

**Politics – April 2011**

*The more we sweat in peace the less we bleed in war.*

~Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit

*Gilad is still in captivity. Veshavu banim legvulam.*

~Raphael Cohen-Almagor

Spring is in the air. It is a wonderful season!!

Happy Yom Atzmaut to all friends of Israel!!

Rocket attacks on Israel continued this month. Dozens of mortar shells, Grad and Qassam rockets were fired by Palestinian terrorists from Gaza. Very little is reported in England. One person was injured. The Israeli anti-missile Iron Dome defence system was able to intercept some of the rockets. Israel's reprisal is confined for the time being to air attacks, but if the situation will escalate be sure to see Israeli troops returning to Gaza. This Israeli government will not tolerate any attacks on peaceful civilians.

The unrest in the Middle East and North Africa comes, again, very close to Israel. Mubarak lost his freedom and glory. After Egypt, now it is Syria's turn to seek democratization. The media, however, seem to be far more restrained/under-developed in Syria than in Egypt. Scores of protesters have been reported killed during anti-government rallies in Syrian cities but not many photos and communications have reached the international media. The protests have posed an unprecedented challenge to President Bashar al-Assad's 11-year rule. He has offered to consider reforms, but activists say his proposals do not go far enough. Assad sent tanks to restore order. I wish to see a non-Assad in power.

I wonder whether Jordan will be able to pass this junction with the same regime. The region is so volatile nowadays and we watch the situation as events unfold one day after the other.

Amre Mohammed Moussa is likely to be the next Egyptian president. Moussa is highly critical of Israel; at the same time, he is a supporter of peace. He opts for a two state solution. So am I. Moussa, obviously, is very pro-Palestinian but his demands are reasonable. I agree with him more than with my own government.

The Libyan and Yemenite governments continue to struggle to maintain power. I wish them short lives. I wish the Libyan and Yemen people better, more democratic and less corrupt establishments.

I hope this democratization wave will spread widely to many African and Southern American countries. Their people also deserve to live in a democratic environment, one whose underpinning values are respect for others, not harming others, liberty, tolerance and pluralism.

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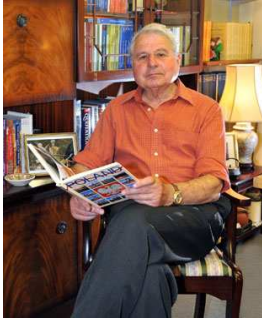
Free Gilad Shalit. The government should invest in his release. It should be one of its top priorities. Veshavu banim legvulam.



Gilad Shalit

### **Reflections on March Newsletter**

From Professor Jo Carby-Hall, University of Hull:



Dear Rafi,

Thank you for your March Politics Bulletin which I have read with great interest and upon which I wish to comment with regard to the exploitation of economic migrants in Israel.

### **The background**

I was commissioned to carry out a three year research programme on the treatment of A8 and A2 economic migrants in the European Union Member States and to submit a report with suggestions and recommendations for changes in the laws (where applicable) in each of the 27 EU States. The report, having been acclaimed by many EU Member States' governments, the EU Parliament and the EU Commission, was published as a book in English and Polish. The book is currently being translated in Spanish and in French (each in two volumes) with a publication date scheduled for 2013 and 2014 respectively.

### **The research findings**

This research proved to be a challenging task but one which has been most rewarding, satisfying and worthwhile in that laws in certain EU countries such as Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Austria and the United Kingdom, as well as EU laws (applicable to each of the 27 EU Member States) treating employment agencies which recruit migrant workers, have been enacted to combat abuses and exploitation.

The terms of reference of this research focused only on EU Member States. The situation in Israel was thus not considered. However, I am not surprised to read that such exploitation of economic migrants also takes place in Israel. The Human Rights Report you mention in your March Bulletin gives but little detail of the nature of such exploitation. It talks of abuses in wages, discrimination by the Israeli government regarding families of migrant workers, debt bondage and the requirement for employer permission to enable migrants to change jobs.

