

The Army and Society Forum

WOMEN IN THE ISRAEL DEFENSE FORCES



The Israel Defense Forces



The Israel Democracy
Institute

Women in the Israel Defense Forces

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The Army and Society Forum

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PART ONE

Women in the Israel Defense Forces

Baruch Nevo and Yael Shur

The State of Israel is the only country in the world in which women are required to serve in the military, as dictated by the law governing compulsory military service. Thirty percent of the regular IDF force is made up of women, serving in a wide range of jobs.

On account of its prominence in the Israeli cultural experience, the IDF is a powerful factor shaping social and economic patterns, norms, and values. The IDF has an enormous practical influence on the lives of individuals extending well beyond their fixed term of service.

HISTORICAL AND LEGISLATIVE LANDMARKS

Before the establishment of the State of Israel, women made up 20% of existing military organizations. In the Palmach (pre-state underground defense organization incorporated into the IDF in 1948), women voluntarily served as combat officers, sappers, drivers, and more. Their drilling and training was similar to that of men, and they were assigned to a wide range of units. Their activities reached a peak during the War of Independence, when they took on combat roles and command positions. It should be noted, however, that although women have participated in battle, this has never been sanctioned by official policy. With the establishment of the state, military recruitment of women came under debate: should women be conscripted, and, if so, what role should they play? In the end, it was decided that there should be mandatory conscription of women by law, but that the service requirement for women would be for certain positions only, although the regulations allowed for them to volunteer for any other position they chose.

In May, 1948, the independent Women's Corps (Chen) was established. The Defense Service Law of 1950 expresses an ambivalent approach to incorporating women into the military, given the three principles guiding policymakers at the time:

- 1) Motherhood takes precedence over security needs and is essential to the survival of the nation

- 2) Recruitment of women enables men to be transferred from home front positions to the battlefield
- 3) During times of emergency, the role of women may be re-examined.

The Defense Service Law of 1952 specified three types of position closed to women in the IDF:

- 1) Combat roles (to prevent women being taken prison of war)
- 2) Tasks in which the physical conditions are unsuitable for female recruits
- 3) Positions that demand a high degree of physical fitness

The terms of compulsory service for men and women (some of which are still valid) were defined in 1952 as follows:

- Duration of service (today): men: 36 months; women: 21 months (formerly 24 months). The period has always been shorter for women than for men.
- Reserve duty: men: until the age of 40 and sometimes beyond; women: until the age of 24 (unless they marry or give birth before that time). The IDF is now re-examining this policy and appears to favor extending the period of reserve duty for women to age 38.
- Reasons for exemption: in addition to the reasons applying to men, women may be exempted from service for reasons of marriage, motherhood, pregnancy, or religious practice.
- Service roles: men: combat positions; women: combat support positions

Changes in the Law

Over the years the Defense Service Law has undergone many revisions. The 1987 amendment erased all mention of women's roles, thus eliminating the legal balance created by the list of positions open to women. The Supreme Command Order (2.0701) states that, as a rule, women cannot be placed in combat roles; however, they may volunteer for them if they receive proper certification. The disappearance of the legal basis for women's service created a situation in which, contrary to popular belief, it was IDF policy, as dictated by the Supreme Command, and not the law itself that prevented women from entering combat positions.

It appears that the first women to work as instructors in field units, together with the 1993 Supreme Court decision in the Alice Miller case, were historical landmarks that paved the way for amending the Defense Service Law.

The Alice Miller Supreme Court Case

In November, 1993, Alice Miller, who immigrated to Israel and studied aerospace engineering and who held a pilot's license from her native South Africa, made feminist history. She challenged the IDF's refusal to accept a woman's request to apply for combat flight training. Miller's subsequent petition to the Israeli Supreme Court rested on the question: does the IDF policy of not recruiting female pilots constitute discrimination that violates the right of sexual equality? The Court decided

to use a model that takes into account the essential differences between men and women, yet acknowledges a woman's right to participate fully in political and social life, the army, and other realms. It ruled in Miller's favor and held that the IDF must accommodate women and their special needs, and absorb them into a range of military functions. (Although she began the application procedure, Miller failed to pass the entrance exams and was thus disqualified from entering the fighter pilot course.)

It appears that Alice Miller's petition transferred the decision-making authority on a basic, value-laden issue from the army to the Supreme Court. The 2000 amendment to the Defense Service Law states that:

- 1) Every female inductee has the same right as a male inductee to fulfill any military service role
- 2) The exclusion of a female inductee from any particular role will not be seen as an infringement of her rights if the nature or characteristics of that role demand it
- 3) The law applying to a female inductee serving voluntarily in a role determined by the minister of defense and approved by the Knesset Foreign and Defense Committee will be identical to the law applying to a male inductee.

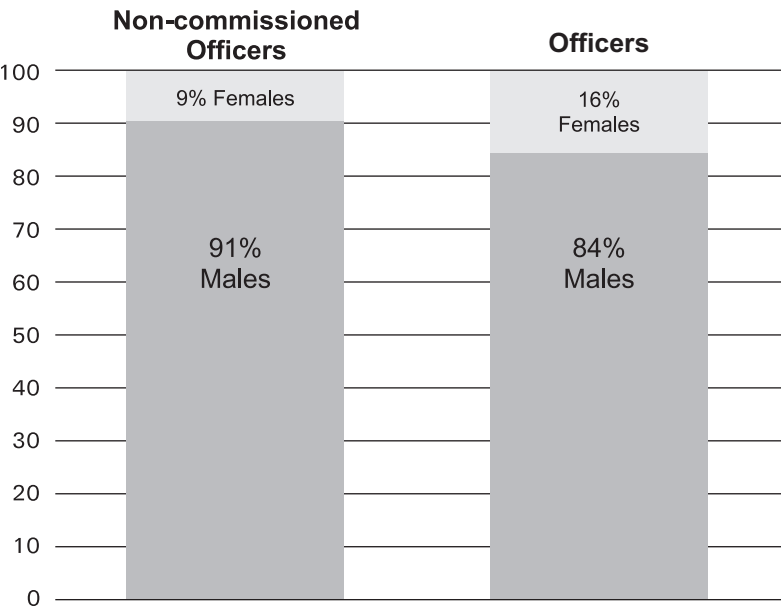
While the Knesset passed the final version of the amendment in 2000, the IDF had started putting the revisions into effect two years earlier. Today, nearly all voluntary military roles are open to women. There are now three female pilots in active service in the Air Force, and in June 2002, Roni Zuckerman

became the first woman to complete the fighter pilot’s course, making her the IDF’s first female combat pilot.

Women in the IDF

- 33% of all soldiers in mandatory service are women
- 65% of all eligible women are recruited by the IDF
- The main reasons for exemption of women from military service are religious conviction, parenthood or pregnancy, and failure to meet the required educational level
- 24% of all officers in regular service and 16% of career officers are women (the majority of them junior officers)

Figure 1
Career Officers, by Gender



- The percentage of women serving as senior officers (lieutenant colonel and higher) are as follows: lieutenant colonel 8%, colonel 3%, brigadier general 1%. The higher the rank, the lower the percentage of women, as seen in Figure 2.

Figure 2
Distribution of Career Officers, by Gender

Rank	Percentage of Men	Percentage of Women
Colonel or higher	98	2
Lieutenant colonel	92	8
Major	81	19
Captain	82	18
First Lieutenant	81	19
Second Lieutenant	83	17

(Data correct as of 28 August 2000. The columns total 100%).

Figure 3
Percentage Distribution of Women in the IDF, by Area

	1990	2000
Administration	42	23
Drivers	1	1
Officers*	7	8
Training	13	13
Early Warning Systems	4	4
Other quality jobs	24	23
Computers	0.3	3
Combat	3	5
Air Force	5	17
Navy	1	3
Total	100	100

*Of the total number of women serving in the IDF, women comprise 16% of career officers and 24% of all officers (including those in regular service).

ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN IN THE IDF

What is the explanation for the situation reflected in the figures, particularly the low percentage of women in senior positions? It seems that social factors influencing the advancement of women in general are present in the army as well.

The first of these factors is occupational segregation. As in the wider society, most positions filled by women are “pink collar” professions: teaching, instruction, communications, office and paramedical work. While the main thrust of the IDF is combat, a look at the percentage of women in combat-related jobs shows that there are hardly any women in this very central sphere. Though significant changes have taken place in the last two years, women have not had opportunities for advancement in this most important area (as fighters in combat units), and were therefore unable to earn recognition for themselves and to rise to key positions in the military.

The second factor is the **glass ceiling**: Women can ostensibly look up and advance towards the top of the pyramid. But in actuality, they encounter a hidden ceiling long before they ever reach the top. The CO of the Women’s Corps used the image of a “cement ceiling” to describe the situation in which women can climb within the organization to a certain point (not to the top) but can climb no further. In the IDF, “the top” is the rank of brigadier general. The leap in rank from major to lieutenant colonel is made by more male officers than

female officers. The most apparent gender gap is between the ranks of colonel and brigadier general.

A third factor is the **glass elevator**: Traditionally, some professions are considered feminine. Yet when men occupy them, they succeed in riding the “elevator” up to the top of the pyramid. Two examples are the Education Corps and the Quartermasters Corps. The former is based on women, most of them instructors. A look at the management level, however, reveals that most of the senior positions are held by men; neither the heads of departments nor the chief educational officers are women. While the Quartermasters Corps is not based entirely on women, the percentage of women in it is quite substantial. Yet, with only two female colonels in this corps in the third millennium, it appears that there is insufficient female representation at the top in an organization so heavily populated by women.

