</sup>



Ill. 1. Israel Labor party's electoral performance's history. Source: Knesset of Israel official website <http://main.knesset.gov.il/mk/elections/Pages/default.aspx>

At the same time, the encompassing interest of the Labor Party and its control of state machinery have largely been preserved thanks to mechanisms and institutions not subject to voter control.

## Box 2. Minority Rule in Israel

Beginning in 1977, the Labor Party (Mapai – Ma'arach – Avodah) lost its hold over the Knesset and, thus, the government. The Israel Defense Forces, or IDF, continues to this day to be controlled largely by the leftist elite. Most generals more or less clearly express leftist or even

<sup>9</sup> The party's long-term ability to attract voters – including by means of its moral leadership – has seemed doubtful ever since A. Barak's fiasco in the direct elections for Prime Minister in 2001 and the failure of the "Avodah" (Labor) list headed by A. Mitzna in the Knesset elections of 2003.

extreme leftist biases.<sup>10</sup> New rapid growth trends in the numbers of rightist and observant officers have become a living nightmare for leftist intellectuals.<sup>11</sup>

For understandable reasons, beginning in 1977, the strategic choice made by leftist leaders has been to transfer increasing numbers of capacities from elected offices of the government to non-elected institutions. Beginning approximately in the mid-1990s, acting in a discretionary manner (in the absence of a written Constitution), the Supreme Court regularly and arbitrarily nullifies legislation passed by the Knesset,<sup>12</sup> thus partly usurping the authority of the legislature. Ministers of the government and Knesset deputies are intimidated by the genuine threat of the courts' making arbitrary use of no less arbitrarily designed punishments, without so much as a semblance of proof or due process of law (note the cases of Haim Ramon or Moshe Katzav: "sexual harassment," pseudo-"rape," and so on<sup>13</sup>). It is not leftist officers who have been impressed by cases of imprisonment based on charges of excessive use of force and the like.

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<sup>10</sup> See, for example, Gen. Nitzan Alon in defense of the PLO from financial sanctions in the USA: <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/12/world/middleeast/israels-west-bank-general-warns-against-radicals.html> See also Generals Ilan Paz, Uri Sagi, and Avi Kostlitz defending the HAMAS treasury (Arab Bank) from the suit brought against it by relatives of HAMAS victims, at: (<http://freecourtdockets.com/DocketSummaries/VVP-Linde-v-Arab-Bank-PLC-1-04-cv-02799-New-York-Eastern-Federal-District-Court-Docket-Case-Summary-54631.htm>): Israel Maariv (NRG site) journalist reaction: <http://www.nrg.co.il/online/1/ART2/135/241.html> (Hebrew)

<sup>11</sup> Consider Israel Shahak's vision: [http://members.tripod.com/alabasters\\_archive/shahak\\_messianism.html](http://members.tripod.com/alabasters_archive/shahak_messianism.html) (ultra-leftist); to compare with mainstream Van Creveld (2002), who wrote (p. 318):

... at least some religious officers became torn between the orders of their superiors and rabbinical teaching (for example, during the evacuation of Hebron)... as long as IDF retains ... an army short-time conscripts and reservists, any danger it will lead to a coup remains minimal... However it is not impossible to imagine a day when a mainly right-wing, orthodox, nationalist officers corps will command and all-volunteer rank and file military consisting as tends to be the case in so many developed countries, primarily of the down-and-out. Should that come handwriting clearly will be on the wall."

<sup>12</sup> For an example see: <http://elyon1.court.gov.il/files/99/310/010/E14/99010310.e14.pdf>: the Supreme Court (SC) decision overturning Knesset legalization of the conservative radio station "A7" (abbreviated Hebrew for "Channel 7"; English commentaries: <http://www.offshore-radio.de/israel/column.htm>). SC reasoning is based on the government's right to license discretionary radio broadcasting (which derives from a ruling dating back to the British Mandate) and the Israeli Freedom of Occupation Basic Law with its guarantees of fair competition (which means that discretionary unauthorized broadcasters may violate the prerogatives of a discretionary authorized broadcaster if permitted by the overturned law; the logic of the decision: any improvements in business regulations and any market entry barriers' removal should be prevented to avoid harming an incumbent firm's interests). The decision was left without translation into English, even though the overwhelming majority of SC decisions are routinely translated.

<sup>13</sup> Proofs were never even expected by the Court in the case based on a complaint filed 7-10 years after the supposed "crime events." See, for example: <http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/regions/middle-east/israel-and-palestine/111207/former-israeli-president-katsav-begins-rape-sentence>

Proceedings of this kind (cf. the case of the US Army SSgt. Wuterich<sup>14</sup> and the similar case of the IDF's First Lieutenant Adam Malul<sup>15</sup>) are indicative of a general trend. In Israel, the peak of court pressure on the military coincided with the Second War in Lebanon. The pressure had dropped noticeably by the time Operation Cast Lead began in Gaza in 2008 (a circumstance dictating the drastically lower number of IDF military casualties: **119**<sup>16</sup> as opposed to the 650-750 of the enemy killed in Lebanon in 2006; **10**<sup>17</sup> as opposed to the 311 terrorist casualties in Gaza in 2008-2009.<sup>18</sup> See the additional data in the section on the HRO vs. IDF).