I am of the opinion that such exploitation of economic migrants currently occurring in Israel goes well beyond the above mentioned limited issues. The commissioned research regarding the EU countries has found a host of illegal practices and exploitation exercised by unscrupulous employers and agencies the details of which are too numerous and complicated to mention here. For example it was discovered in Italy that Albanian, Polish, Ukrainian and economic migrants of other nationalities were treated like slaves at the Orta Nova camp where "Capos" controlled their very lives. The

migrants' passports were confiscated, there was prostitution, criminal activities, such as assaults and grievous bodily harm took place, living conditions were substandard, punishments were harsh, food was inadequate, transportation to work sites was dangerous, etc...These conditions constituted modern slavery as defined by the Human Rights Charter. In almost every EU State it was found that employers or agencies made illegal deductions from migrants' wages, overtime work was not paid, the minimum salary was not granted, extortionate prices were charged for accommodation and transport provided by the employer or agency, wages were withheld as a means of punishment, deductions from wages were made for tax and national insurance contributions which were never paid to governments. Additional charges were made if the migrants wished to be paid by cheque. Threats were often made of deportation should the economic migrants complain to the authorities about their treatment or working conditions. Intimidation often featured and insulting behaviour and discriminatory treatment took place. Foul language and the making of gibes at the nationality of migrants also featured. Flagrant breaches of health and safety laws occurred thus endangering migrants' lives some of whom sustained severe injuries and many were killed as a result of accidents at work. Debt bondage prevailed where the migrant worker, because of illegal wage deductions, owed considerable sums of money to the employer. I have seen some of the dirty and unkempt conditions in which economic migrants lived; sleeping on mattresses two feet apart in large dormitories or caravans. I have seen hot bedding being practiced where migrants slept in the same bed during different shifts. How many times have I experienced the visits of penniless Polish, Lithuanian, Latvian, Slovak and Estonian economic migrants at the Consulate of the Republic of Poland seeking assistance to be repatriated to their respective countries, seeking shelter because their employer had dismissed them without following the legal procedures and at the same time throwing them out of their pitiful accommodation!. This is a pan-European situation and is happening at our own door step in Hull. Little does the public know what is going on at their very doorstep! I therefore suspect that what is happening in Israel with regard to economic migrants, as reported, is merely the tip of the iceberg!

I should add that many conferences have been held in the past years in the EU countries and in EU universities regarding the issue of economic migrants. The latest one organised by Hull University and the European University Cyprus will be held in Nicosia on 9th and 10th May, 2011.

Once again thank you for the richness of your monthly bulletins. Your efforts are much appreciated.

Shalom

Jo

### **Judge Goldstone: Claims of Israel's Gaza War Crimes Should be Reconsidered**

Charges mounted against Israel in the Goldstone Report, including those of alleged war crimes and intentionally targeting civilians, would have been modified had Israel

cooperated with the United Nations' fact-finding commission, said Richard Goldstone in a recent article he published on *The Washington Post*.

The article criticizes two organizations: Hamas and the UN. Indirectly, it is also self-critic as Goldstone was very critical of Israel in his Report, and far less so regarding Hamas. Goldstone serves the UN, thus he contributed to its bias against Israel.

"We know a lot more today about what happened in the Gaza war of 2008-09 than we did when I chaired the fact-finding mission appointed by the UN Human Rights Council that produced what has come to be known as the Goldstone Report," Goldstone wrote, adding: "If I had known then what I know now, the Goldstone Report would have been a different document."



Goldstone noted Israeli efforts to investigate wrongdoings by soldiers and commanders during the Gaza war, saying that war crime allegations against Israel would have been influenced by the evidence provided by such probes.

While "Israeli evidence that has emerged since publication of our report doesn't negate the tragic loss of civilian life, I regret that our fact-finding mission did not have such evidence explaining the circumstances in which we said civilians in Gaza were targeted, because it probably would have influenced our findings about intentionality and war crimes."