The repercussions of these phenomena are more extensive than they appear at first glance. The issue of occupational segregation, for example, greatly affects status and salary level. In theory, military salaries are equal; however, if a man’s salary is compared to a woman’s for field positions that are closed to women, very wide gaps are apparent. In addition, the glass ceiling, on closer glance, is something more. Those who occupy high level positions can influence, create, accomplish. Those who never get there are denied the chance to do these things.

The Reciprocal Relationship with the Civilian Sector

It appears that the three factors mentioned are not unique to the IDF. They can be found in the civilian sector as well, and a reciprocal relationship may exist between the two. The army constitutes an important opportunity to develop a social network that helps with access to information, support, and future civilian careers. Both women and men make use of this network, yet men appear to benefit more through a greater number of connections within the army. Men serve for a longer period and come into contact with more and a greater variety of people. Reserve duty enables men from every sector of Israeli society to meet; it is unlikely that such a diverse group would meet in any other setting. Senior officers encounter one another at society's highest levels, having mapped out their future careers while still serving in active duty. Specific kinds of military experience are a condition of employment for some occupations (aviation, security, etc.). In addition, the pay mechanism in civilian society is still based on military service. Men appear to benefit from service in combat units and from their access to high-ranking jobs in the military, jobs that are closed to women. The military elite enjoys a relatively smooth path to the civilian elite, where they contribute to perpetuating gender inequality.

WOMEN AND WAR

The concept of war and the concept of masculinity have been linked for thousands of years. From pre-historic hunters to

the warriors of Sparta, from the Roman Legion, medieval knights and the horsemen of Genghis Khan to the dawn of the twentieth century, wars were planned and executed by men. Men were called to defend their women and children; wives waited anxiously for their husbands and sons to return while they cared for their other children at home.

The two world wars of the twentieth century brought about changes in the conception of a woman's role in time of war. Women began to fill many home front functions as office workers, telegraph operators, drivers, workers and managers in armaments factories, nurses in military hospitals, and active members of underground cells. Over time, front-line roles were added: supply truck and ambulance drivers, nurses in field hospitals, combat soldiers (principally in Russia), and guerilla fighters.

Men generally have a clear advantage over women in physical strength, speed, endurance under extreme environmental conditions, seeing things from a holistic perspective etc. These advantages were of importance on the traditional battlefield. At the beginning in the twentieth century, however, the traditional battlefield began to change, and it continues to change due to the impact of high-tech and a looser definition of battle-front and home-front. These changes make the masculine advantage less relevant and foster equality between men and women in the area of combat skills.

THE FEMINIST MOVEMENT

The aim of the feminist movement is to work toward political, social, and educational equality between women and men. Its roots are in the humanist movements of the eighteenth century and in the Industrial Revolution.

Women have traditionally been considered physically and intellectually inferior to men, a conception that was expressed in both law and religion. Women were not permitted to own land, enter business ventures, or influence their children's formal education. They were also barred from voting and from studying at institutions of higher learning. They won these rights through a slow and gradual process fueled by constant struggle. Women's suffrage in the U.S., for example, was achieved only in the 1920s. In an attempt to remedy past discrimination against women, affirmative action laws were passed in the twentieth century. In 1946, the U.N. established the Commission on the Status of Women in an attempt to set a global standard for women's rights.

In 1960 the feminist movement gained new momentum by advocating the right to abortion, benefits for working mothers, equal job opportunities and salaries, and equality in education.

In the 150 years since its inception, the movement has recorded many impressive achievements. Women can not only vote, but can also be elected to public office and serve

as judges. The working world opened up to them; over a million women now work in what were considered until fairly recently non-traditional jobs for women. Occupational opportunities have been created in military settings as well. In 1976, the doors of U.S. military academies opened to women allowing them to enter a growing spectrum of military jobs. Once women were accepted into the military, they began to advance and climb to higher ranks.

EQUALITY AND PARTNERSHIP

The two most important values to consider when examining the issue of women's military service are equality and partnership. Their examination will lead to conclusions that form the basis of IDF policy. Regarding equality, psychological and sociological research today clearly proves that there is no functional difference between men and women in most areas. Though they may differ in physical strength, men and women have the same intellectual, social, and leadership abilities. In addition, it appears that in future warfare, technological skills will be in much higher demand than physical strength, thus further reinforcing the basis for equality. Regarding the value of partnership, the law requiring women to serve in the IDF and the fact that they share the burden of defending the country are part of the conception of "a people's army" or "the people in uniform." Since Israel's establishment (and even before, as described), women have been active in the military.

In theory, the two values are interrelated: actualization of the value of partnership advances actualization of the value of equality, and vice versa. However, actualization of the value of partnership, given that women's service in the IDF is shorter and characteristically different from that of men, is detrimental to the value of equality in the case of women. The current situation can therefore be described as partial partnership and partial equality. In the following paragraphs, we will examine ways to improve this "partialness."

Any discussion of women's military service must begin by recalling the objective of the IDF. The IDF is a combat organization, and as such is charged with providing Israel and its citizens with sufficient security in times of war. In order to fulfill its goal, the IDF must make full use of the resources at its disposal, primarily its human resources. It has often been said that the strength of the IDF lies in the quality of those who fill its ranks, and the test of its strength is its degree of organizational efficiency. Since Israeli society supplies the required human resources (both men and women), it is the task of the IDF to use them in the most efficient way possible in the pursuit of its goals.

However, sexual inequality in the IDF is a fact, and this situation has to be changed. The status of women in the military is influenced by the accepted norms of civilian society and to a large extent reflects their status generally. True realization of the value of equality would be beneficial to the IDF and would enhance the status and contribution of women in both military and civilian life.

Based on these considerations, senior staff in the IDF have reached the cautious yet inevitable conclusion that, viewed historically, the value of partnership of women in the IDF has overshadowed that of equality.

Questions Regarding the Values of Equality and Partnership

This issue gives rise to many questions. Can women achieve equality and partnership if they do not play a central role in the military's decision-making process? There is, for example, no woman of high enough rank to participate regularly in meetings with the chief of staff. Since senior positions are closed to them; they are prevented from taking part in setting policy that determines the standing of women in the army. Another question concerns the combat core of the IDF, which requires arduous training. Should women who have not passed through these channels be allowed to perform certain managerial functions? Such functions may be based not on cognitive knowledge, but on knowledge that comes from personal experience. From another point of view, is there a difference between the status of women in a peacetime army and in a conventional fighting army? A peacetime army might lead to a situation in which all military paths are open to women. Given the fact that combat in Israel takes place close to home and that the dividing lines between internal and external and between war and peace are constantly blurred, perhaps the time has come to speak in different terms about the image of the combat fighter and to consider an

approach that allows women to make use of their abilities and be included in the field of combat. Given the dependence of the IDF on reserve forces, it is also worth examining the role of women as reservists, assuming that their desire to improve their status extends beyond the months of their compulsory IDF service.

What Must the IDF Do? What Is It Doing? What Will It Do in the Future?

First, the conclusion to be drawn from the preceding discussion is that a situation must be created in which equality is strengthened and given real expression without harming the value of partnership. Equal opportunity, instituted gradually, will enhance the value of partnership and identification with the organization, and it will lead to more efficient use of human resources in the IDF and thus improve the status of women in Israeli society. There are several routes to this end. Many different job categories previously closed to women must be made available to them. It can be said that the army has historically adhered to the view that soldiers unable to crawl under barbed wire fences or charge a fortified position are not capable of being successful commanders. This view blocked the advancement of talented women, since they were barred from taking part in setting the priorities of the organization itself.

Another route is to exclude combat experience from the list of demands for senior positions that do not require such

experience. Traditionally, non-combat considerations have not been given sufficient weight when women are considered for high-ranking positions in the IDF. These assignments have been based on the degree of combat experience of the candidates and not necessarily on the qualities required for the job. Combat experience is extremely valuable; however, it is not a necessary condition for success in many senior IDF positions. In order to succeed, candidates must, among other things, belong to the organization and know it intimately. With regard to positions that require combat experience and reflect the current direction of the IDF, the partnership of women can be developed in their early stages as officers, as well as in combat roles, thus paving their way to senior roles.

The Value of Equality

It appears that the IDF now believes that the trend toward equality and partnership should be expanded and that a wider range of roles and opportunities should be made available to women. The aforementioned recommended steps have already been adopted by the departments of Human Resources and Planning, by the CO of the Women's Corps and by General Headquarters. As a result:

- Classification of female recruits will now be performed prior to their recruitment, as is the case with male recruits. Thus, all candidates for military service will know, upon recruitment, the units to which they have been assigned.
- The range of positions open to women will be expanded.

- Women will be trained for professional, technical, and technological positions, thus reducing the number of women assigned to solely administrative positions.