The coalition inclusive, besides leftist politicians, of the state bureaucracy, the court system, and the "public" mass media, thus maintains thoroughly effective control of all levers for running the country, all while voter support for the coalition has become a thing of the past. Working against the coalition are current demographic trends (e.g., the low birth rate among the secular population). A certain role in the coalition's loss of popularity is also played by its openly anti-democratic methods of foisting its will upon the public.

So, we believe, it is quite reasonable, to count a major policy changes as a result of combined impact of leftists' administrative and political power.

The peculiar power structure described earlier ( see Yanovskiy, Zhavoronkov, Zatskovetsky, and Kudryavtseva 2013) has also determined the structure of the public goods provided, as well as their prioritizing and quality.

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<sup>14</sup> Cf. the stance of the people, who seem assured they need no army or defense: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2091333/Frank-Wuterich-trial-Stunning-denial-US-Marine-Haditha-massacre-court-martial.html> (at least, the people who seem to feel they need no protection by the US Army); the position of the SSgt's colleagues: [http://warchronicle.com/DefendOurMarinesExclusive/Trial\\_of\\_SSgt\\_Wuterich/SSgt\\_Wuterich's\\_Choice.htm](http://warchronicle.com/DefendOurMarinesExclusive/Trial_of_SSgt_Wuterich/SSgt_Wuterich's_Choice.htm) (provided Wuterich is innocent), and the Geneva Convention (IV) pertaining to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Times of War (Geneva, August 12, 1949; note especially Articles 5, 27, 28, and 29 on assigning responsibility for civilian life to the "party to the conflict in whose hands the protected persons (i.e., children in the present case) may be," and stressing that "**The presence of a protected person may not be used to render certain points or areas immune from military operations.**")

<sup>15</sup> Consider the two views of the case, respectively: left-wingers at: [http://www.btselem.org/english/beatings\\_and\\_abuse/20100318\\_jag\\_appeal\\_light\\_sentence\\_in\\_security\\_forces\\_violence\\_case.asp](http://www.btselem.org/english/beatings_and_abuse/20100318_jag_appeal_light_sentence_in_security_forces_violence_case.asp); and right-wingers at: <http://www.theyeshivaworld.com/article.php?p=50924>

<sup>16</sup> Biddle and Friedman 2008, p. 33.

<sup>17</sup> See the full list of names of fallen IDF soldiers at: <http://frgdr.com/blog/articles/fallen-cast-lead/>

<sup>18</sup> IDF spokesman on "THE OPERATION IN GAZA: FACTUAL AND LEGAL ASPECTS," p. 94

<http://dover.idf.il/NR/rdonlyres/14998311-6477-422B-B5EE-50C2F1B31D03/0/FINALDRAFTwithclearance.pdf>



The summer 2011 political campaign for “social justice” has made clear the continued radicalization of the Left in Israel. Demands for intensified redistribution – even if this entails further increasing the debt and cutting down on the defense effort – spell out the severing of ties between the Labor Party and what remains of the responsibility for defense and security of the citizens (see below for further detail).

## **Questionable Rationality of the Israeli Government**

The “mysterious” incentives for the choice and actions of the government of Israel:

- Beginning in 1992, the natural responsibility of the government for the security of the citizens has been replaced by the priority of advancing the “peace process.”
- The prohibition against negotiating with terrorist organizations was lifted in 1992 (retroactively).
- The IDF has lost its ability to fight for a decisive victory. This development is due to the very credible threat of punishment for military commanders if they are charged with “disproportional” use of force.
- A priori obviously disproportionate exchanges: mass freeing of terrorists (the 2011 case of Gilad Shalit,<sup>19</sup> or the 2013 “gestures” made to the Palestine Authority so as to entice FATH terrorist leaders to resume negotiations);
- A priori ineffective refusal to engage in active advance or attack measures, with preference given instead to high-cost defense projects (Defense instead of Offense: an inefficient strategy choice);
- The summer 2011 radical campaign for global redistribution which destroyed the moderate Netanyahu market reforms;
- The Iranian threat and the likelihood of discontinued US military assistance as a means of preventing efficient military and economic strategies (see Yanovski 2014).

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<sup>19</sup> [http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/18/opinion/saving-a-soldier-encouraging-terror.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/18/opinion/saving-a-soldier-encouraging-terror.html?_r=0)

### *Systems of Defense vs. Offense Strategy*

The threat of politicized persecution and punishment for military achievement ( ) makes opting for cost-efficient decisions dangerous for a military man. The emerging situation makes high-cost defense systems more attractive for the commanding elite and the military bureaucracy. These systems look attractive even when the legislative authority treats them with suspicion. Thus, military officials in the US regularly run into difficulties when called upon to provide justification for the latest programs (see GAO, 2006; GAO, 2008, GAO 2011), but still push defensive systems ahead. In Israel, the "Iron Dome" failed as an alternative to major offensive action (Rubin 2011<sup>20</sup>). The price of interceptors – up to \$100,000 (Sharp 2010) – is incomparably higher than that of the intercepted Qassam rockets (five missiles could cost an approximate \$4000<sup>21</sup> given selective interception). So it appears that this defense system fails to meet the Nitze criterion, namely: "... to produce a defensive interceptor at less cost than [it would cost] for the enemy to produce an additional offensive ballistic missile." (Spring, Bendikova 2011)

A new argument used by military bureaucrats in defense of what amounts to squandering resources is to consider "the value of what is being defended" (ibid.), thus evincing failure to demonstrate the universal "advantages" of defense as opposed to offensive deterrence.