"Israel's lack of cooperation with our investigation meant that we were not able to corroborate how many Gazans killed were civilians and how many were combatants. The Israeli military's numbers have turned out to be similar to those recently furnished by Hamas (although Hamas may have reason to inflate the number of its combatants)."

Trying to belatedly balance, to some degree, his critic of Hamas compared to his critic of Israel, Goldstone now writes that while Israel has shown to probe itself "to a significant degree" over Gaza war actions, Hamas "has done nothing."

Goldstone also criticizes the UN Human Rights Council's anti-Israel bias, saying that he had hoped that the report could "begin a new era of evenhandedness at the UN Human Rights Council, whose history of bias against Israel cannot be doubted."

"Something that has not been recognized often enough is the fact that our report marked the first time illegal acts of terrorism from Hamas were being investigated and condemned by the United Nations," Goldstone wrote, saying that his report "found

evidence of potential war crimes and 'possibly crimes against humanity' by both Israel and Hamas. That the crimes allegedly committed by Hamas were intentional goes without saying — its rockets were purposefully and indiscriminately aimed at civilian targets."

"That comparatively few Israelis have been killed by the unlawful rocket and mortar attacks from Gaza in no way minimizes the criminality. The UN Human Rights Council should condemn these heinous acts in the strongest terms".

Goldstone also urged the UN's rights body to condemn a recent stabbing attack at the West Bank settlement of Itamar, saying that "the Human Rights Council should condemn the inexcusable and cold-blooded recent slaughter of a young Israeli couple and three of their small children in their beds."

"Simply put, the laws of armed conflict apply no less to non-state actors such as Hamas than they do to national armies," Goldstone concluded in his *Washington Post* column, saying that "ensuring that non-state actors respect these principles, and are investigated when they fail to do so, is one of the most significant challenges facing the law of armed conflict."

"Only if all parties to armed conflicts are held to these standards will we be able to protect civilians who, through no choice of their own, are caught up in war".

Goldstone continues to believe "in the cause of establishing and applying international law to protracted and deadly conflicts. Our report has led to numerous "lessons learned" and policy changes, including the adoption of new Israel Defense Forces procedures for protecting civilians in cases of urban warfare and limiting the use of white phosphorus in civilian areas. The Palestinian Authority established an independent inquiry into our allegations of human rights abuses — assassinations, torture and illegal detentions — perpetrated by Fatah in the West Bank, especially against members of Hamas. Most of those allegations were confirmed by this inquiry. Regrettably, there has been no effort by Hamas in Gaza to investigate the allegations of its war crimes and possible crimes against humanity."

The Goldstone Report said very little about Hamas. The majority of its content details alleged Israeli violations of international law in its war conduct. I think that the Israeli generals operated in Gaza with the following aims: To bring the destruction of Hamas; to minimize Israeli casualties to minimum; to prevent any situation that might result in another Gilad Shalit. All three aims were achieved successfully. The main question, for me, is of proportionality: Did Israel do all that in its power to prevent harming of civilians? This question remains open. I personally doubt this.

Israel bitterly opposed the investigation from the beginning, has since demanded that the United Nations rescind the Goldstone Report. Israel pushed this motion harder after Goldstone published his *Washington Post* article. But three co-authors of the report -- Pakistani human rights lawyer Hina Jilani, Christine Chinvin, a professor of international law at the London School of Economics and former Irish peacekeeper Desmond Travers -- rejected calls to retract it.

"We concur in our view that there is no justification for any demand or expectation for reconsideration of the report as nothing of substance has appeared that would in anyway change the context, findings or conclusions of that report with respect to any of the parties to the Gaza conflict," they said in a statement to Britain's *The Guardian* newspaper.