Changes are starting to take place in combat units, for which soldiers volunteer. The first steps are being taken in all the military divisions, and the intent is to have mixed units of male and female volunteers in combat units to serve Israel's ongoing security needs, including along its borders. The main combat positions open to women today are as air force crews, navy skippers, in anti-aircraft units, the border patrol and the military police. Women are also assigned as intelligence observers on the northern and Jordanian borders, and lately as paratroop instructors. The IDF also appears to be in the advanced planning stages of absorbing women in aviation rescue units, patrol platoons on the Egyptian and Jordanian borders, and in atomic, biological, and chemical units of the Engineering Corps. In the future, women will be assigned to command positions at training bases in the artillery and the armored corps. Positions still closed to women (but likely to be opened to them gradually over time) include combat positions in infantry and armored brigades, certain reconnaissance units (paratroopers, Golani, GHQ, etc.), and Shaldag (special operations unit).

The Value of Partnership

The following steps have been taken to promote partnership.

- The IDF decided to extend the period of women's service

to 24 months and to shorten that of men to 32 months as of August 2001, thus achieving a greater degree of both equality and partnership.

- A greater effort is being made to assign young female officers to field and combat units in headquarters, instruction, and combat support positions. Ultimately, if these same women decide on a military career after their regular service, a greater number of them will be serving in field units over time. Service in combat and field units will then be considered the province of women as well as men.
- Qualifications and professional suitability will become more important criteria for the promotion of women to senior positions in the IDF; the service path will be a less prominent consideration.
- The IDF is exploring the possibility of converting the position of CO of the Women's Corps to advisor to the chief of staff on women's affairs, in order to grant women official representation at the GHQ level.

It is hoped that the achievements already made will lead to further promotion of the status of women in the IDF through partnership and true equality of opportunity.

COSTS

It appears that the female IDF soldier of the 2000s will not be able to have her cake and eat it too, and also lose weight. There is a price attached to the desire for equal opportunity

and the right to choose. Equal rights must come in tandem with equal obligations. If, by law, women volunteer for particular positions, they must serve for the same duration as men in those positions. They will also have to serve in the reserves for a time that justifies the length of training. These are only two demands that will be made of women who take on traditionally male positions. There still appears to be a gap between the permission given to women to volunteer and the obligation of men to serve. Women who wish to volunteer are welcome, but not without some objection by men, who tend to view the service of women as "deluxe." This view perpetuates the gap between the two populations.

Damage to a Unique Identity

It may be futile to speak of equality in the IDF as long as there is a Women's Corps and a female officer at its head. This sort of structure is non-existent in civilian life. A policy began to take shape in the late 1990s limiting the intervention of the Women's Corps in "matters relevant to the differences between women and men" (such as women's health, sexual harassment, gender discrimination). Since then, responsibility in areas such as the judgment of individual cases and shift duty assignments has been transferred from the Women's Corps officer to the immediate commander. Recently, in fact, the chief of staff gave final approval to a plan to eliminate the Women's Corps. This change in policy reflects an evolution in the approach of the IDF, particularly where it limits opportunities for women's advancement.

When speaking of equality and the full integration of women in the IDF, it is important to take into account the possibility that something may be lost. In the political and social arenas, women have long demanded the right to a unique, feminine voice by virtue of their relative detachment from the melting pot and the systems that generate male discourse in Israel. This feminine voice is in danger of becoming lost. There may be women who do not want this voice to disappear as a result of over-integration. There is a need to explore how to achieve one without losing the other.

Evidence of this problem can be seen in the monitoring of female recruits in officer training programs and non-commissioned female officers working as instructors in male units. The aim was to examine the pressure women experience when filling a traditionally male role, as well as their responses to this pressure. First, women in these positions expressed their feeling that they were under constant examination and constantly needing to prove they were fit for the job. Second, they adopted male patterns of behavior in their use of language and tone of voice, manner of walking, etc. Finally, the women tended to demand that those under their authority strictly adhere to regulations. It seems that women in officer training programs were in a gender trap. They felt pressure to prove they were suited to joining the men and were no less able to do the job. At the same time, they were expected to remain “real women” and not to resemble men too closely. The tension between these two demands made it difficult for the women to adopt a consistent “winning strategy.”

The Physical Price

It appears that loss of unique identity is not the only cost. Research has indicated that as result of competition and the desire to achieve and to prove themselves, women pay a serious, irreversible physical and medical price. A detailed survey conducted by a group of physicians and physiologists on the physiological differences between men and women in their thirties found that though proper physical training improves the physical ability of women, it does not eradicate the ability gaps between the sexes. Experience, particularly in the U.S. army, demonstrates that while it is possible to integrate women in military activities that demand physical effort, there must be a change in norms; in most cases, it is impossible to adopt a uniform standard (such as a measure of physical effort) for both sexes.

Sexual Harassment

Since it is part of the experiential world of female soldiers, the issue of sexual harassment deserves attention. Alongside the question of equality, freedom from harassment should also be emphasized. The link between freedom and harassment is essential to a women's ability to make choices while serving in the army and to determine her occupation, life path, and fate.

Possible Social Effects

The military system sometimes influences negatively those who

pass through it, and this is a factor to take into consideration when discussing the participation of women. Are we willing to pay the price of being exposed to the same negative influences as men? How will women be affected if they fill the newly opened positions, or if they learn in a more militaristic fashion? Will Israeli society, already militaristic, become even more so if the number of women in military careers grows significantly? Increased participation by women could serve to widen the country's social gaps. The breakthroughs have been achieved by a very thin layer of women in Israeli society, leaving behind a large population of less privileged women, for whom possibilities such as becoming pilots are merely theoretical. These women will continue as in the past, thus perpetuating the relationship between the military and Israel's poorer sectors. Very few women from these sectors will enter and advance in military careers. In fact, the gap between women of high and low socio-economic levels may widen even further.

Effects within the IDF

From the military's point of view, the presence of women in combat units may conflict with the needs of religious male recruits. Given the army's desire to recruit a larger number of men from the religious sector, this potential conflict should be examined. Religious men cannot be recruited into units that require them to violate religious laws. Orthodox graduates of pre-military training programs cannot serve on a tank crew, for instance, if it includes a woman. This is another issue that must be taken into account.

IMPLEMENTATION: TURNING THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Both the IDF and Israeli society in general appear to be willing to pay the price of including women in the military as a means of promoting the values of partnership and equality. Nevertheless, consideration should be given to how best to implement this willingness. There may be significant differences between soldiers and units. Implementation is less problematic in the case of non-combat units. It is possible to approach combat units more cautiously by carrying out experiments and examining the results. In the case of Alice Miller, the Supreme Court did not definitively call for equality of women in combat units; rather, it ruled that the army must “experiment” with the issue.

Perhaps the best means of implementing the two values would be to strive for suitable representation of women in the various IDF units. The question is: what is suitable representation? Is it a numerical figure? Is it flexible and dependent on circumstances, such as the particular unit or type of service in question? Perhaps suitable representation must be determined for each and every unit. Or, perhaps the time required to absorb women and attain the value of equality will, in itself, solve some of the problems mentioned.

The concept of affirmative action may be interpreted as the inclusion of women in every decision-making forum. Why should the concept of “a friend bringing another friend” not apply to women as well? This is a means of widening the

spectrum of these forums. The value of equality may mean behaving the same way toward different people, accepting their differences and letting them speak in their individual voices. The intention is not to make people homogenous (to create a woman in a man's mold, for example), but rather to open a wider spectrum of fields to women.

There is a need to emphasize the value of service—the value to women and to the army. It is important to find more meaningful functions for women, so that they feel they are contributing to the IDF and that their service is not being wasted. It appears that the IDF currently rejects the idea of automatic equality between men and women and prefers, first and foremost, to foster equal opportunity.

A COMPARISON WITH OTHER ARMIES

Since the 1970s, armies around the world (particularly in the West) have permitted women to serve on a voluntary basis. While in the past women were recruited only in times of war, today they are sought because of the growing need for qualified and skilled personnel who can operate sophisticated technological instruments.

Reports indicate that armies throughout the world deal with similar questions and problems regarding how best to recruit women. Most have a disproportionately low representation of women in certain positions. A large number of women continue to occupy “pink” jobs: paramedical, office,

personnel, and logistics. Their increased participation in the military is felt most strongly in traditional women's jobs. As in Israel, few women in the world's armies occupy high-ranking positions: In the U.S. army, there are nine female generals as opposed to 149 male generals.

Many of the major armies of the world still restrict certain functions to males (see the following data for NATO countries). It also appears that many face the dilemmas of maintaining either hetero- or homogeneous units (or including both types in the same army). Recently, the French army addressed the question of integrating women into traditionally male units and how many women to accept. Research has shown that the tension created in these types of units can affect their quality negatively. An appropriate solution may be to establish separate divisions at the company level, for reasons connected with the individual level of the female soldier and the rank in question.

The Gulf War of 1991 was a turning point in the U.S. army's perception of women. Forty-one thousand women participated in the war and, as a result, additional roles were opened up to them. There are now women serving as assault helicopter pilots and Patriot missile engineers. There is, however, no model in the U.S. army of a women's battle unit, and a decision was reached not to place women on the frontlines of battle (in units such as the Navy Seals). Some units, such as diving, remain closed to women because of the need for shared living quarters. Others are closed to

women despite regulations permitting their recruitment. The U.S. Navy's nuclear program, for example, is closed to women because it demands that they serve as divers. Another obstacle faced by American women recruits may be the exam used in the selection process: the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB), which includes whole sections based on knowledge to which women are not exposed during their period of service.