### *HRO vs. IDF*

The well-known Israeli "human rights" organization (an NGO<sup>22</sup>) called "Yesh Din"<sup>23</sup> (the organization's name in Hebrew means "there is trial" or "there is law") has published a report

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<sup>20</sup> Uzi Rubin, a natural supporter of defensive missiles, makes a confession which is especially worthy of attention.

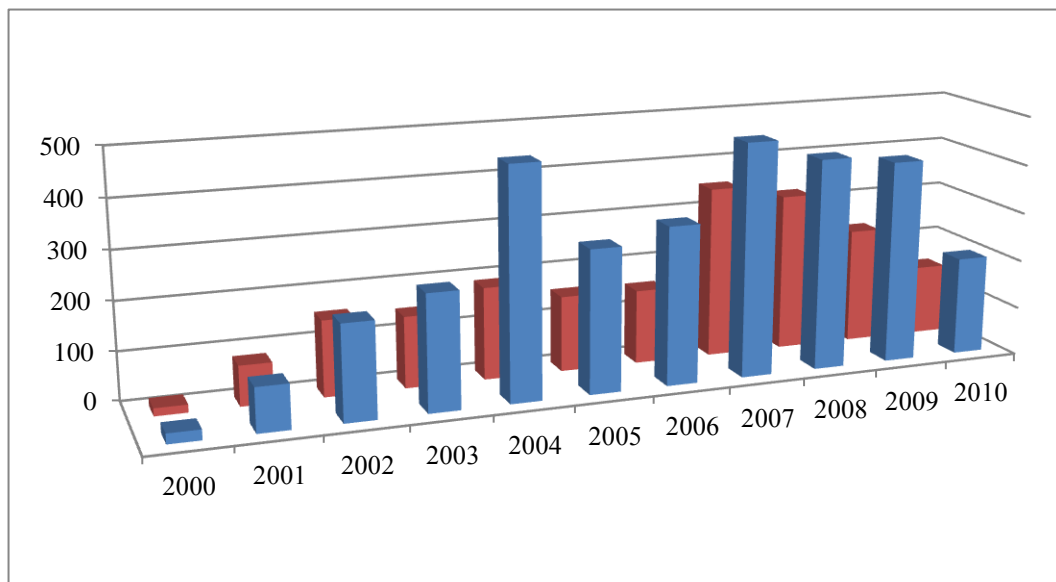
<sup>21</sup> "What are Qassam Rockets?" at: <http://www.jewishpolicycenter.org/prr/qassams.php>; see also Dr. Adam Reuter's analysis of the outcomes at: <http://www.globes.co.il/news/article.aspx?did=1000637352> (Hebrew). So Dr. Reuter decides that the "... cost of each Iron Dome rocket needs to be measured not against the cost of a Qassam, but according to the cost of every structure destroyed by a successful Qassam hit" <http://www.cidi.nl/CIDI-in-the-media/Iron-Dome-success-attracts-foreign-clients-.html?lang=en>

<sup>22</sup> The organization is not simply politicized. It is not simply involved in a "special relationship" with the state prosecutor and police of Israel. (Not one single organization of a different ideological hue can show as impressive a list of responses to its demands). It is financed by foreign governments which do not recognize Israeli sovereignty over Israel's own capital, as well as governments which accuse Israel (in violation of the mandate issued by the League of Nations; see the July 24, 1922, Palestine Mandate from the Council of the League of Nations, at: <http://www.mideastweb.org/mandate.htm>) of occupying Judea and Samaria. In other words, the total of the activity engaged in by this organization is based on a conflict of interests between objective monitoring of Rule of Law processes and political interests of both internal and foreign agents. It bears emphasizing that unlike the situation in many other countries, sponsoring such organizations poses no problem for domestic entrepreneurs in Israel. This

voicing outrage in connection with that out of the 3,150 incidents (recorded by leftist activists of complaints lodged by persons under terrorist control), only 112 cases concluded with the issuance of a guilty verdict.<sup>24</sup>

It is essential to emphasize that, compared to Wuterich, who got away with demotion to private and a lower salary, the overwhelming majority of officers and soldiers in the Israel Defense Forces are given sentences on the basis of insubstantial accusations and insignificant “violations” (this is quite besides the fact that the present authors are inclined to believe that Wuterich did not violate any laws or moral imperatives). Thus, Lieutenant Adam Malul was sentenced for bonking on the ear an Arab who had been obstructing military units’ movement.

The dynamics of the result-producing rate of the activity should be informative (see Ill. 3 and Ill. 4).

