



ISRAEL NEWS

*A collection of the week's news from Israel
From the Bet El Twinning / Israel Action Committee of
Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation*

and you have made me one."

It obviously has been more important for Arafat, as well as his successor, Mahmoud Abbas, who turned down an even more generous offer from Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, to continue the struggle then to arrive at a permanent

Commentary...

Crossing the Rubicon By Sarah N. Stern

Last Wednesday, at a U.S. State Department press briefing, the Rubicon was finally crossed. Responding to a question regarding Israeli-Palestinian peace, spokeswoman Heather Nauert said, "We want to work toward a peace that both sides can agree to and both sides find sustainable. ... We believe that both parties should be able to find a workable solution that works for both of them. We are not going to state what the outcome has to be. ... It's been many, many decades, as you well know, that the parties have not been able to come to any kind of good agreement and sustainable solution to this. So we leave it up to them to be able to work through that."

This is the most constructive statement I have heard about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in decades. For the last several years, the "experts" have been saying, "We all know what a solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict looks like."

If anyone ever took the time to listen to the parties themselves, and examine the cultural context in which these words are spoken, they would immediately understand that the single most critical litmus test for determining a negotiating partner's real intentions is not what they say to visiting diplomats and journalists in English, but what they say among themselves in their own language, and in particular, what they teach their children.

According to John Calvin (formerly "Jonaid Salameh," before his conversion to Christianity), an EMET fellow who was born in Nablus, from the very earliest age, he was taught there would not be two states, but one state called Palestine. An important slogan on everyone's tongue in the disputed territories is "Lama neharherah," meaning "When we free it" -- and "it" is all of Israel.

Calvin told me that this belief is a certainty, that the average Palestinian feels it is destiny that eventually all of the land will be free of Jews.

Surah 8, verse 39 of the Quran says, "And fight with them until there is no more fitnah [mischief, persecution, oppression, disbelief] and religion should be only for Allah; but if they desist, then surely Allah sees what they do." According to Calvin, the interpretation is clear: There should be conflict until all worship is only to Allah.

Part of this cultural context implies a different meaning of the word "peace." Accepting the existence of the other on their own terms is incompatible with true Islamic thought. Islam is a religion of conquest.

Says Calvin, "The conception of peace, as we know it in the West, simply does not exist within Islam. There can be a "hudna," a temporary cessation of war, but only to regroup. Islam means total submission, or surrender, and a permanent peace can only happen when the entire world surrenders to Islamic rule. There is that sort of messianic concept of peace, but only after the entire world submits to Islamic rule."

Many individual Muslims, particularly in places like Indonesia, Pakistan and India, where Arabic is not the native tongue, may not understand the Quran in a literal sense, and thus, may not hold these sort of hegemonic beliefs.

Most Americans, including many so-called "experts" in the field, have no idea of the cultural context with which they are dealing when they set out to solve the Israeli-Palestinian dispute.

In former U.S. President Bill Clinton's autobiography, "My Life," he describes how profoundly disappointed he had been with then-PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat after generous offers were made to the Palestinian leader by Prime Minister Ehud Barak in the Camp David negotiations. Arafat did not respond in the affirmative or the negative, but simply walked away from the table. His response came several months later, in the form of the Second Intifada.

In a moving chapter, Clinton describes how, just as he was about to leave office, Arafat called him up and told him he was a great man.

"Mr. Chairman," Clinton replied, "I am not a great man. I am a failure,

peace.

For decades, too many Western leaders and diplomats have tried to impose a solution that looks ideal when viewed through Western lenses.

These statesmen, however, do not have to be there on the ground when the maximalist offers are walked away from, and the inevitable violence ensues.

Thank you, Heather Nauert, for taking us a bit closer to reality. (Israel Hayom Aug 27)

The Results of the Iran Nuclear Deal By Moshe Arens

A little more than two years after the signature of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action between Iran and the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council plus Germany. It is time to take stock of what the results are so far.

Iran is not a nuclear power at the moment but has the capability to become one on relatively short notice. It has continued to develop its ballistic missile arsenal, whose primary objective is to launch nuclear warheads against those Iran considers its enemy. And Iran, relieved of the economic sanctions that had forced it into the negotiations, has used resources that have become available to project its power in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Yemen. It keeps threatening Israel.