Sexual harassment and the punishment for it is another issue faced by armies of the world. In the U.S., the situation in the army is better than that in society as a whole, since army regulations can be enforced in a more efficient manner. Research in this area has shown that when new functions are opened to women, they do not usually rush to fill them. Most female recruits have no desire or intention of approaching a "danger zone." Moreover, job standards are usually raised when women are recruited to fill traditionally male positions. Researchers have also found that women are drawn to a military career because of the framework and unique experience it offers.

Figure 4
Data on Women in NATO Country Armies

Country	Female Representation (percentage)	Employment Areas/Restrictions
Belgium	7.2	No restrictions
Canada	10.8	Restricted from submarine service
Denmark	5.1	No restrictions
France	7.5	Navy: restricted from submarine service, carrier pilots and marine commando. Army: limited to 3.5% of combat arms. Air: restricted from commando roles
Germany		Limited to medical service and bands due to constitutional restriction on women bearing arms
Greece	3.8	Navy: finance only. Army: restricted from line positions. Air: Engineering only
Netherlands	7.2	Restricted from some combat areas and submarines
Norway	5.1	No restrictions
Spain	2.3	Corps/assignments open. Restricted from tactical and operational roles in Legion, special ops. Paratroops, submarines, and some small ships
Turkey		Officers only. No female NCM. Navy: Restricted from submarines. Army: Restricted from infantry and armored. Air: Open.
United Kingdom	7	Navy: 76% of positions open. (Restricted from marines and submarines); Army: 70% positions open (restricted from infantry, armored and some artillery and engineer positions); Air: All occupations open except RAF regiment
U.S.A.	14.4	More than 90% of total positions open. Navy: 96% of positions open but restricted from submarines, SEALs, and some small vessels. Army: 90% of positions open, restricted from direct ground combat positions. Air: 99.7% of positions open

THE IDF POSITION: LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

In general the IDF is marching toward opening most of its positions to women. A practical, creative way must be found to recruit women for combat roles. The correct method is one that concerns itself with details but looks toward the future; one that opens possibilities and creates equal opportunities wherever possible. Change must occur gradually; the army should not go to extremes by immediately appointing a female chief of staff.

The policy of promoting women has already begun with the appointment of female battalion adjutants, armaments officers, intelligence personnel, and equipment maintenance staff. Women now serve at the brigade and division levels, and there are already female colonels. Progress is being made from the bottom-up. It is a positive process leading to equal opportunity. The solution lies in a pragmatic approach, rather than in going to extremes. Not all women are destined to be flight commanders. But if one someday qualifies for this position based on her talent and skills, she should be allowed to enter it without petitioning the Supreme Court.

In summary, the IDF is called “the People’s Army” for good reason. Beyond its organizational responsibility to afford security and win wars, it is also charged with teaching values to the men and women who fill its ranks. The results of this education extend well beyond the period of service, and for that reason the topics of equal opportunity and prevention of

discrimination should be addressed within the framework of the army. The IDF has the important function of shaping the national ethos of Israel. Therefore, “the connection between contribution to security and meaningful service must guide the army as it taps the resource of women, while realizing the value of egalitarianism based on quality.”

PART TWO

Proceedings of the Symposium

Speakers:

Professor Arye Carmon

President, The Israel Democracy Institute

Lieutenant General Shaul Mofaz

Chief of Staff

Brigadier General Suzy Yogev

CO, Women's Corps

■■ **Arye Carmon:**

I would like to extend my greetings to The Army and Society Forum as it begins its first session. They say that when the cannons roar, the muses fall silent. I think that today's meeting carries significance above and beyond the topic under discussion. Given the prevailing reality, it is amazing to see this symposium actually taking place. On behalf of The Israel Democracy Institute, I would like to welcome the chief of staff, deputy chief of staff, IDF commanders, civilian members of

the Forum, and my colleagues at The Israel Democracy Institute.

Before we begin, I would like to say a few words. The chief of staff will then give his opening address. I would like to share with those gathered here our sense of the deep commitment of the chief of staff to the process we are beginning today. The most obvious expression of this commitment is the very existence of this symposium.

Israel's security needs were, and still are, interwoven with the continuing act of building a people, molding a society, and shaping a government and culture. The processes of change taking place in the reservoir known as society directly affect the ways in which the army handles security needs. The two are so closely linked that the reciprocal relationship between army and society in Israel has become one of the country's strategic issues.

The Forum, meeting here for its first session, will draft its own agenda for discussing the issues and questions raised by the very close connection between the army and society. Most of these issues are discussed, or argued, in a disorderly fashion. Our goal is to influence efforts to identify problems and to suggest approaches toward solving them. This goal—targeting problems, exploring them, and suggesting possible ways of addressing them—is somewhat ambitious, and we have not defined the tools through which we plan to achieve our goal. We hope that these tools will become clear in the course of the forum itself.

Without further ado, I would like to invite the chief of staff, Lieutenant General Shaul Mofaz, to open the Forum's discussion and today's session.

■ **Shaul Mofaz:**

Shalom honored guests, fellows of The Israel Democracy Institute, deputy chief of staff, and my colleagues at the GHQ.

To begin, I must admit that we debated for quite some time over whether it was right at this time, when we are in what is called a "limited conflict" but which in actuality is a situation in which the army is engaged in very intensive activity demanding broad and complex actions, to invest the time required to prepare for and participate in this dialogue. I believe that the answer to that question is affirmative.

The question of the relationship between the army and society, the link between the IDF and Israeli society, and the recognition of the importance of conducting a dialogue between them have in recent years been occupying an increasingly important place on our agenda. We need to remember whence we came and where we are coming back to—for what purpose we are performing our mission.

The IDF has discussed several central issues related to the army-society connection, issues that affect the content of our military activities. Among other things, we chose to discuss two issues as part of the dialogue hosted by The Israel Democracy

Institute. Although these may not be the most relevant topics at this point in time, there is no doubt that they are weighty issues, and in my view extremely important to Israeli society and certainly to the IDF.

One is the question of human dignity, which is the discussion topic for the next session. Today we will discuss the issue of women in the IDF and their ability to influence what is done there, and later, what is done in society at large. In my view, what is on the agenda today is the question of the health and soundness of Israeli society—its ability to cope with a struggle which, in my opinion, is one of the most crucial struggles of the era: the struggle to determine the permanent borders of the State of Israel, to end the Arab-Israeli conflict. Do we sense that the soundness of our nation or our society is deteriorating?

I would like to focus on the area of the army and say how I see the matter reflected in the level of motivation and willingness to serve of reservists. I must say that I sense no problem here. As an army and a country, we are not in trouble. It may be that in everyday life, when there are dilemmas and a part of society takes on the military burden and another part does not, questions are raised about society's ability to contribute to the army and to security. Nevertheless, at this crucial point in time there is willingness and exceptional motivation.

I think that especially at this time, a central issue worthy of note is that the IDF is primarily an army of reservists. Most

IDF units are reserve units, and therefore the preparedness, desire, and motivation of people to contribute their share to the army is a central issue.

However, let us keep to today's program, which deals with women in the IDF. The many changes that have recently taken place in this area will significantly influence the status of women, their contribution, and their place in the IDF and Israeli society as whole. It is about this influence that I plan to speak.

I will say a few words about my basic understanding and conception of the place of women in the IDF and their contribution to this organization. Afterward, I will review their ability to turn their IDF service into a contribution to Israeli society.

I will begin by saying that Israel is the only country in the world in which there is mandatory military service for women. This fact alone creates an image of equality in Israeli society in general, and in the military system specifically. But image is one thing and reality another.

The prominent place of the IDF in Israeli culture makes it a very powerful shaper of models, norms, and social and economic values. The IDF has an extremely practical influence on individual life during and well beyond the period of service. Therefore, the starting point of the discussion, this session, is the mutual influence of the IDF and Israeli society.

Two basic values must be examined in connection with women's service in the IDF. The first is the value of partnership and the second the value of egalitarianism. I will attempt to analyze these two values and to formulate the conclusions that are the basis of our policies in the IDF.

Regarding the value of partnership, I can say the following. Women serve in the IDF by law. The fact that the burden of security is shared as a partnership is part of the conception of the army as a people's army, or as a nation in uniform. Since the establishment of the State of Israel, women have served in the IDF. The Women's Corps was established in 1948. The principles that guided the inclusion of women in the IDF in the early years were stated by Ben-Gurion, and I quote: "If the daughters of Israel are absent from the army, the character of the Yishuv will be distorted. Women are not disqualified from a year of national service. They are not denied any right and are not exempt from compulsory service, unless that might be injurious to their motherhood."

Ben-Gurion also expressed his personal view: "We know that women are not obligated to serve in any other army in the world. Neither do we have any intention to send them to combat units, although if there is a security situation in which we are attacked and our survival is endangered, we will not hesitate to call every man and woman to service. However, the law at hand discusses the situation in a time of peace, and we will give women only the most basic training." Ben-Gurion's words express an ambivalent approach to including women in the military system.

My impression is that the principles that guided policymakers then are based on three main components. The first is that motherhood is more important than security needs, and it is no less essential to the survival of the nation than active participation in its defense. The second is that recruitment of women is intended as a means of transferring men from home-front positions to the battlefield. The third is that in times of emergency, in a situation of existential threat, the role of women may be reconsidered.

I would like to say, with great caution, that these principles are no longer valid today. As we will see later, some of them have undergone change.

