



Manhigut Yehudit Weekly Update

27 Tishrei, 5770 (Oct. 15) Issue 7003

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Open Letter to Defense Minister Barak: Do Not Negotiate My Release

As an Israeli citizen, as a soldier and a reserve officer, I hereby instruct you that if, God forbid, I am ever kidnapped or taken captive by Arab terror organizations, no negotiations should be conducted to secure my release. The reasons for this instruction are as follows:

A. Twenty-five years ago, Israeli agent Jonathan Pollard took shelter from his pursuers inside the Israeli Embassy in Washington. In accordance with an order issued by the Shamir government, then-Israeli Ambassador Elyakim Rubinstein handed him directly over to US federal authorities. Since then and to this day, Jonathan has been imprisoned under disgraceful conditions. He has never had even a short vacation outside the prison walls. His health is dangerously deteriorating. Israel – for whom and in whose name Jonathan sacrificed his life, did and continues to do everything possible to ensure that Jonathan will remain in prison and die there. Despite the biting betrayal that he experienced, every time that the media raises the possibility that Jonathan will be exchanged for one arch-murderer or another, Pollard hurriedly announces his opposition to this type of swap. It is incumbent on every Israeli citizen to understand – as a free person – what our betrayed hero understands from his jail cell. We must not buy liberty for an individual in exchange for endangering the lives of the public and encouraging additional abductions.

B. After a number of visits to his prison cell I understood that in the 25 years of continued betrayal of Jonathan, Israel's government has lost the moral foundation in the name of which it sends its sons to endanger themselves and in the power of which it can also bring them home. In fact, since the betrayal of Jonathan and until this very day, Israel has not brought one captive soldier home alive.

C. The Israeli government has refrained from carrying out the simple and most obvious actions for Gilad Shalit's release. Hamas, which at first avoided admitting that it was the kidnapper, quickly understood that Israel's leaders would not endanger themselves with international arrest warrants and is no longer afraid to claim full responsibility for this act. Its thousands of detainees in Israel are getting the royal treatment and enjoy conditions no Israeli detainee can even dream of. As a first step, Israel should have compared the arrest conditions of Hamas prisoners to those of Shalit. No visits, no information, no sunlight. All Hamas leaders should have become the targets of kidnappings and assassinations.

The entire supply of money, weapons, cement, fuel and electricity from Israel to Gaza should have stopped.

D. Clearly, the loss of vision and leadership that engenders these wholesale releases greatly encourages our enemies. The wave of terror and kidnappings that broke out following the release of thousands of terrorists does not fit what we had known in the past by any standard. The Jibril exchange 25 years ago led directly to the first *intifada*. This led to a mass release of terrorists in the Oslo Accord and to the suicide bomber rage that followed on its heels. The State of Israel has sunk itself inside fences and guards, but this is nothing more than a pain killer for spreading cancer.

No fence can stop rockets. The weakness of the Israeli leadership in the face of terror organizations has been well internalized by a distant and much more dangerous circle of enemy states. Why should Iran's leader be afraid if the Hamas leaders feel safe?

E. "I see Israel as a state of all its citizens," explained the most influential Israeli of this generation, former Chief Justice Aharon Barak. Israel, fleeing from its Jewish identity, has pulled the carpet out from under the moral foundation of its very existence and right to send soldiers into battle. If not for a Jewish state, then what are we doing here?

The inevitable result of loss of Jewish vision is loss of our ability to conduct any sort of political program. When there is no strategic goal, there cannot be tactical policies. As a result, Israel will continue to conduct itself according to the caprices of constantly-surfacing international and local pressure and media campaigns.

F. In this situation, the responsible Israeli citizen is faced with two choices: One – to come to terms with the process briefly described here and to wait for the coup de grace that will terminate the historic episode called 'The State of Israel'. The other option is that, like in past wars, the simple soldiers will know how to save the state from the failures of its leaders. As such, we, the civilians and the soldiers order that no negotiations be held for us.

G. I am pleased to report that both combat officers and soldiers have announced that they will unhesitatingly add their names to this petition. I will continue to send you their letters.

Respectfully,

Moshe Feiglin