It is arguable just how quickly Iran could go nuclear if it so decides. Iranian President Hassan Rohani recently declared to the Iranian parliament that "Iran could return to conditions more advanced than before the negotiations within hours." Even discounting some of this as bluster aimed at his enemies at home and abroad, the time required for Iran to go nuclear would be at most a few months.

The nuclear deal neglected to address Iran's ballistic missiles, and ignored Iran's well-known ambitions to become the dominant power in the Middle East. Barack Obama, the architect of the agreement with Tehran, then stood by while the slaughter in Syria continued, and Iran and Russia moved in to take over. Now the Iranians and their proxy, Hezbollah, are approaching Israel's borders.

As Benjamin Netanyahu said at the time, it was a bad deal. Bad for Israel and bad for the world. The prime minister did his level best to prevent the confirmation of the agreement by the Congress of the United States.

There was general agreement in Israel that it was a bad deal, but Netanyahu's appearance before both houses of Congress came in for criticism from the opposition. He is going to ruin Israel's relations with the United States, Israel's only friend and ally, it was claimed. This will be the end of bipartisan support for Israel in the Congress, it was argued.

Actually, he did what was incumbent upon an Israeli prime minister to do: make his best efforts to try and stop a deal that would cause damage to Israel's interests. The U.S.-Israeli relationship has not only survived his appearance before the U.S. Congress, but it is better today than it has been in a long time. And support for Israel in the Congress continues to be, as it has been for many years, bipartisan -- Democratic and Republican. There are some lessons to be learned from this short-sighted view of the Israeli-U.S. relationship that was adopted by so many at the time. It is true that the task of the opposition is to oppose, but not at the cost of losing sight of Israel's most vital interests.

Now Israel is stuck with contending with growing Iranian influence approaching its borders. To the threat of over 100,000 Hezbollah rockets and missiles in Lebanon has been added the danger of Hezbollah and Iranian militias attempting to approach the Golan Heights. If not the direct result of the nuclear deal with Iran, it has certainly been compounded by that agreement. The dangers to Israel implied by it were simply ignored by Obama and the other signatories, and now Israel, although dealing with a much more friendly administration in Washington, is left to its own devices.

Everyone has to be put on notice that Israel is fully aware of the approaching danger and will not hesitate to deal with it before it is too late. Netanyahu's visit to Sochi was intended to let President Vladimir Putin know in no uncertain terms that Israel will not stand by impassively as the dangers accrue. This time the opposition seems to agree. (Haaretz Aug 29)

A Dishonest Disguise By Annika Hernroth-Rothstein

I tried really hard not to do this.

For the years I have been writing professionally, I have made a point not to attack or take down other journalists or publications or be part of what I see as an incestuous market for self-promotion and narcissistic echoes in the dark. I talk issues, not issuers, and I have been proud of the restraint I have shown, because God knows, it has not been easy.

However.

There comes a point when one has to speak up or get out of this business, and that point came for me on Aug. 17, 2017. On that day, the publication *The Forward* ran a piece titled "Richard Spencer might be the worst person in America. But he might also be right about Israel." By doing so, it crossed the line from Left to far Left and from criticism to attack. For those who don't know, Richard Spencer is America's foremost white supremacist. The point of the piece was that Zionism and the idea of a Jewish state and Nazism and the idea of a white state are the same, and one cannot agree with the actions of Israel while protesting white supremacy anywhere else in the world.

This is not *The Forward's* first foray into these muddy waters of anti-Israel rhetoric, nor was it the last. *The Forward* has come to specialize in attacks on the Jewish state, Zionism, conservative political opinions and Orthodox religious practice. Examples include the adamant defense of Linda Sarsour (even late in the game), the anti-Israel boycott, divestment and sanctions movement and Iran's policies; and anti-Orthodox smear pieces, including attacks on Jewish female modesty while praising and defending the Islamic hijab. And now, just last week, in a piece titled "How your favorite #neverTrump Republicans planted seeds of his rise to power," the author claimed that calling President Barack Obama anti-Israel somehow advanced the cause of white supremacists, and the anti-Jewish dog-whistling was loud enough to be heard around the world.

Had *The Forward* not been a Jewish publication (formerly *The Jewish Daily Forward*), I still would have been upset, but probably much less appalled. Not because Jews are not allowed to have any variety of political opinions or affiliations, but because this very publication is using its Jewish identity to legitimize attacks on Orthodox and traditional Jews and on the State of Israel. This is a publication that is using the ethnicity of its staff to get away with expressions of bigotry that it would not accept from anyone else, and definitely not from the political Right. In my eyes, that is not only hypocrisy, it is political activism dishonestly disguised as journalism.