The Defense Service Law passed in 1952 designated three categories of profession that were closed to female IDF recruits: combat roles, professions in which environmental conditions were not suitable for female soldiers, and professions that demanded intense physical stamina. I have so far detailed the partnership dictated by law and the principles upon which the law was based. It is clear that this law has changed over time, and in January 2000, a new law was passed. I will speak about this later.

The second value is egalitarianism. At first glance, the two values appear to be correlated: Realization of the value of partnership promotes realization of the value of equality, and vice versa. However, realization of the value of partnership, in a situation in which women serve for a shorter period

and under different conditions, has a clear negative effect on the value of equality. Thus, sexual inequality in the IDF is a basic fact that should be changed. The status of women in the military is influenced by the accepted norms of civilian society, and it reflects to a large extent their overall status. A change in the value of egalitarianism in the IDF and genuine and full realization of this value will be beneficial to the IDF, to the status and contribution of women in the army, and certainly to Israeli society.

As we begin to discuss the service of women in the IDF, we cannot ignore the objective of the organization. The IDF is a combat organization. It must grant security to the State of Israel and its citizens, and win wars.

In order to achieve this goal, the IDF must make full use of the resources at its disposal, primarily its human resources. It has often been said that the strength of the IDF lies in the quality of those who fill its ranks, and the test of its strength is its degree of organizational efficiency. This resource has been given to us.

By law, the IDF recruits both men and women, without paying a real price for the human resource it is getting from society. The army must measure its steps according to considerations of efficiency and use of human resources in order to achieve the goals stated earlier. I have reached the conclusion, a cautious but self-evident one in my view, that from an historical viewpoint, the value of partnership in the

IDF has taken prominence over the value of egalitarianism. If this is so, what should we do? What should we do now, and what should we do in the future?

The obvious conclusion based on my earlier remarks is that we must strengthen the value of egalitarianism and give it practical expression without harming the value of partnership. Gradual equality of opportunity will also strengthen the value of partnership and identification with the organization, and it will lead to better use of the human resources given to the IDF, thus influencing the status of women in Israeli society.

We also find support for this in an additional value that I did not mention earlier, but which exists in a much deeper way in society as a whole and in the army. The additional value worth mentioning appears in the Supreme Court opinion of Justice Dalia Dorner in the case of Alice Miller, which considered the issue of discrimination in the Basic Law: Human Dignity and Liberty. This Supreme Court decision is one of the cornerstones of equality of opportunity for women in the IDF. Dorner identified this law as an example of sexual discrimination, writing: "Closing the pilots' training course to women injures their dignity and humiliates them, as it injures this Basic Law." She added: "What we need to do is find the middle ground between 'sexual blindness' and recognition of the differences between the sexes." Toward the end of her opinion, she notes that "discrimination hurts not only the group discriminated against, but society as a whole." The IDF

is in the process of change as a result of change in the Israeli social environment and in the army itself, an organization that permeates the whole of Israeli society.

What must we do in the future? Some things are already happening. The first thing we need to do is to open a wide range of positions in the IDF to female recruits. Over the years the army has adhered to an anachronistic point of view, in my opinion, according to which anyone unable to crawl under a barbed wire fence or to charge a fortification is unable to become a successful commander. This view blocked the advancement of talented women, since they were barred from taking part in setting the priorities of the organization itself.

We must exclude combat experience from the list of requirements for senior positions that do not demand such experience. Traditionally, non-combat considerations have not been given sufficient weight when women were being considered for high-ranking positions in the IDF. We have not given qualifications the weight they deserve. We often assigned or directed people to high-level functions according to their degree of combat experience; we did not necessarily choose people with the qualifications best suited to the function.

There is great value in combat experience. And as I have already said, in the end this is a combat organization, and an organization that has one mission: to provide security and

win wars. But there are many positions at the senior level of the IDF in which combat experience is not needed in order to succeed. These necessitate belonging to and being acquainted with the organization and knowing other aspects of field and combat service. A situation was created within the IDF in which no woman held a rank high enough to participate regularly in GHQ meetings. This resulted in women being prevented from taking part in setting the very policies that determined their status in the army.

I have read some of the material that was distributed, as well as research material on the status of women in Israeli society and research on women in the IDF. Israeli researchers have already indicated the depth of involvement of the military in every sector of society, as well as the special status of the army in the national ethos. The army served as a primary instrument for building the nation, and there is hardly an area of civilian life that has not been marked by it. The strong identification of the army with the country grants the IDF greater influence than that of any other public organization.

And so, we have examined what we have done so far and what we should do in the future. I believe it is right to strengthen, in every way possible, the trend toward widening the circle of egalitarianism and partnership, exposing women to a wider spectrum of roles and opportunities in the army without harming the value of partnership. I will now specify the directions that will guide us.

Some of the things I present here have already been addressed by the Human Resources Division, by the CO of the Women's Corps and by the Planning Division, as well as by GHQ. These will lead to the same desired end: the value of egalitarianism will be promoted without the value of partnership being harmed.

These are issues that we have already started to address. We reached the conclusion—and this has already been addressed by Human Resources—that the classification of candidates, or more correctly, female candidates, for the security service will be done before recruitment, as is done in the case of men. That is, this classification will be done prior to recruitment to the IDF so that on the actual day of recruitment, women will already know the units to which they have been assigned. This policy has thus far applied to men only. In the past year, we have applied it to women as well. The results are certainly satisfactory.

The second thing we need to do is to expand the range of service positions open to female IDF recruits. I claim that there are many jobs that women can do better than men if qualifications are the main factor.

The third thing is training women for professional positions and reducing the number of women who work in purely administrative positions.

Women have started to volunteer for service in combat

units. There is already talk of mixed male and female units, volunteer combat units responsible for ongoing security within the country and along its borders.

On the subject of basic training, we would like to reach the point where female recruits take their first steps under the authority of the specific military branch, that is, within the army's basic framework. Basic training would then be under the authority of the specific branches and corps. Essentially, this means the end of Training Base 12, which is now used for the training of women only. Today we are headed toward instituting equality between male and female soldiers in everything connected with absorption and training.

On the question of partnership we have decided to extend the duration of women's service to 24 months and shorten the duration of men's service to 32 months, beginning in August 2001, thus creating a sort of egalitarian balance and at the same time promoting the value of partnership during the months of a woman's service. I think this step will be welcomed. It is subject, of course, to evaluation in light of the current situation. But it will be welcomed by both men and women.

The next area is the issue of assigning young female officers to field and combat units, headquarters positions, instruction positions, and combat support roles. In the long run, if these female officers go on to military careers, we will see, over time, more and more female officers serving in field units, and

women officers will be part of the realm of service in combat and field units.

I am also speaking, of course, of mixed courses at the corps and professional levels. The promotion of women to senior positions in the IDF, more on the basis of qualification and professional suitability than on the basis of service path, is very important in my view. Therefore, in the past two years, we have assigned women to senior officer positions that had previously been filled by men only. The only criterion was the quality of the candidate. And, in the end, if the members of the IDF placement panel judged a female candidate to be stronger than a male candidate on account of her ability and suitability for a particular position, then she was appointed.

I can point to nine of these positions, from brigadier general positions that are certainly a gateway to even higher senior positions; head of the Paymaster General's administration, which handles all payments within the army; head of the Behavioral Sciences Division; head of the Retirement Division, commander of Training Base 15, the center for Military Intelligence training; the chief Military Censor; commander of the IDF Absorption and Classification Base; chief military attaché in Poland; head of Field Intelligence in the land branch; and head of the Evaluation and Monitoring Division, which is part of Military Intelligence.

I think that if we continue to move in this direction, the number of women reaching officer-rank positions will grow, and in the

future we will see more and more women in the upper echelons of the IDF. We will be able to witness their influence on the course of the IDF and, later, on the course of Israeli society.

I must mention that the CO of the Women's Corps led a seminar that examined the possibility of replacing that role with the role of advisor for Women's Affairs to the chief of staff, to be coordinated by the head of Human Resources. This new position would, perhaps, become part of the General Headquarters, so that women in the IDF would also be represented there.

[Editor's note: On August 1, 2001, the Women's Corps was dismantled and in its place the position of advisor to the chief of staff on Women's Affairs was established, to be headed by an officer with the rank of brigadier general.]

I believe that if we pursue all the issues presented here, and if other ideas are developed and implemented over time, this vision will become reality. In addition to the achievements we have seen so far—the appointment of female instructors in field units, which began a few years ago, the 1993 Supreme Court decision in the case of Alice Miller and the amendment in 2000 to the Defense Service Law, which opened field and combat unit positions to women—the status of women in the IDF will be elevated, thus realizing the value of true equal opportunity and partnership. The “IDF 2000” program laid the cornerstone; we must now work hard to continue, out of a desire to enhance the quality of the IDF and the contribution

made by women to the army and to Israeli society in general.

These are the main points I wanted to put across at the start of this dialogue. I think that action should precede words. Most of the things I have mentioned are already being dealt with. They are being managed at the GHQ level and most of the people handling these changes are sitting here: the head of Human Resources, the head of Planning, the deputy chief of staff, the CO of the Women's Corps. We are, essentially, headed in the right direction. All we have to do is attach the appropriate cars to this train and continue in a straight line.