Source: **Richard Goldstone, "Reconsidering the Goldstone Report on Israel and war crimes,"** *The Washington Post* (April 1, 2011),  
[http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/reconsidering-the-goldstone-report-on-israel-and-war-crimes/2011/04/01/AFg111JC\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/reconsidering-the-goldstone-report-on-israel-and-war-crimes/2011/04/01/AFg111JC_story.html)

### **US Helped Israel Contain UN Gaza War Probe**

According to *Foreign Policy*, the United States worked behind the scenes to help Israel contain UN probes into possible war crimes committed during the 2008-2009 Gaza war. The online foreign affairs magazine cited exclusive WikiLeaks cables detailing moves by the US ambassador to the UN Susan Rice to prevent a more thorough UN investigation of alleged abuses during the conflict.

To recall: Some 1,400 Palestinians and 13 Israelis were killed during the three-week-long Israeli offensive in December 2008 and January 2009, which was aimed at halting Palestinian rocket attacks.

According to one cable, Rice spoke with UN chief Ban Ki-moon three times on May 4, 2009 to urge him to remove recommendations for a wider investigation from a board of inquiry report into attacks on UN sites in Gaza.

Rice "underscored the importance of having a strong cover letter that made clear that no further action was needed and would close out this issue," the US diplomatic cable said.

Ban said his staff was working with the Israeli delegation and "called her after the letter had been finalized to report that he believed they had arrived at a satisfactory cover letter."

Later that year Israel and the United States pushed back against a similar effort to investigate the war by the UN Human Rights Council, which appointed a team led by Richard Goldstone.

#### **Source:**

[http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20110419/pl\\_afp/usisraelpalestinianspeaceunconflictga\\_20110419134723](http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20110419/pl_afp/usisraelpalestinianspeaceunconflictga_20110419134723)

### **Recognition of Palestine**

Eight countries have recognized to date the State of Palestine: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Cyprus, Ecuador, Russia and Uruguay. Notice that the Muslim and Arab countries are not among the eight. The Arab League will convene to decide the issue soon and then all Arab countries will formally recognize Palestine.

The only European country in this selective list is Russia. France, Ireland, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom have upgraded their diplomatic relationships with the Palestinian Authority. I assume more and more countries will follow suit as the “peace process” is frozen and Israel expands settlements.

### **U.S. Shifts to Seek Removal of Yemen's Leader**

The United States continues to show that democratization processes trump other interests, and that its authoritarian allies should not rely on its support. The US, which long supported Yemen's president, even in the face of recent widespread protests, has now quietly shifted positions and has concluded that he is unlikely to bring about the required reforms and must be eased out of office.

While American officials have not publicly pressed President Ali Abdullah Saleh to go, they have told allies and some reporters that they now view his hold on office as untenable, and they believe he should leave.

A recent Carnegie Endowment article explains that when the country's most powerful military commander, General Ali Mohsin al-Ahmar, announced he was siding with the protesters it appeared as if the country was headed for a civil war. Ali Mohsin looks like he is positioning himself to have a role in guiding post-Saleh Yemen and is seeking to align himself and the military forces loyal to him with the interests of the country—and not the Saleh regime. The problem, however, is that Al-Qaeda is already taking advantage of the unstable situation. Its fighters have increased attacks on Yemeni security forces and checkpoints. With the regime looking increasingly fragile, the fear is that the frequency and the magnitude of these attacks will escalate. And as the regime is more distracted with this political crisis, al-Qaeda has more space to plan and launch operations.

Read More:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/04/world/middleeast/04yemen.html?emc=na>

<http://carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=43289>

### **Racism and Tolerance in Israel – Reality Show**

Professor Menachem Kellner sent me a link which I would like to share with you all:

"A reality show had a female Arab actor play a customer going in to a gas station/convenience store to purchase a coffee. The man behind the counter, also an actor, tells her, in front of several average Israelis, who are not actors, that he will not serve Arabs." To see what happens, go to <http://weareforisrael.org/2011/04/12/a-look-at-anti-arab-racism-in-israel/>

## Democracy Index 2010

In last year's democracy index, Israel is ranked in the second category titled "Flawed Democracies". The first category titled "Full Democracies" includes **only 26 countries**. Norway, Iceland, Denmark and Sweden lead the group.