The reason I don't usually do this is not that I am a more honorable person than anyone else, but that I can anticipate the inevitable response -- that I am trying to strong-arm my fellow Jews into a political fold or that I am accusing my brethren of being kapos, but in this case all I am asking for are clear and equal rules of engagement when it comes to journalism and the overall political debate.

Being Jewish does not excuse bad behavior but even adds a level of responsibility -- that has been a major point of the Jewish Left for as long as I can remember, and a point made in many *Forward* articles throughout the years. All I ask at this point is that *The Forward* abide by the rules it imposes on others and that its editor-in-chief, Jane Eisner, either publicly defend these outrageous editorial decisions or stop making them altogether.

I tried so hard not to do this, but now that I did, I want to make my point, simple and clear: Being Jewish does not mean you have to subscribe to a particular political or religious view, but it also does not excuse bad journalism or dishonest methods in a political or cultural war. (Israel Hayom Aug 31)

Follow Frankfurt's Lead By Ariel Bolstein

The decision by the municipality of Frankfurt to ban the use of city facilities for events aimed at calling for a boycott of Israel could be a significant milestone in the fight against those who reject the existence of the Jewish state. The welcome decision does not suffice with a specific prohibition, but rather shames the entire boycott movement, deems it anti-Semitic and exposes its unequivocal resemblance to the Nazi movement. The municipality's decision makes a moral statement that exposes the true face of those who continue to wage a campaign against Israel's very existence.

Other cities in Germany and elsewhere should now be called on to

follow Frankfurt's lead. Much work remains to be done. Public funds continue to feed and finance anti-Israel initiatives all across Europe. Taxpayer money in Switzerland, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Spain and Great Britain continues to turn the wheels of hatred toward Israel, sometimes in opposition to the position of those countries' governments.

About a week ago, it was announced that Europe would cease its funding of the Women's Technical Affairs Committee, a Palestinian organization that, with its inauguration of the Martyr Dalal Mughrabi Center, "excelled" at honoring a vile terrorist and turning her into a role model for women in the Palestinian Authority. Mughrabi was a Fatah operative who died participating in the 1978 Coastal Road massacre that killed 37 people, 13 of them children. Unfortunately, no organization that spreads lies about Israel and depicts it as the embodiment of evil is likely to suffer from a lack of funding.

We must not underestimate the hundreds of anti-Israel bodies that aim to smear our good name. Far from the Israeli public eye, in the universities and colleges, the battle for public opinion is being waged on a daily basis, and in most cases Israel and its friends are still playing defense. Unfortunately, there is no lack of examples: a sign that accuses Israel of ethnic cleansing at England's University of East Anglia, a call to boycott Israel at the University of Manchester, a vote by the University of California's student union to divest from Israel. The sheer quantity of these unjust attacks means they have an effect. People in Europe and the Americas are constantly bombarded with anti-Israel propaganda from all sides, and a majority are not immune to their influence. The poison permeates and contaminates a good many of them.

Israel does not have the resources to reach every campus and refute every single blood libel, so alliances and collaborations with local activists, both Jews and non-Jews, are of the utmost importance. But to win the battle for hearts and minds, much more will need to be done.

We must switch from a defensive position to an offensive position. Israel's enemies have long understood this and implemented the tactic. They know that if you sling tons of mud at a target, no matter how clean and pure it may be, something is bound to stick and leave a mark.

For years, Israel believed the mud would not bother us. About a decade ago, we woke up and started cleaning. But this is not enough. We need to go on the offensive and take care of those slinging the mud. (Israel Hayom Aug 28)

The Shifting Tides of Extremism By Eyal Zisser

On Sunday this week, Hezbollah and the Lebanese army finished capturing the Aarsal mountains in eastern Lebanon, a swathe of territory spanning several hundred kilometers along the border with Syria which in recent years has been controlled by Islamic State and the Nusra Front as a launching pad for terrorist attack inside Lebanon. The last remnant of ISIS was eradicated from Lebanon and Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah was quick to reap the fruits by regaling his supporters with comparisons to the IDF's withdrawal from south Lebanon in May 2000.