I think that these steps are important. They constitute change. In military vernacular, we call this "changing the diskette." In one sense, there is change in the IDF, but it is not enough to address the issue for a limited period of time and to consider select aspects of it. We must expand the issue and continue in this direction because, in the final analysis, I believe in the intrinsic ability of women to contribute to the IDF. The State of Israel provides us with this bank of individuals, both men and women, and it is my impression that until a few years ago, we had not learned how to use the outstanding abilities of this population effectively. I say this for the good of the IDF as well as for the security of the State of Israel, and certainly in relation to the future contribution of women in Israeli society.

■ **Suzy Yogev:**

Chief of staff, ladies and gentlemen, I cannot help but open on a personal note. I enlisted in the IDF in the mid 1970s, when the question for women recruits was not in which role to serve, but how to serve the needs of the army. In the mid 70s, the question was not the number of female officers in senior ranks, but whether or not to try for a senior position to have some influence. While changes are being made, and certainly there have been many, change is not exactly happening apace.

I will try to point out the trends, processes, and the societal phenomena that go hand in hand with the chief of staff's presentation.

Beyond the value aspect of women's service in the IDF, and the fact that Israel is the only country in the world that recruits women by law, we must remember that women make up 30% of the IDF's human resource manpower.

However, despite the fact that women were indeed a significant factor in promoting the central aims of the IDF, in the end their placement in the military served to entrench the stereotypical gender division.

It is enough to examine the division by units over the last decade (see figure 5). Here we see that while changes have indeed taken place, they have been of relatively little significance. The percentage of women dropped from 42%

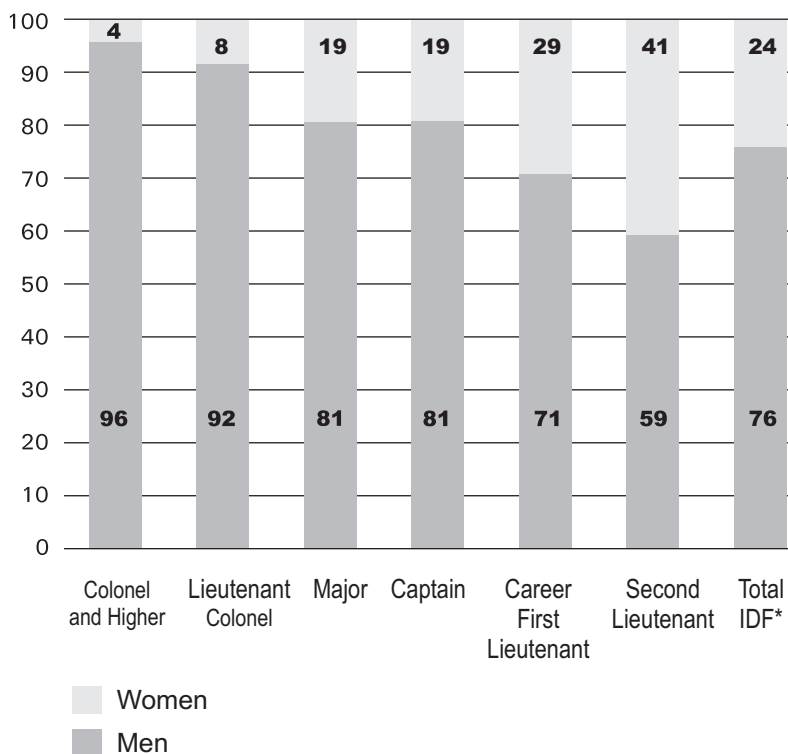
to 23% of the administrative workforce; it rose a little in quality positions that require course attendance and for which entrance is based on certain requirements, e.g., Early Warning Systems and the computer field. Taking the data for field units, one can see that although women have been assigned to combat positions for the past two years, they do not even get onto the chart because they constitute less than one percent of the total. That figure relates mainly to field instructors, as the chief of staff mentioned, where women began working in the 1980s.

The figure shows the number of men and women in IDF officer positions as of 2000. We can see that although 24% of all officers were women, the largest proportion were minor officers. That is, women enroll in officer training courses and see this as a significant chance to become influential. It does not mean, however, that they stay in the system and blossom there. We see a continual decline as we rise in rank. We note a nearly impossible jump from the rank of major to lieutenant colonel and from lieutenant colonel to brigadier general.

What do we learn from this data? What we see here are two prominent factors that have a great influence on the way women are perceived not only in the army, but in Israeli society as well.

The first factor is occupational segregation. As in Israeli society, most of our professions in the army are “pink” professions. By the way, as the CO of the Women’s Corps,

Figure 5
Division of Officer Ranks by Gender



*Mandatory service, as opposed to only 16% of career officers

Editorial note: According to 2001 data, there has been improvement in the percentage of women officers, particularly in the rank of captain: 34% women and 66% men.

I am not allowed to present figures in pink. I always present them in blue because it is confusing to present them in pink. Professions in the chart colored light gray are teaching professions—instruction, communications, office work, and paramedical. These positions are filled by the largest percentage of women in the army, and as said, women occupy less than one percent of the top positions.

Women had no chance—although in the last two years important changes have taken place—to develop along the most central axis, and they therefore had no means of expressing themselves or of entering key positions in the army.

The second factor is the interesting phenomenon of the **glass elevator**, as it is called today in the professional literature on professions that are traditionally considered “women’s”; however, when men fill these positions, they somehow manage to rise very quickly to reach the top of the pyramid.

I will present two clear examples in the IDF, the first from the Education Corps. The Education Corps is based on women, as is, by the way, the Education Ministry. However, when you look at the level of director, those in the executive positions are men. There are no female department heads. The IDF has not yet succeeded in producing a female department head in the Education Corps, a corps in which women do most of the work.

A somewhat similar example is the Quartermasters' Corps. Although it may not be based entirely on women, it does include a very significant number. There can be no doubt that two female colonels do not add up to suitable representation, in the year 2000, of an organization based so substantially on a population of women.

The **glass ceiling** is one in which women can, theoretically, look upward and advance until they reach the top of the pyramid. We can see that in the army, the glass ceiling does not apply. What we have here is a cement ceiling. You look upward and see places you are unable to reach. You can't reach the rank of general; only the CO of the Women's Corps can reach the rank of brigadier general; and in a few instances, we might even find ourselves on a sticky floor. As the years go by, we become less gullible. When young, we enroll in officer training courses. We want to make an investment and to have influence, and it seems to us that the sky's the limit. But we never manage to get off the ground. We are stuck.

We have many ways of showing, by percentage, the unsatisfactory representation of women. Take the Medical Corps. When you look at the number of male and female doctors and their respective degrees of representation, it is clear that women are not adequately represented at all.

I am not raising this here in order to attack the army. I merely want to make it clear that these two factors exist in the army. The army is the first organization that a young man or

woman enters. From there, after discharge, he/she progresses to the civil sector, where, essentially, the same factors are encountered. The issue of occupational segregation has a strong influence on status and low salaries. Theoretically, our salaries in the army are identical with those of men, as they should be. But if we take the salary of a man and compare it with the salary of a woman for field positions that are not open to women, we find very wide gaps. If we look at the glass ceiling, we see that it is not just a glass ceiling. Occupying a key position involves power and influence. If you are there, you have influence. You can create and do things, certainly in particular ranks. If you never get there, you have no chance of doing so.

The chief of staff touched on the milestones, and I will not repeat them. I must mention two things at this point. Sitting with us today is Alice Miller, who in my eyes is a pioneer. The chief of staff presented the Supreme Court decision about women being assigned the same positions as men. In my opinion, the case of Alice Miller is groundbreaking in that she took a step that highlighted a trend among young women her age. I am quite sure that women had previously requested that the army place them in a certain profession, and were turned down. Female candidates tended to be conformist. They didn't challenge the army's response.

Alice Miller was the first person to question the army's response. Her petition to the Supreme Court sowed the seeds of the work that we are doing here today, army and society

together. In essence, she took a basic values issue out of the hands of the army and handed it to the Supreme Court for consideration.

It is important to understand that the amendment to the Defense Service Law was passed only in January 2000. I will not repeat the details of the policy that the chief of staff presented. His policy is quite remarkable and preceded the amendment to the Defense Service Law. For the past two years we have been operating in the spirit of the amended law, even before its passage. There is no doubt that from this point of view, the IDF has undergone a very important process, one that is having an enormous impact on our image in Israeli society.

For years we said that it is not the province of the army whether a woman is a combat soldier or not. It is a matter to be determined by Israeli society. I have news for you: society has spoken. The amendment to the Defense Service Law and the Supreme Court case of Alice Miller signaled a clear statement on this matter. The task we have now is to implement changes in the spirit of the Supreme Court ruling.

Recognizing the ability of women to perform men's tasks is, undoubtedly, a kind of threat. By the way, Yael Rom [one of the few female pilots in the IDF] said this back in the 1950s. But she is not the one who needs to express this sentiment. We are the ones who need to make it clear to ourselves that Yael Rom and others like her filled combat and operations positions.

Twelve hundred women served in the War of Independence. Zippy Neria, for example, and the women of the Palmach, did a great deal, and I have no doubt about their capabilities. However, this was followed by a process of retreat, and today we are in a renaissance, in a process of re-awakening. It seems that the pendulum swings back and forth.

As CO of the Women's Corps, I can tell you that women are not necessarily in need of additional protection. Treating women as weak, fragile beings who require delicate handling is not appropriate to the current zeitgeist, nor to women's strength or ability.