The second category includes 52 countries. **Israel is ranked no. 37 in the world**. Israel scores low on civil liberties and relatively low on government functioning and political culture.

Among other flawed democracies are Italy (ranked 29), France (31), India (40), Brazil (47), Poland (48), Mexico (50), Argentina (51) and Romania (56).

The third category, "Hybrid Regime", includes 31 countries, and the fourth category, "Authoritarian Regime", includes 54 countries. North Korea closes the Index.

You can read the full Report at  
[http://graphics.eiu.com/PDF/Democracy\\_Index\\_2010\\_web.pdf](http://graphics.eiu.com/PDF/Democracy_Index_2010_web.pdf)

## Human Rights 2010

The US Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor published in April 2011 its annual human rights report. In Israel, the Reports notes that the principal human rights problems were institutional, legal, and societal discrimination against Arab citizens, Palestinian residents of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (see annex), non-Orthodox Jews, and other religious groups; societal discrimination against persons with disabilities; and societal discrimination and domestic violence against women, particularly in Bedouin society. While trafficking in persons for the purpose of prostitution decreased in recent years, trafficking for the purpose of labor remained a serious problem, as did abuse of foreign workers and societal discrimination and incitement against asylum seekers.

The full report is available at  
<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2010/nea/154463.htm>.

See also <http://www.humanrights.gov/reports/?cat=Human%20Rights>  
<http://www.humanrights.gov/2011/04/08/assistant-secretary-michael-posners-qa-on-the-release-of-the-2010-human-rights-reports/>  
<http://www.humanrights.gov/2011/04/08/secretary-clintons-remarks-to-the-press-at-the-release-of-the-2010-human-rights-reports/>

## Defending Civil Society Country Reports

The Defending Civil Society country reports from the World Movement for Democracy and the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law detail the legal environments under

which civil society and CSOs operate in fifteen countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The reports highlight both the challenges civil society faces that are unique to each country and common obstacles, such as methods used to limit civil society work and the tendency of governments to seek direct control over civil society groups through regulations and legal requirements. Additionally, the reports provide recommendations for businesses and individuals to provide greater support to civil society organizations. Countries assessed include: Burundi, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria, Sudan, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Nepal, Singapore, Taiwan, Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, El Salvador, and Panama.

See <http://www.wmd.org/projects/defending-civil-society/country-reports>

### **Please Help Dr Miguel Beltran who is imprisoned in Colombia**

I received a letter from Sally Hunt, General Secretary of the UK University and College Union (UCU), asking me to sign a petition to defend Dr Miguel Beltran, who has now been detained without conviction in Colombia for 22 months and who once more faces the opening of a trial for 'rebellion'.

Dr Miguel Beltran is a Colombian academic. He has been imprisoned since May 2009 accused of 'rebellion' and is currently detained in La Picota Prison, Bogota, without being convicted of any crime. Colombia is one of the most dangerous places in the world for trade unionists, human rights activists, journalists and educators.

Dr Beltran is a widely respected academic who has taught at a number of Colombian universities. You can read more about him and his work here: <http://www.ucu.org.uk/aboutDrBeltran>

<http://colombiasolidarity.net/2010/03/open-letter-from-professor-miguel-angel-beltran-villegas-to-the-colombian-association-of-university-students/>

<http://www.justiceforcolombia.org/campaigns/freedom/>

<https://www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=5474>



Dr Beltran has published research on the Colombian conflict and is an outspoken critic of the government. He has been charged with 'rebellion', tortured, detained for 22 months and is currently held in a prison where 90% of the inmates are paramilitaries.

I have signed the petition. Please add your name to the online letter protesting at his trial here: <http://www.ucu.org.uk/Beltranopenletter>

Dr Beltran's trial has been repeatedly postponed, most recently after it was alleged that evidence against him had been manipulated. However, on 3 May 2011, it will begin again.