We must admit, however, that Nasrallah had reason to be celebrate, because for many people the victory over ISIS bolstered his image as the "defender of Lebanon" against the threat from the extremist Sunni group and others similar to it.

Even before victory over ISIS was declared in Lebanon, the Syrian army, aided by Russia and Iran, was able to dislodge ISIS from its last remaining strongholds in western Syria, around the city of Homs in the country's center, and Sweida province in the south. Syrian President Bashar Assad's army even began its advance toward Deir ez-Zor, the most important city in the country's east.

To round out the picture, reports from Baghdad on Sunday said the Iraqi army completed its conquest of Tal Afar in the country's west, the last ISIS-held city in Iraq.

Islamic State's dream of a regional caliphate, therefore, has disintegrated. In a matter of months, the empire it sought to establish across an area spanning hundreds of thousands of kilometers, larger than the size of Great Britain or France, has crumbled. The root cause of Islamic State's failure was its uncompromising and unrestrained extremism, which not only angered but united the entire world against it. Credit for success in the fight against ISIS, however, can only go to the Americans. In the fight to defeat the Sunni group, the world witnessed both the greatness and weakness of Washington. On one hand, the U.S. has an awe-inspiring ability to execute large-scale, complex military operations; but at the same time it lacks a comprehensive strategy for the "day after" to secure the fruits of victory for it and its allies.

The Americans pummeled and incapacitated a large number of Islamic State's institutions from the air. More importantly, on the ground they were able to rally localized forces around them to destroy the ISIS regime

with American military support. Only after ISIS lost its power centers and its quasi-state had collapsed, were Hezbollah and the Lebanese army, not to mention the Syrian army, able to banish the group's fighters from their remaining strongholds in western Syria and along the border with Lebanon.

This fact didn't stop Nasrallah, Assad or any of their other allies from accrediting themselves for the victory over ISIS. Assad outdid even himself last week, claiming the Americans not only failed to contribute to Islamic State's downfall, but actually supported and were responsible for its rise to prominence.

It turns out, however, that Washington has no strategy for the day after Islamic State's demise, and is essentially willing to hand Moscow the keys to Syria so that it can ensure stability and calm in the country. This apparently comes at the price of Assad retaining power. Iran's continued presence throughout Syria, even if the border area with Israel is currently off-limits, is apparently also part of this American-Russian package deal.

The fall of ISIS, therefore, only means that the previous threat looming over Jordan and Israel is now being replaced by the far more significant threat posed by the Islamic Republic of Iran. (Israel Hayom Aug 29)

The Voice Of Our Brothers' Blood By Yedidia Z. Stern

As inconceivable as it may seem, the fear of open physical antisemitism of the classic sort has begun to trickle into the hearts of Jews in the Diaspora. We speak not only of dictatorships or Third World countries, but the most upright democracies in which the commitment to human rights and combating racism have been taken for granted, so it would seem, for at least the last three generations.

Australia is an old friend of the Jewish people. Jews moved there from South Africa in both the Apartheid and post-Apartheid eras, when the political situation in the latter was unstable. The newcomers joined Jews who had immigrated Down Under before and after World War II. It is a beautiful love story: Jews from Europe and Africa found a warm home in Australia and repaid the country's generosity by contributing their talents to the development of the remote island continent.

Yet about two weeks ago, the local council in a suburb of Sydney voted to not allow the construction of a new synagogue, on the revolting and absurd grounds that it would be a target for terrorists.

The entry to the main synagogue in the city is protected as if it were a military base in hostile territory – locked behind two automatic gates that cannot be opened simultaneously. Another synagogue has armed guards stationed in two lines of defense outside the building.

But there are no guards outside Sydney's churches and mosques; no one is threatening them.

In Charlottesville, Virginia, the site of the neo-Nazi demonstration that evoked a controversial response from US President Donald Trump, there is a Reform temple, Congregation Beth Israel. Last week, its president, Alan Zimmerman, described a scene in which three hooligans armed with semi-automatic rifles had paraded ostentatiously outside the building during Sabbath services. Had they been so inclined, they could have massacred the worshipers, because the local police refused to provide an officer to stand guard by the door. There have been Nazi rallies there in the past, punctuated by rhythmic chants of "Sieg Heil," with swastika flags held aloft.