The final factor is organizational. While the chief of staff expounded on this, there is no doubt that the true test will be, in the end, if the female recruit of 2000 wants to have her cake and eat it too, and also lose weight. This will not work. There is a price to be paid for the desire to achieve equal opportunity. There is also a price to pay for being given the right to choose. Women volunteer for certain professions according to the law, and they must then serve for the same length of time as men. They are also obliged to do reserve duty, and there are, of course, other demands that follow as a consequence.

If we take a closer look at the direction in which we are now heading, we will see that in order to change the conception of women's service in the IDF, saying one thing or another is not enough. There has to be a holistic approach.

I have spoken about the chief of staff's policies. There is no doubt that the views of senior officers are very important in creating an environment of success, ushering in change, destroying myths, breaking paradigms, and making room for people in key positions, giving them an opportunity to make themselves heard or, sometimes, to remain silent.

Changes and processes are not enough. We also need to act, to be the agents of change in these matters. We must implement the Defense Service Law, of course. Everyone sitting here influences the image of our society and the type of country in which we live and desire to live, from members of the legal system and the media to members of the public and the Knesset.

In the end, I still think that there is much work ahead, and that we must set out on a course of equal opportunity for women in the army. I am not sure whether there is justification for a separate body, and perhaps Ronit Lev-Ari, in her role as director of the Authority for the Advancement of the Status of Women, will work to achieve these changes from outside the army.

My vision as CO of the Women's Corps is to see the IDF as a leading organization granting equal opportunity to women. Let us be a bit optimistic. I would like to end with a short quote by Marilyn French: "The idea that we have the power to transform the world may seem utopian, idealistic, or simple-minded and naïve. But I repeat my argument: the world will change in any case."

Opening plenary session

Introductory Remarks:

Professor Amia Lieblich

Dept. of Psychology, Hebrew University

Professor Eyal Ben-Ari

Dept. of Sociology and Anthropology, Hebrew University

Participants:

Professor Arye Carmon President, The Israel Democracy Institute

Nili Eldar Principal, The Reali School, Haifa

Lily Galili Staff Writer, *Ha'aretz* daily

Brigadier General Suzy Yogev CO, IDF Women's Corps

General Ya'acov Amidror

Commander, The National Defense College

Dr. Henriette Dahan Kalev

School of Public Administration, Ben-Gurion University

Lieutenant General Shaul Mofaz

Chief of Staff

Yisrael Segal

Director, The George Schultz Round Table Forum
of The Israel Democracy Institute; television host

Didi Arazi

Chairman, George Leven Hi-Tech Management School,
Tel Aviv University

Shulamit Amichai Director General, Ministry of Education

Colonel Ilan Schiff President, Military Appeals Court

Professor Mordechai Kremnitzer

Senior Fellow, The Israel Democracy Institute;
Professor of Law, Hebrew University

Ami Erel

Chairman and CEO, Elron Electronic Industries;
Chairman, Israeli Electronics Industry Association

Mordechai Green Attorney

Uri Dromi Director of Publications, The Israel Democracy Institute

Brigadier General Barbara Doornink

Director of Planning, Operations and Automation,
Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics, U.S. Army

Discussion topics:

1. The value of equality—should the IDF promote the value of equality, and if so, why? Is the IDF expected to do anything different from other social institutions?
2. Attitudes toward women in the IDF.
3. Does the IDF need women?

■ Arye Carmon:

Due to the pressure of time, we will proceed directly to the discussion itself, rather than divide into groups at this point. By doing so, we miss the opportunity to become better acquainted with each other in groups, and people will not have as much time to speak. But I take it upon myself to conduct the discussion in a way that allows as many people as possible to express their opinions.

I would like to say a few words to pave the way to the discussion. I think that the presentations of the chief of staff and the CO of the Women's Corps related to an organization that, without a doubt, is the pivotal organization of Israel and Israeli society. It seems appropriate to pose a question before this forum, a challenge of the first order: what is the reciprocal relationship between processes occurring within the army and things that are happening outside the army, between the cement ceiling and the glass ceiling? It appears that we have some sort of glass structure here that we, as a society, view from the outside. In the end, however, we feed the structure with one hand and take what it produces with the other.

I am certain that Israeli society of 2000 is completely different from Israeli society of the 1950s in its structure and anthropology, in its definition of values, and in its priorities. In this regard, I would like to make a speculation. The chief of staff spoke about two values: the value of partnership and the value of equality. He stressed that the value of partnership has become more important over time, and that a serious and strenuous effort is now being made to create a kind of symmetry. I will allow myself to say, perhaps as someone who looks at things from the outside, that it would be more convenient for Israeli society if the value of partnership were stronger and we were not running so quickly toward the value of equality, since equality does not necessarily suit the character of society and its agenda.

If we speak about the army-society interface—and this interface has many controversial aspects that we'll touch upon when we discuss human dignity—even if the army decides to be a modern and progressive army, taking the positions mentioned and leading in the directions that were also mentioned here, the progress will never be sufficient; it will always be possible to do more. The army has taken a stand in a society in which two minority populations do not serve, minorities whose values are not values of equality, and their voices are clearly heard. The political strengthening of these two focal points affects conceptions of equality of women in the army and elsewhere.

One central question is posed here: Should we charge the

army with pioneering the value of equality while we, civilian society, do not? This leads to other questions that must be addressed, in the educational system and society in general.

I pose this as an open question in order to say that the discussion is not limited only to the place of women in the army. Rather, it will examine what is happening in the army from the standpoint of society, as it sees this sector of women in the army. I think it is also appropriate to examine the issue from a wider point of view.

In the discussion we will divide the issues diagnostically, examining questions such as these and others. Perhaps we can continue the discussion in the second part, in order to suggest ideas in a more formal way. The second part of the discussion will open with remarks by Supreme Court Justice Dalia Dorner.

We have asked Professors Amia Lieblich and Eyal Ben-Ari to pave the way with a few introductory remarks.

Introductory Remarks

■ Amia Lieblich:

I was pleased to hear the opening remarks of the chief of staff and the CO of the Women's Corps, because they neatly summarized matters that we otherwise may have argued over. There is not, in my opinion, much to argue about now.

I think there is a reciprocal relationship between the status of

women in society and the status of women in the army, and the question of where the influence begins requires an analysis on which we will never be able to agree. In Israeli society, more and more women are waking up and striving to achieve equal opportunities and equal rights. It is not surprising that this should happen in the army, where women have difficulty advancing in equally. Let us take the university, which is the institution most familiar to me. There as well—I don't know if it is a cement ceiling or sticky floor or glass ceiling—all those expressions are wonderful, but only 16% of the academic staff are women. And despite our attempts to elbow our way in, and despite the committees we establish, we have not succeeded in getting beyond that percentage.

If the figures for the army are those presented to us today, I must say that they are nothing to be ashamed of. Perhaps we will reach the stage in which the army will pave the way for other institutions that are, theoretically, completely free and not defined as male in character. And perhaps the men will influence society at large and not just military society. It is clear that the two are interrelated.

Psychological and sociological research today clearly proves that there is no difference in ability between women and men across the widest range of functions. There may be a certain difference in physical strength, something which can also be developed, but there is no difference in intellectual ability or social leadership ability. And these things, essentially, form the basis in anticipating equality.

On the other side of the value of equality is a value that relates to the place of women in society, in culture, in human myths. You called this “motherhood,” but we are basically speaking of women in a slightly different way, and I agree with what you said. If you were to bring in a staunch or extreme feminist, she may say that you need to grant women an equal place in everything—in battle, in field conditions, and so forth. I am not one of them; I think we need to strive for equality and partnership, at the same time taking into account certain limitations mentioned here, which perhaps need re-examining.

One of the issues to be addressed is which limitations to examine in the twenty-first century, without the illusion that these limitations can be totally eliminated. There is no place, in my opinion, for automatic equality in the allocation of functions, and perhaps we should remove combat units from this rule of equality. That is the first issue to be discussed.

The second is the issue of meaningful service. There is no doubt—and I have a considerable amount of material from female students, from formal and informal conversations and from research—that many women in the army feel that their service is meaningless, because they were asked to be office workers or tea and coffee servers. I am not making this up. Some of them go on to study at the university. They speak of their service as embarrassing. They need to recover from it when they enter civilian life. The army must make sure that it rids itself of this phenomenon. It has to ensure that every

woman experiences meaningful service in accordance with her own abilities, high school education, and potential, which is examined seriously when she enters military service. The problem with serving tea with a nice smile is that its time has passed. Another solution must be found.

The next point is the question of the duration of service. I think that Israeli society is willing to agree to an equal length of service for women and men in exchange for the idea of meaningful service, the inclusion of women in serious courses, and the presentation of real challenges. The view that a woman needs to marry quickly and have children seems outdated to us today from a demographic point of view. The childbearing age is rising. I do not see any reason to continue this custom of short service for women, which, in one sense, is a blow to women as a whole.

The next point is education in the army, and perhaps in society as a whole—education to prevent discrimination and harassment. I am not speaking only of instances of actual sexual harassment, but also of those gray areas in which a woman is treated generally, the way she is addressed and perceived. Here too, most of the material concerns pretty young women and what happens to them, where they are assigned, and so forth. It is clear to me as a psychologist that the solution cannot be a cut-and-dried one. We need to make a considerable investment in it, and when we do, the results will not be immediately noticeable. Nevertheless, we must find a way of preventing all these phenomena.