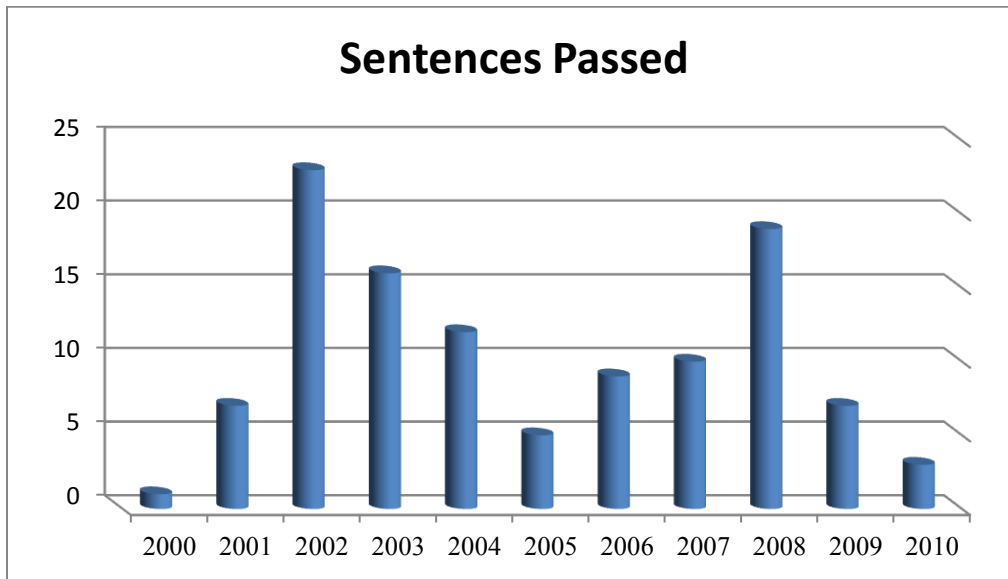


Ill. 3. Dynamics of complaints supervised by “Yesh Din” (blue bars) and the dynamics of criminal cases initiated by the organization (red bars). Source: The organization’s 2011 report, <http://www.yesh-din.org/infoitem.asp?infocaid=165>

means that this particular organization’s appeals for aid to the EU and European governments (see the list of project sponsors, as well as the NGO monitor data in the next footnote below) assume an entirely different set of connotations than they would in authoritarian countries.

<sup>23</sup> [http://www.ngo-monitor.org/article/\\_yesh\\_din\\_justice\\_for\\_all](http://www.ngo-monitor.org/article/_yesh_din_justice_for_all)

<sup>24</sup> See the 2008 report for the years 2000-2007 at: <http://www.yesh-din.org/infoitem.asp?infocaid=11> and the 2011 report (for 2000-2010) at: <http://www.yesh-din.org/infoitem.asp?infocaid=165>. See the 2011 Report, Table 3, c. 29 (English version).



Ill. 4. Dynamics of verdicts of guilty meted out to military servicemen, as based on complaints monitored by the organization “Yesh Din.” Source: the organization’s 2011 report, <http://www.yesh-din.org/infoitem.asp?infocatid=165>

Whatever the evaluation criteria used (initiation of criminal cases or verdicts of guilty issued by the courts), the organization’s achievements reached their peak prior to the launching of Operation Cast Lead in 2008. Unlike the Second Lebanon War, Operation Cast Lead was conducted with relatively little notice being taken of the principle of “proportionality in use of force.” Based on the outcomes of the operation, international pressure notwithstanding, politicized making short shrift of military men was much less widespread than could have been expected (see Box 2 above for casualties data).

At the same time, the negative impact cannot be ignored which the legal system and “public” (“non-governmental”) organizations of this type have on officer and soldier morale and the motivation for choosing victory in battle as a primary objective and criterion of success in military service. It follows that activity of this kind lowers the attractiveness of serving in military units as compared with doing office work for the military establishment.

**Box 3. Two instances** *Two cases should be cited to illustrate the dynamics of the leftist approach to penalizing military servicemen and the threat of lowering combat readiness in an intimidated army. **On December 23, 1954**, Jordanian Arabs killed Shoshana Har-Zion and her friend Oded Wagmeister (both aged 18). Their bodies were discovered hidden under some rocks six weeks later. The brother of the murdered young woman, the well-known special ops unit*

fighter Meir Har-Zion (Unit 101) together with three friends infiltrated the area east of the 1949 truce line without authorization. There they attacked the men of the clan to which, as was supposed, the murderers belonged. They killed four men, returning safely. They were arrested, but thanks to Ben Gurion's personal interference, they were not even tried in court. Ben Gurion invited Meir Har-Zion to join his party list during the 1965 elections as a candidate for the symbolic 101<sup>st</sup> slot.

**The Sinai War broke out on October 29, 1956.** Many of the residents of the village of Kfar Kassem (Qfar Kasim) did not manage to return home in time for the curfew, which had been made especially stringent just a short while previously. 48 violators were shot at a number of different checkpoints. The servicemen held responsible for the bloodshed were tried in court and sentenced (with prison terms ranging from 7 to 17 years). Within a year after beginning to serve their terms, all those sentenced were amnestied by President Yitzhak Ben-Zvi. The authorities had good reason to fear creating an undesirable impression on the army. First and foremost, measures of this kind (similar to the amnesty granted by President Nixon to Lieutenant William Calley) prevented the proliferation of fear among military officers and officers' refusal to take charge in complex situations.