UCU and Justice for Colombia are campaigning together for the release of Dr Beltran. UCU has written to the governments of the UK and Colombia.

Sally Hunt wrote: "UCU members have already shown that international solidarity and academic freedom are not mere words but powerful ideas that we cherish and campaign on. Now, I need your help once more."

Please support our colleague by adding your name to this open letter to President Santos. Please then circulate this message to your own colleagues.

### **The Role of Information Technology in Defeating the Arab Regimes**

I would like to draw your attention to "The Role of Information Technology in Defeating the Arab Regimes: Facebook 2-0 Arab Presidents." which you can find at: <http://www.ifla.org/en/faife/spotlight>

### **Ahmad Zeidabadi wins World Press Freedom Prize**

In 2009, Ahmad Zeidabadi, a well-known Iranian journalist, was one of dozens of journalists arrested following the re-election of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and charged with plotting to overthrow the government with a "soft revolution". He was sentenced to six years in jail, five years of exile and a lifetime ban from practising journalism. In 2011, he has been awarded the UNESCO Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize.

Zeidabadi is former editor-in-chief of the "Azad" newspaper and a contributor to BBC Persian - a particular thorn in the side of Iran's regime.



He was selected by an independent international jury of 12 media professionals, in a tribute to "his exceptional courage, resistance and commitment to freedom of expression," jury president Diana Senghor said.

"Beyond him, also the prize will award the numerous Iranian journalists who are currently jailed," she added. At least 26 other journalists are still behind bars.

According to news reports, Zeidabadi's wife says her husband has been put under severe pressure in prison and has not been granted any leave since his arrest.

The director general of UNESCO, Irina Bokova, who endorsed the jury's decision, also called for his release. "Throughout his career Ahmad Zeidabadi has courageously and unceasingly spoken out for press freedom and freedom of expression.

"Ahead of World Press Freedom Day and in recognition of the concerns expressed by the international jury for his health and well-being, I call on the Iranian authorities to release Mr Zeidabadi from detention."

Last year, Zeidabadi was awarded the Golden Pen of Freedom by the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA).

The US\$25,000 Guillermo Cano award is named in honour of the Colombian journalist who was murdered in front of his office in 1986.

Source: [http://www.ifex.org/awards/2011/04/13/zeidabadi\\_unesco\\_wpfd/](http://www.ifex.org/awards/2011/04/13/zeidabadi_unesco_wpfd/)

### **Call for Nominations: 2011 Jonathan B. Postel Service Award**

Nominations for the 2011 Jonathan B. Postel Service Award are now open. This annual award is presented to an individual or organization that has made outstanding contributions in service to the data communications community. This year the award will be presented during the 81st Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) meeting in Quebec City, Canada, 24-29 July 2011. The award includes a presentation crystal and a prize of USD 20,000. For more information, see:

<http://isoc.org/postel>

## New Books

**Levmore, Saul, and Martha C. Nussbaum (eds.), *The Offensive Internet: Speech, Privacy, and Reputation*. Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 2010.**



"The Internet has been romanticized as a zone of freedom. The alluring combination of sophisticated technology with low barriers to entry and instantaneous outreach to millions of users has mesmerized libertarians and communitarians alike. Lawmakers have joined the celebration, passing the Communications Decency Act, which enables Internet Service Providers to allow unregulated discourse without danger of liability, all in the name of enhancing freedom of speech. But an unregulated Internet is a breeding ground for offensive conduct." "At last we have a book that begins to focus on abuses made possible by anonymity, freedom from liability, and lack of oversight. The distinguished scholars assembled in this volume, drawn from law and philosophy, connect the absence of legal oversight with harassment and discrimination. Questioning the simplistic notion that abusive speech and mobocracy are the inevitable outcomes of new technology, they argue that current misuse is the outgrowth of social, technological, and legal choices. Seeing this clearly will help us to be better informed about our options." "In a field still dominated by a frontier perspective, this book has the potential to be a real game changer. Armed with example after example of harassment in Internet chat rooms, blogs, and forums, the authors detail some of the vile and hateful speech that the current combination of law and technology has bred. The facts are then treated to analysis and policy prescriptions. Read this book and you will never again see the Internet through rose-colored glasses."--BOOK JACKET.

