

# Deception Surrounds Israel and its Quest for Peace

Has Justice Minister Tzipi Livni joined Yedioth Ahronoth's official choir? Livni, too, has begun working against the country and its ability to survive in a hostile world.

One can become chronically depressed by the apocalyptic prophecies about what will be in store for us if we continue to insist on our right to the land of Israel and to life as a free people in our own homeland. If David Ben-Gurion had thought accordingly, we would still to this day not have a country. And if the Irgun underground fighters had suffered from such a defeatist spirit, the British would still be here.

Tzipi Livni openly declares that Israeli citizens, even those living in Tel Aviv, can expect boycotts, ostracism and a fatal blow to the economy if the government does not acquiesce to the dictates and desires of the Palestinians and the Americans. The justice minister has yet to internalize that Ehud Olmert is no longer prime minister and that the willingness to retreat and pack up the national flag has been replaced with a principled stance, vision and security arrangements for the many generations of Jews to come. In the past, too, we have been threatened, but we are still here, growing stronger.

We returned to Israel to be a free people in our own homeland, not to build a Diaspora community which bases its moves on the whims of one lord or another. Despite the spirit of gloom espoused by Yedioth's pundits, the Zionist vision is coming to fruition, the land of Israel is being built and we have every reason to be optimistic.

Despite the impression that certain media outlets are trying to create, the people are strong, determined and wiser from

their experiences. They understand better than some government ministers that by succumbing we only increase the other side's tenacity, and that all of our past capitulations have not led to conciliation or peace, but rather to painful military campaigns.

The Americans are very open to hearing the voices emanating from Israel. But Livni's comments only serve to drive them to apply more pressure. Any expression of weakness invites added pressure to achieve something. They need a diplomatic victory like they need air, after the entire world has discovered that its arrangements with Syria and Iran are, for all intents and purposes, worthless.

Moshe Dayan, in his eulogy in 1956 to Roi Rothberg, who was killed by an Arab sniper in Nahal Oz near Gaza, said: "The yearning for peace deafened his ears, and he didn't hear the sound of death lying in ambush." The disingenuous calls for peace emanating from within us could mislead the public and weaken its resolve.

I often wonder how people, who are considered intelligent, can blind themselves to reality. Our fortune is that today's leaders understand the illusion of peace is as dangerous as war.