At the end of the service, the congregants had to sneak out of the building through a back door. In 2017, the Jews of Charlottesville decided to remove their Torah scrolls from the sanctuary out of a real fear that an arson attack would be committed in the near future. As a further security measure, they canceled the havdala service at the end of Shabbat.

In cyberspace, too, hatred of the Jews is spreading like wildfire. The social networks are full of all types of hate speech – sexual, racial, political and so on – but the antisemitic variety is the most prominent of all. The presence of hatred for Jews and Judaism, wherever found – going beyond the "normal" criticism of Israel – is vast and terrifying. Web crawlers who search the Internet can identify the sources of online antisemitism; it turns out that it comes not only from countries whose regimes are hostile to Israel, but also from citizens of Western countries, among which Britain is especially notorious. It is no wonder that more than a third of the Jews of the United Kingdom feel it necessary to conceal their Jewish identity in public.

To the simple question "Why?" there was no answer during the Middle Ages or during the Holocaust. Today is no different. There is no valid explanation for the hatred of Jews because they are Jews. The circumstances and arguments change, the regimes and hegemonic cultures come and go. But the antisemitic demon persists and continues to befoul our world.

Unlike in times past, however, today we Jews have our own place on the globe – the State of Israel – where we have marshalled many forces:

political and diplomatic, media-based and intelligence-related, technological and military. It is incumbent on Israel to deploy them in an active and determined fight against antisemitism wherever it appears. This is one of the most important implications of the fact that we are the nation-state of the Jewish people, and not just a state comprised of its citizens.

Yad Vashem is the institution that preserves the memory of the consequences of antisemitism; Masada is the site where we vow, "Never again." But the whole world must be the arena of the war against antisemitism and the Jewish nation-state must serve as the supreme commander in this universal conflict. (Jerusalem Post Aug 30)

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Stop the Naziwashing By Orit Arfa

Left-wing radicals often accuse Israel of "pinkwashing," a term used to accuse Israel of "whitewashing" its "crimes" by flouting its gay-friendliness. Israel, they argue, purposefully makes its policies in the West Bank/Judea and Samaria less egregious by broadcasting its acceptance of progressive values. God forbid people should recognize that Israel is an overall leader in liberalism and human rights! But the Left is guilty of a far more dangerous and now popular form of whitewashing: Naziwashing.

Radical leftists position themselves as the heroic crusaders against Nazism, which they inflate as a world threat. In doing so, these radicals cast themselves as moral touchstones who are immuned from criticism because, after all, they take a clear stance against one of the world's worst evils. But this contempt for Nazism is a far cry from the kind held by the likes of Winston Churchill. It's anti-American, anti-capitalistic, and anti-individualistic in nature, the successor of another evil, Communism.

This tactic needs to be called out and discredited.

Naziwashing provides Leftist extremists, Jews included, cover for their desire for immoral rule, in which they would, for example, shut down or physically assault someone (or something) who does not eschew antisemitism or Nazism as fiercely as they deem appropriate. They become self-appointed, righteous vigilantes who should not be punished if, for example, they take a bat against protesters in Charlottesville who made antisemitic remarks. Meanwhile, they wouldn't dare lay a hand on the Palestinian who slaughtered an Israeli family in cold blood last month during their Shabbat dinner celebration. Palestinians are, after all, victims of Israel's pink-washed "occupation."

We then enter the new, insidious phase of Naziwashing: Since Nazism today is the Evil of the World, and Israel, according to their revisionist interpretation, behaves like Nazis for "oppressing" a minority group, taking a knife against regular Israeli "Nazi-sympathizers" is justified, too.

Naziwashing is not new. Visit memorials in former East Germany, and you'll find the Left has used this tactic since the end of World War II. For example, in Dresden, a Soviet-built sign leading into the Zwinger Palace portrays the Soviet army as Dresden's "liberators" from both the American-British bomber "gangs" (who bombed the Old Town to bits) as well as the "Fascist Tyranny" – the Nazis. Naturally, the Soviets fail to mention the Dresden firebombing was completed with their full cooperation.

While in East Berlin, the Soviets put up memorials (mostly in the 1980s, in part to draw money from Jewish tourists) condemning the Nazis in no uncertain terms for their brutal murder of the Jewish people, Communism did not grant Jews religious rights, and the East German government was also extremely anti-Zionist. The Communists thus "Nazi-washed" their innate antisemitism and other human rights violations committed under their oppressive, dictatorial Communist rule.