### ***Disarmed Civilians***

State of Israel Basic Law: Human Liberty and Dignity, Article 4 (Protection of life, body and dignity) reads: "All persons are entitled to protection of their life, body and dignity." This requirement is openly disregarded in law enforcement proceedings.

The informal law elite of the State of Israel, supported by the executive authority (primarily by Yitzhak Aharonovitch, Police Minister since 2009), are deeply concerned about citizens' ability to defend themselves successfully. Judges, prosecuting attorneys, and chiefs of police all try to undermine this ability by providing strong negative incentives. These consist primarily of vicious penalties whose lawfulness remains extremely doubtful.<sup>25</sup> Besides, the police are gradually augmenting the administrative burden upon private persons desiring to acquire arms.

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<sup>25</sup> See the criminal cases of I. Podolsky, M. Ezer, and Sh. Dromi. Considering how typical the last case was, Israel's Knesset in 2008 began work on the law "named in honor of" Sh. Dromi: the law is supposed to protect individuals who are prepared to offer armed resistance to criminals.

The position assumed by representatives of the authorities in power is practically sufficient to suppress any real competition. The unfolding of events in Israel shows that action taken by civilians in connection with self-defense is usually not only more effective in protecting their lives, property, and dignity. Practical measures of this kind also turn out to be much more selective and “humane” with regard to all parties involved in the conflict, by comparison with action taken by state agencies – the police or the military.<sup>26</sup>

## "Rationalizing" Government Choice: Statistical Analysis

### Box 4. Hypotheses tested:

1. Labor’s long-term control over parliament, government, state bureaucracy, the courts, the “public” mass media, and the system of education<sup>27</sup> **have led to the emergence of an encompassing interest** and motivation to provide society with a guaranteed supply of pure public goods.<sup>28</sup> The mixed public goods share in government spending surged since Labor (the leftist coalition) lost control over parliament and government (while maintaining control over the other state agencies mentioned), due to that the encompassing interest had been broken.
2. The crash of the national consensus concerning citizens’ defense and security as a priority state objective took place at the beginning of the First Lebanon War. Labor’s demonstrative resolve ever since shows that nothing but the perception of the state as a corporate asset of the Left prevented leftists from inflating social spending earlier. As soon as perception of the state as an asset began to decline **in 1977-82, the Israeli Left went back to the activism typical of leftists in general:** a struggle against the military and against prioritizing the function of providing pure public goods.

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<sup>26</sup> The bulldozer terrorist attack (near the Machaneh Yehudah market) and the shooting incident in the Merkaz ha-Rav yeshiva (religious study academy), both in Jerusalem, 2008, were halted (with the terrorist attacker killed) on the spot by armed civilians, not by policemen on duty.

<sup>27</sup> Considered exclusively as a propaganda channel in the present context ().

<sup>28</sup> The interest provoked by the peculiarity of Israel’s political regime was strong enough to overcome the natural leftist inclination for social spending (but it never got the better of the leftist penchant for redistribution).

**Table 2. Describing the Variables**

#	Variables	Comments
1	Defense expenses as a share in total government spending	
1.1.	The same, lagged	L.share_def_spend
2	Military Expenditures, %GDP (50-87 - GNP)	Dependent, % GDP (50-87 - GNP)
2.1.	The same, lagged	L.military_expenditures
3	Labor faction in Knesset; number of seats	Independent (of the Knesset's total of 120 seats)
4	Electoral support for leftist parties	Independent (share of votes, %)
5	Labor Party leads the government or influences it strategically by direct participation (coalitions with Sharon and Kadima 2005-2008)	independent dummy; Sharon, Peres and some high-ranking deserters from Labor and Likud formed the Kadima Party, counted here as a separate entity only in the Knesset
6	Negotiate with terrorists and "rotate like propellers"	independent dummy (since 1993 = 1) – Law prohibition against contacting PLO terrorists is lifted; "You can rotate like propellers, it will not change a thing," declared Prime Minister Rabin in response to voter complaints that he has no authorization to give away the Golan Heights, make strategic concessions, or appease terrorists in return for a promise of "peace."
7	Security out of consensus	1982 (the Lebanon War marks the first time when Labor undermined an IDF security operation), independent dummy





**Table 3. Explaining the Variation in the Share of Military Expenditures**

Regressions (4) and (5) show that past dependence notwithstanding, the "Security out of consensus " variable remains significant and negatively impacts the military spending share (Table 3). Regression (13) shows the significance of the Labor government variable, which is positively correlated with the share of total government spending accounted for by defense.