The book has four sections: 1) The Internet and Its Problems; 2) Reputation; 3) Speech, and 4) Privacy. Most of the book is really about privacy as Daniel Solove chapter in the first section, and the entire Reputation section deals in one way or another also with privacy issues. In the Internet age, the means of controlling threats to privacy and reputation involve some constraints on speech.

I particularly recommend Solove, "Speech, Privacy, and Reputation on the Internet", pp. 15-30; Saul Levmore, "The Internet's Anonymity Problem," pp. 50-67; Cass R. Sunstein, "Believing False Rumors", pp. 91-106; Brian Leiter, "Cleaning Cyber-Cesspools: Google and Free Speech", pp. 155-173, and Geoffrey R. Stone, "Privacy, the First Amendment, and the Internet", pp. 174-194.



With a sigh, a smile?



A little while in the shine of the sun,  
 We were twined together, joined lips forgot  
 How the shadows fall when day is done,  
 And when Love is not.

We have made no vows - there will none be broke,  
 Our love was free as the wind on the hill,  
 There was no word said we need wish unspoke,  
 We have wrought no ill.

So shall we not part at the end of day,  
 Who have loved and lingered a little while,  
 Join lips for the last time, go our way,  
 With a sigh, a smile.

**Ernest Christopher Dowson**

More poems from Ernest Christopher Dowson

**Paganini Plays**



I could have expressed that which cannot be expressed  
 Safely investigate the skies' secrets  
 Drowned in a million dollar smile  
 Breathless swallow the present as if there is no tomorrow  
 Is it love or mere lust?

Gulp every word miss heartbeat  
 No lips, eyes, breast  
 Completeness of two  
 Field to shepherd for two thousand years, and for one more minute  
 Tomorrow I bury my face, day after tomorrow

Your uplifted me to unreachable places  
 The clouds are no longer thick, the cold does not penetrate  
 Dancing, floating, go over and beyond the sun  
 As Icarus, but do not burn  
 Is this Paganini who plays?

**Raphael Cohen-Almagor**

### **Light Side**

Hebrew speakers may enjoy Yisrael Katorza, one of the funniest people in the country. Here he laconically answers Yair Lapid's one liners:



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u6dQaV4AQGI&NR=1>

### **Jewish Mothers**

Q: Why don't Jewish mothers drink?

A: Alcohol interferes with their suffering.

\*\*\*

Q: Why do Jewish mothers make great parole officers?

A: They never let anyone finish a sentence!



\*\*\*

A man called his mother in Florida ,

"Mom, how are you?"

"Not too good," said the mother. "I've been very weak."

The son said, "Why are you so weak?" She said, "Because I haven't eaten in 38 days."

The son said, "That's terrible.  
Why haven't you eaten in 38 days?"

The mother answered, "Because I didn't want my mouth to be filled with food if you should call."

\*\*\*

A Jewish boy comes home from school and tells his mother he has a part in the play. She asks,

"What part is it?"

The boy says, "I play the part of the Jewish husband."

"The mother scowls and says, "Go back and tell the teacher you want a speaking part."

\*\*\*

Q: How many Jewish mothers does it take to change a light bulb?

A: (Sigh) "Don't bother. I'll sit in the dark. I don't want to be a nuisance to anybody."

Peace and love. Happy Independence Day to all supporters of Israel. Many happy returns.



Yours as ever,

Rafi

My last communications are available on <http://almagor.blogspot.com/>  
Earlier posts at my home page: <http://hcc.haifa.ac.il/~rca/>

People wishing to subscribe to this Monthly Newsletter are welcome to e-mail me at [r.cohen-almagor@hull.ac.uk](mailto:r.cohen-almagor@hull.ac.uk)  
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