It is not difficult to come out against Nazis, especially since they are universally recognized as evil.

No one is going to lose Facebook friends or job opportunities for coming out against Nazi-sympathizers.

The minuscule number of literal neo-Nazis in existence will likely not retaliate. In fact, those who truly sympathize with Hitler's genocide of the Jewish people are radical Muslims who have fantasies of wiping Israel off the map, thus being useful agents against the Zionist "entity." But come out against radical Muslims, or use the word "Islam" in the pejorative, then get ready to lose Facebook friends or social standing because you are, somehow, ironically, a Nazi sympathizer.

Coming out against Nazis is easy because Nazism, technically, doesn't exist anymore. Nazis were members of The National Socialist German Workers' Party, a distinct, German supremacist political party of which not every German soldier was technically a part. Even modern Germans today resent labeling their grandparents "Nazis" if they didn't officially join the party. This makes me wonder why Germans aren't coming out in fuller force in ensuring that even their evil history is not being abused for

nefarious political purposes. Coming out against “Nazis” today is to engage in an anachronism.

But the Left is wise. They have assumed causes that are universally condemned, like Nazism and slavery, and abusing them to “whitewash” (or “colorwash”) their violent hatred for Jewish political strength (in the form of Israel), America, capitalism and people of white color, as well as their immoral use of force against anyone (or anything) they subjectively, wrongly label a “Nazi.”

So... time to call out and stop the Naziwashing.
(Jerusalem Post Aug 30)

The Politics of Protesting Unelected Politicians By Caroline B. Glick

The big story in Israel over the past several weeks has been the protests outside the home of Attorney General Avichai Mandelblit, which have grown in size and bitterness over the past month.

For the past nine months, every Saturday night protesters have gathered outside Mandelblit’s apartment building in Petah Tikva to demand that he indict Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. The protesters have not been specific about the particular transgression Netanyahu should be indicted for. One memorable banner made the point succinctly, declaring, “Bibi is guilty until proven guilty!”

The anti-Mandelblit protests are led by the high-profile far-left political strategist Eldad Yaniv and by Meni Naftali. Naftali has been leading a well-funded public and legal campaign against Sara Netanyahu since he was fired as manager of the prime minister’s official residence in 2014. The protests are also the brainchild of Raviv Drucker who doubles as an “objective” journalist on Channel 10 and a New Israel Fund sponsored far-left political activist.

Mandelblit is overseeing two criminal investigations against Netanyahu. The first involves the question of whether or not Netanyahu received more gifts than he should have from his personal friends.

The other investigation concerns conversations Netanyahu had in 2014 with his nemesis, Yediot Aharonot publisher Arnon Mozes. Netanyahu recorded these discussions with Mozes of a hypothetical deal, never executed, whereby Mozes would attenuate his newspaper’s war against Netanyahu in exchange for reduced circulation of Yediot’s chief competitor, Israel Hayom.

If Mandelblit decides to indict Netanyahu in either of the probes, the leftist establishment, including the media, will demand that Netanyahu resign in keeping with a non-binding Supreme Court decision from 1993 which insists that indicted politicians must resign.

If Netanyahu resigns, his governing coalition will fall apart and early elections will be called.

This past Saturday night, while Yaniv and Naftali and their comrades protested outside of Mandelblit’s residence for the 40th time, in Jerusalem, another group of protesters set up shop outside the home of Supreme Court President Miriam Naor.

The protesters in Jerusalem demanded that Naor stop stalling the court’s hearings regarding a petition by regarding illegal migrants from Africa.

Media coverage of both the longstanding protests outside of Mandelblit’s home and the protest Saturday night outside Naor’s home has been dominated by three issues. First, there is the question of the protesters’ behavior.

For instance, since last Saturday night the discussion of the anti-Mandelblit protests has been dominated by a video of Avraham Porat, one of Naftali’s long-time fundraisers, verbally assaulting an ultra-Orthodox man who questioned the demonstrators’ decision to begin their event before the end of Shabbat. Porat was videoed hurling a full-blown antisemitic diatribe at the man. Porat demanded that he “take the rug off your head” (meaning his kippa) and shave off his beard.

The second issue is whether the protests outside of Mandelblit’s house, and to a lesser degree the protests outside of Naor’s home, are politically or ideologically motivated.