VARIABLES	Regressions												
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
	military _expenditures	share_def _spend	military _expenditures	military _expenditures	share_def _spend	military _expenditures	share_def _spend	military _expenditures	share_def _spend	military _expenditures	share_def _spend	military _expenditures	share_def _spend
L.military_ expenditures	0.917*** [0.0534]			0.891*** [0.0518]		0.883*** [0.0609]		0.915*** [0.0539]		0.854*** [0.0642]		0.930*** [0.0534]	
L.share_def_spend		0.872*** [0.0875]			0.690*** [0.0993]		0.799*** [0.107]		0.809*** [0.0972]		0.717*** [0.127]		0.814*** [0.0881]
Security out of consensus			<b>-4.436**</b> [1.893]	<b>-2.098**</b> [0.788]	<b>-</b> <b>4.707***</b> [1.559]								
neg_terrorists						<b>-1.170</b> [1.013]	<b>-2.867</b> [2.454]						
leftists_electoral_ support								<b>0.0315</b> [0.0619]	<b>0.159</b> [0.113]				
labour_mandates										<b>0.0787*</b> [0.0457]	<b>0.187</b> [0.113]		
labour_lead_ government												<b>1.337</b> [0.852]	<b>2.934**</b> [1.404]
Observations	60	37	61	60	37	60	37	60	37	60	37	60	37
Adjusted R- squared	0.833	0.732	0.070	0.849	0.783	0.834	0.735	0.831	0.740	0.838	0.745	0.837	0.756

Regressions (4) and (5) show that even under past dependence counting "Security out of consensus " variable still significant and negatively influences military spending share (Table 3).

The drop in voter support for leftist parties during elections undermined the formerly widespread notion of the state as party property. This, in turn, brought about the collapse of the national consensus concerning prioritizing defense as a state objective (see regressions 1 – 3, Table 4). The same development also accounts for the annulment of the prohibition against negotiating with terrorists (the PLO) and, accordingly, a drop in the share allotted to defense spending.

**Table 4. Labor and General Leftist Electoral Support Influences Dummy Variables**

Electoral support for leftists parties volatility (combined with negative trend) causes break in national consensus about defense priority (see regressions 1 – 3, Table 4) caused cancellation of PLO terrorist negotiation ban...

VARIABLES	Regressions					
	(1) Tobit security	(2) Tobit security	(3) Tobit security	(4) Tobit neg_terrorists ban	(5) Tobit neg_terrorists ban	(6) Tobit neg_terrorists ban
leftists_electoral_support	<b>-0.334***</b> [0.0847]				<b>-0.294***</b> [0.0766]	
labour_mandates		<b>-0.152***</b> [0.0483]		<b>-0.200***</b> [0.0608]		
labour_lead_government			<b>-1.362***</b> [0.373]			-0.445 [0.345]
Observations	62	62	62	62	62	62
Pseudo R-squared	0.526	0.375	0.170	0.517	0.642	0.0217

[ ] – Standard deviation

... and, respectively decrease of defense spending share:

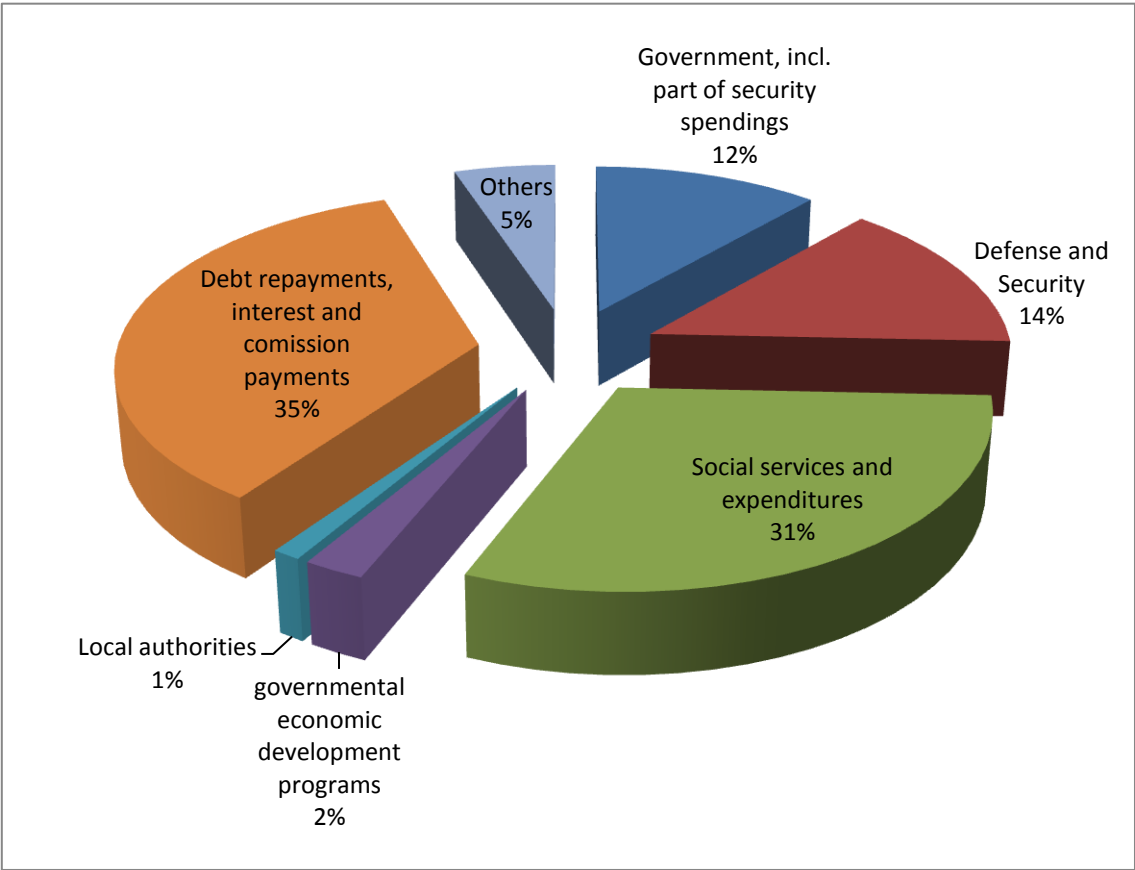
**Table 5. Combined Influence of Electoral Support and Dummy Variables on Military Spending Test**

The regressions shown in Table 5 indicate the negative correlations of ruling (leftist) groups' political preferences and their change of strategy with the size and share of military spending in total Central Government expenditures.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
VARIABLES	military _expen ditures	military _expen ditures	military _expen ditures	military _expen ditures	share _def _spend	share _def _spend	share _def _spend
L.military_expenditure s	0.884***	0.885***	0.896***	0.872***			
	[0.0511]	[0.0646]	[0.0541]	[0.0663]			
L.share_def_spend					0.674***	0.771***	0.690***
					[0.103]	[0.110]	[0.108]
Security out of consensus	<b>-3.308***</b>	<b>-1.988*</b>	<b>-1.937**</b>		<b>-4.378**</b>		
	[1.047]	[1.010]	[0.915]		[1.651]		
neg_terrorists				-1.620		-1.959	<b>-4.348*</b>
				[1.452]		[2.586]	[2.349]
leftists_electoral_supp ort	<b>-0.134*</b>			-0.0383	0.0711	0.130	
	[0.0778]			[0.0880]	[0.109]	[0.120]	
labour_mandates		0.00999					
		[0.0566]					
labour_lead_governme nt			0.336				<b>3.575**</b>
			[0.953]				[1.400]
Observations	60	60	60	60	37	37	37
Adjusted R-squared	0.854	0.846	0.846	0.831	0.779	0.737	0.772

[ ] – Standard deviation

# Social Justice or Security for Every Citizen? Further Radicalization



Ill 5. 2011 Structure of Budgetary Expenses

Sources: Israel Finance Ministry

[http://www.mof.gov.il/BudgetSite/StateBudget/Budget2011\\_2012/Pages/Budget2011\\_2012HP.aspx](http://www.mof.gov.il/BudgetSite/StateBudget/Budget2011_2012/Pages/Budget2011_2012HP.aspx)  
(Hebrew) Grand total: 348,185 billion NIS (roughly \$95-97 billion)  
<http://www.knesset.gov.il/committees/heb/material/data/kalkala2011-07-06.pdf>

***"Tent Protest" (Israel's Earlier Version of the "Occupy... Everything" Leftist Movement, Summer 2011; "TP")***

**Table 6**

#	The issue (the problem)	Reason/ Resolution of the problem	Government proposal and TP leaders' reaction	Trachtenberg Commission proposal and TP leaders' reaction	Tent Protest leaders' demands
1	"Mass feeling of injustice" (meaning the "sense that wealth is unequally distributed")	New branches (high tech) appearing in Israel and new population groups prospering, accordingly; for the first time in Israel's history, incomes not dependent on the bureaucracy and politicized oligarchy in control of the public and other leading mass media resources	Enhance taxation "progressivity" (two new "brackets" on the scale); references to the "Biblical prophets" (as if the prophets had ever been communists, demanded equal distribution of wealth or equal treatment not only in court but outside court, as well) / too little too late;  Moderate economic liberalization reversed		To break the trend of income inequality
2	To replace security agenda with "social justice" agenda	New security challenges due to Islamic fundamentalism coming to power in countries surrounding Israel; TP leaders urged "to repeat the success of Tahrir Square in Israel" <a href="http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/sep/04/israel-protests-social-justice?INTCMP=ILCNETTXT3487">http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/sep/04/israel-protests-social-justice?INTCMP=ILCNETTXT3487</a>	Government borrowing of TP leaders' rhetoric re cuts in defense spending; but no actual cuts in military spending ensuing in practice		
3	Cheap	Concurrent demand to put a halt to	Actual freezing of	-	No

#	The issue (the problem)	Reason/ Resolution of the problem	Government proposal and TP leaders' reaction	Trachtenberg Commission proposal and TP leaders' reaction	Tent Protest leaders' demands
	(subsidized) housing	building in Judea and Samaria <a href="http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/aug/04/tel-aviv-tent-city-protesters?INTCMP=ILCNETTXT3487">http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/aug/04/tel-aviv-tent-city-protesters?INTCMP=ILCNETTXT3487</a>	construction in Judea and Samaria; liberalizing of building projects procedure (see the bill draft at: <a href="http://www.knesset.gov.il/committees/heb/material/data/kala2011-07-06.pdf">http://www.knesset.gov.il/committees/heb/material/data/kala2011-07-06.pdf</a> - Hebrew)		liberalizing, <sup>29</sup> no exclusive building subsidies for Judea and Samaria
4	Free childcare for preschoolers (age 3 and up)				