In the case of Mandelblit, the protesters insist that they are motivated simply by concern over corruption. They wish to unseat Netanyahu because in their opinion he is corrupt.

The fact that the same protesters, or similarly funded ones, were not manning the barricades outside of Mandelblit’s predecessors’ homes to demand the indictment of Netanyahu’s predecessors from Shimon Peres to Ehud Barak, Ariel Sharon and Ehud Olmert demonstrates fairly clearly that despite their protestations to the contrary, politics is the anti-Mandelblit protesters’ primary motivation.

As for Naor, the issue of ideology is cut-and-dried. Supreme Court justices, including Naor herself, have repeatedly made clear through both their public pronouncements and their rulings that the majority of justices

are ideologically aligned with the far Left. And whereas residents of Tel Aviv are not organically tied to the political Right, activist Supreme Court justices have placed them firmly in the right-wing camp by operating hand in glove with far-left NGOs, supported by the US-based New Israel Fund and other groups, to prevent successive governments from removing the illegal migrants from south Tel Aviv specifically and from Israel more generally.

As to the specific protesters outside Naor’s home last Saturday, nearly two years ago radical leftist NGOs petitioned the Court asking it to overturn a law enabling the government to deport illegal migrants to willing third countries and incarcerate them until expulsion.

Naor’s court issued an injunction barring the government from enforcing the law until court issued its decision and then sat on the petition and did nothing. The protesters demanded that the court issue a ruling.

Monday, two days after the protest, the court suddenly rendered its verdict. In a decision thin on legal arguments, the court ruled that while the government can transfer the migrants to third countries, they can only do so if the illegal migrants agree to go. Moreover, the government can only incarcerate illegal migrants for 60 days, meaning that if the migrants refuse to leave Israel for a third country, they will effectively to remain in the country indefinitely after a two month period of incarceration.

This then brings us to the final question that has dominated discussion of the protests against Mandelblit, and since last Saturday night, against Naor, outside their private homes. Should protesters congregate outside the home of unelected officials in an attempt to influence their actions just as activists demonstrate outside the homes of politicians?

The answers commentators have provided to the question have predictably aligned with their own political sympathies. Commentators on the Left side with the protesters outside Mandelblit’s home and oppose the protest outside Naor’s home. Commentators on the Right adopt the opposite position. But both positions miss the basic reality that protesters have intuitively acted upon.

Today, Supreme Court justices and the state prosecutors led by the attorney general are the most powerful political actors in Israel. Indeed, to the extent that protests outside the homes of public officials have any impact on their behavior, it makes more sense for citizens to protest outside the homes of justices and the attorney general than it makes to protest outside the homes of politicians.

By conducting criminal probes against the sitting prime minister which revolve around issues of personal behavior that bear no connection to Israel’s national security or interests, Mandelblit has made himself the most powerful political force in the country. And he has also made himself a reasonable target for a political campaign. In other words, he brought it on himself.

If he wants the protesters to go away, he should stop seizing political power. He should announce that he is suspending the criminal probes against Netanyahu and any criminal probes against any other currently sitting elected officials that are now underway. He should also stipulate that he will not conduct any further criminal probes of sitting politicians for the duration of their tenure in office unless they are suspected of treason or other security-related offenses.

This then brings us to the Supreme Court.

In 1992 the Supreme Court seized the power of the Knesset to make laws by arrogating to itself the right to overturn them. It subsequently seized the power of the government to execute laws and determine Israel’s national policies by granting itself the power to arbitrarily decide that government decisions and policies are illegal.

In other words, for a generation the court has been acting as a judicial tyranny.

In response to the court’s decision Monday, the residents of South Tel Aviv announced that they would maintain and expand their demonstrations outside Naor’s home until the Supreme Court cancels its decision and allows the government to govern. Their decision was the most reasonable response to the verdict.

Like Mandelblit with his political probes, Naor and her fellow radicals brought the public’s scrutiny and fury on themselves. Until they stop behaving like judicial dictators, they should expect for the public to demonstrate against them.

The reason then that the demonstrations against Mandelblit on the one hand and Naor on the other are reasonable and should be expected to continue is that due to the tyrannical power the legal system exerts over the government and Knesset, Israel’s viability as a representative democracy has been weakened. Until we restore our system of government and restore the balance of power between the branches of government, the public is right to treat our justices and prosecutors as politicians.