***More sources on the topic:***

Ori Chudy (August 29, 2011) (on TP leaders' demands)

Trachtenberg Commission reports at: <http://hidavrut.gov.il/> (Hebrew)

TP Panel of Experts (see, for example: <http://www.haaretz.com/news/national/alternative-experts-panel-vows-to-address-israel-s-unacceptable-economic-policy-1.378729>); no plan published as a result;

<sup>29</sup> <http://southjerusalem.com/2011/08/the-vandal-law-and-the-note-on-the-door/>; saved (cached) copy: <http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:EQrqX5DoaxcJ:southjerusalem.com/2011/08/the-vandal-law-and-the-note-on-the-door/+vandal+law+note+door&hl=en&strip=1>

Jerusalem Institute for Market Studies: Trachtenberg's Plans Will Be Costly Failures, JIMS Cites Report's Faulty Logic, Offers Alternatives <http://www.jims-israel.org/pdf/trachtenbergPR2english.pdf>

Hillman (2010) notes that a certain kind of “expressive behavior” (voting for the Left or taking part in mass events organized by the Left) seems to many civilians an inexpensive way to “look fine.” Such a situation is possible insofar as leftists continue to maintain their control over the “public” mass media and educational institutions used as propaganda channels. Someone whose attitudes take shape exclusively due to the impact of means of ideological indoctrination<sup>30</sup> along with the old “private” mass media<sup>31</sup> will be sincerely puzzled about why most co-citizens do not share in his enthusiasm. Why do they vote for the Right or go so far as to attend rightist rallies? Yet, still relying on the same mass media, a citizen of this type interprets the conduct of the majority as being bound up with unsound character traits or incomplete education. Participants in the protest action of 2011 thus also acquired – at minimal cost – a sense of belonging to the elite.

Leftist ideologemes (e.g., “state-provided butter is better than guns,” or “war is no solution,” and so on) in Israel today signify a demand to ignore security challenges in favor of redistribution of incomes. By a different interpretation – already noted above – these demands reduce to the summons to replace pure public goods and the spending they require with mixed public goods.

Providing mixed public goods is defined and interpreted by the Left as “moral,” while supplying pure public goods (dependable defense and security) is “vigilantism,” “militarism,” and even fascism.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> The media shift and leftist indoctrination are guaranteed in Israel by the “public” media and “public” schools (Rabin’s Lessons of Peace and the like).

<sup>31</sup> Private mass media such as the daily *Haaretz* became established on the market during the years of undivided leftist power. The mechanism governing their affiliation with the Left has to do with the benefit to be derived from the fact that for some participants in the market, standard administrative barriers turn into a lowered “grade barrier.” The Supreme Court decision recognizing as “anti-constitutional” the law which had legalized the rightist “Seventh Channel” illustrates the mechanism involved. The basis for the court decision was the claim that simplified legalization procedure violates the rights of those market agents who have already surmounted some challenging hurdles. In reality, these participants in the market simply walked under a raised gate barrier after having been given special leeway on the market.

<sup>32</sup> See, for example, typical leftist journalist reflections at: <http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/opinion/the-truth-i-e-kahane-won-out-1.403418>

## Conclusions

During the last few decades, Israel's government has been giving up one after the other all the elements of the strategy which had formerly yielded military achievement and established the high reputation enjoyed by the military and the special services of the state. The government avoids tried and proven effective decision making, from large-scale military action to private individual self-defense. This is due partly to that the security agenda has lost its priority status for the special interest and political coalitions (Labor-led leftists) traditionally preserving their control over the executive authority's bureaucracy, activist court system, police, public media, and education (i.e., a collection of state non-elected means of control).

To clarify the machinery of security agenda deactualization we tested two hypotheses:

1. Labor's long-term control over parliament and government, state bureaucracy, courts and police, public media and education **created an encompassing interest** and some incentives for providing pure public goods.<sup>33</sup> **The mixed public goods share in government spending surged since Labor Party** (the leftist coalition's) **lost its control over parliament and government**<sup>34</sup> (while preserving its control over the unelected governmental positions) because the encompassing interest had been broken.

2. **The national consensus concerning security collapsed at the time of the First Lebanon War.** Labors clearly manifested their resolution to subordinate pure public goods provision to mixed public goods provision. Since that time the Left shifted to the most radical form of opposition to prioritizing pure public goods and even harms their quality. **Leftists initiated and pushed the new military justice, causing the threat of punishment for "excessive use**

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<sup>33</sup> The interest due to the special features of Israel's political regime was strong enough to overcome the natural leftist predilection for social spending (but it never overcame the leftist inclination to redistribute wealth).

<sup>34</sup> See Table 3



of force" etc. instead of victory's reward. New institutions promoted by leftists, effectively prevent Army from decisive victory targeting<sup>35</sup>.

Once tested, both hypotheses should be considered more closely based on the availability of significant data and background facts.

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<sup>35</sup> See tables 4, 5.

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