I would like to say something about female volunteers. Do we really want volunteers? Perhaps this is Justice Dorner's conclusion: to open up everything, but on a volunteer basis. Is this possible? What are the limitations of this approach?

The final point concerns wish fulfillment. Our agenda today would be different if we were speaking about a peacetime army. A few years ago we hoped that the army was going in a different direction, the direction of a professional army, an army that would maintain the status quo and not be caught up in battle. If this were so, the army would be an organization in which every path is open to women. I hope we return to that scenario in another few months or years. There is a difference between thinking about the status of women in what is called a peacetime army and thinking about the status of women in a fighting army, as it is today.

I would like to mention that a doctoral dissertation by Orna Sasson-Levi on women in the IDF was presented today at the Hebrew University. Since she has not yet received permission, she cannot publish her findings. But make a note that in a few months, we will have, in my opinion, first-class material on which we can base conclusions.

■ **Arye Carmon:**

I would like to return to the point that I raised earlier. There is a cultural gap between what is happening to society's value systems, including the stereotypes they contain, and what is happening in the army.

■ **Eyal Ben-Ari:**

I will add only a few words. I will raise a few questions and then something to speculate about.

My first question is addressed to the military personnel. To what extent have you thought about the dilemma faced by other armies, which is the dilemma of creating homogenous or heterogeneous units or some combination of the two? In recent years, for example, the French army has faced the question of whether to include women in men's branches, and, if so, how many. Or should they establish separate units on the company level for reasons connected with the individual level and functioning of the female soldiers?

The second question is one touched upon by Amia Lieblich and one on which I would like to expand. There is still a gap between permitting women to volunteer and requiring men to serve. This is a kind of deluxe service for women. Women who want to volunteer are welcome. But the claim against men, especially in armored, artillery, and anti-aircraft units, and not in elite units, is that a gap is formed between these two populations.

I would not want you to misunderstand my sense of wonderment. It is interesting that in recent years in particular, when the importance and legitimacy of the army is being questioned in the media and in the legal system, women have begun to enter all sorts of military roles. There is an interesting interaction here, a decline of sorts in the centrality of the army. I say this very cautiously.

■ **Comment from the audience:** Someone told me that a professor from the Hebrew University explained this in one of the weekend newspapers.

■ **Amia Lieblich:** That's right. Martin van Creveld. We do not think his arguments are reasonable.

■ **Nili Eldar:** I served for a relatively long period beyond my compulsory army service. On discharge I held the rank of colonel, this following a placement discussion that determined I could not fill the role of the Gadna para-military youth battalion officer (when the Gadna still existed). The reason was that there are religious schools in the country that cannot allow a female officer to go through the embarrassment of putting on pants. In light of this, I decided to end my service, and I'm sorry I did so. But it was a matter of principle.

There is a lot more to say, but I will raise only a few comments and questions here.

The chief of staff opened with a fitting definition of the IDF and said that the army is mainly a reserve army. We should therefore examine the place of women in the reserves if we want to relate to their status as a whole, and not only during those 24 months. On the subject of equal opportunity for female soldiers, it seems that taking action before hearing all the arguments is not always an advantage. In other words, the army decided to take action in this case. I think that given such a significant subject, which demands a process

of preparation and deep thinking, there was a need to think before acting. Without fundamental and precise preparation of commanders, physical infrastructure, and male and female recruits, a process like this cannot succeed. If we go back to Arye Carmon's idea about the army's influence on society, we will see that the influence is mutual, not only in the period preceding recruitment, but during and after service as well. It is essential to examine and relate to the entire continuum.

As a high school principal dealing with the education of youth, it seems that one of the most important aims or roles of the educational system is to prepare our graduates for the next stage in their lives; i.e., the IDF. Therefore, the place of the army must be very significant during the preparation period. The idea of pink and blue was not born in the army; it is a sociological process that begins, essentially, at birth and is expressed by the way parents relate to their sons or daughters in choosing colors and toys. It continues in the educational system in the choice of majors: what girls choose and what boys choose. And that's how male and female soldiers come to the army; that is, the female soldiers prepare themselves for a meaningful military service according to a sociological process that delegates different roles to men and women. If we begin to intervene in this process only at age 18, we have done nothing significant. We will have done something, and that is important. But we must begin earlier.

Regarding the way in which the army relates to awareness of security service, I agree with what has been said here—it

is disgraceful. This extends to the way in which eleventh and twelfth grade students are prepared. They are transported to their first real encounter with the IDF at an absorption and classification center, and there is an enormous difference in the way future male soldiers and future female soldiers are treated. If we do not deal with this, we will not have any influence later on, during the course of service, except for a few isolated cases, such as one female graduate of a naval course, another of a pilot's course. We see this as a breakthrough, but these are actually isolated cases.

The matter of values and of partnership and equality reminds me of two values that are always discussed in connection with the Arab minority. For some reason this works, since women are conceived of as a minority even though they represent at least half the population. I find the matter of partnership very troublesome because in my opinion—and I may not be aware of what is happening today in the army, but I hear what new female recruits have to say and I can read the situation—not only is there no equality, there is also no partnership. In my view, partnership is also, and primarily, expressed in the decision-making process. Placement discussions include one female representative—maybe—and it is not clear to me what she does there. Neither do I know who evaluates the female officer's candidate from the point of view of her qualifications—her commander? Since the number of female commanders is small, it is most likely that a male commander will perform the evaluation, and the results will be in accordance.

In other words, if we have no real part in the decision-making process, we cannot speak of the concept of partnership, and, of course, not of egalitarianism. And from here to a sense of discrimination and disappointment, the path is very short.

On the subject of organizational culture: the army must change its organizational culture. You spoke of this from a formal perspective, and I am speaking of something else. I am speaking of style, the prevailing atmosphere in the military. It is customary to say: male soldiers, female soldiers, it's all the same, with certain exceptions. Given the organizational conception of the army, we are very far from this. There are commanders sitting here, and I have no doubt that this matter is a difficult one for them. I suppose that the view of women's service in the IDF is a decisively economic view. It may have nothing to do with the values of equality and partnership. It focuses more on the matter of purpose, and I agree that the army needs to think about this in order to function. But in defining its goals and functions, the army has an interest that conflicts with what was said here about women's service.

I would add that the types and characteristics of wars, and not only the reality, have changed. Women with small children living in settlements are also recruited. There is no reason at all for not changing the concept of a woman's service, in accordance with changes in the nature of war. We saw what a home front war was at the time of the Gulf War and the role women and motherhood had in that struggle. You defined

it correctly when you spoke about the immunization of the country and its ability to cope with its future wars.

Excuse me, Suzy [Suzy Yogev, Women's Corps CO], do not take this personally, but in my opinion, as long as we have a Women's Corps and a female CO commanding it, we cannot speak of equality. This sort of structure is non-existent both before and after military service. If the rank of CO of a Women's Corps continues to exist, we cannot speak of equality between male and female soldiers.

That is part of the process that says: male and female soldiers are one and the same. If commanders do not treat their female soldiers as they do their male soldiers, we cannot speak about the process of changing the status of female soldiers in the army.

■ **Lily Galili:** I have a problem with the definition of women in the IDF. I would be more comfortable if the definition were women *and* the IDF, because, in my opinion, women fulfill an important function in the army today, even outside the military system. That issue is not included in the definition of our discussion at the moment, and since I would like to be brief, I will mention just a few points.

As in every organization we are familiar with—and it is a shame to devote time to this now—women also fulfill a function outside the military system and influence it.

I have a problem with the basic assumption of this entire discussion. Let us put aside for a moment the fact that we all share the desire for full participation and equality in the army, outside the army, and at every level of our existence. I think that the situation of women, like that of Israeli society, is much more complex today.

Even when we speak of equality and full integration in the IDF, I think something may get lost along the way. For many long years, women have been demanding the right to a unique feminine voice in politics and society, by virtue of their relative detachment from the melting pot and the systems that produce Israeli male discourse. I would not want that voice to be lost due to over-integration. I'm not sure how to do this. I have no answer. All I want to do is raise the problem, which I know plays a role in the work of women who promote these issues. The issue stands as a counter-consideration.

Essentially, what we want is both. I don't know how to achieve one thing without losing the other. In any case, we must be aware of preventing the loss of that feminine voice in the enormous sea of achievements that have been presented to us today.

The third thing that influences me is the basic assumption that—and again, I don't know how to separate the elements—the compensation system in civilian society is still based on military service. That also, in my opinion, deserves to be discussed. Perhaps the change must occur not only in

the army; perhaps it does not have to occur in the army at all, but in civilian society.

■ **Arye Carmon:** Lily, you cover Russian immigrants from former Soviet countries. Can you try to describe what their perspective might be if they were participating in this discussion? We are, after all, speaking about a fifth of Israeli society, and many of them serve in the army. Regarding this specific question, is there anything you can shed light on, now that we have put the issue on the table?

■ **Lily Galili:** I don't think so. On the subject of military service, their relationship to the military is within Israeli norms. In my opinion, there is no unique normative system for immigrants. There are peripheral effects that are slightly different, but they are unrelated to our discussion. On the whole, they have internalized Israeli norms, both positive and negative.

■ **Suzy Yogev:** It is very important, in my opinion, to put two things on the table that both Lily Galili and Eyal Ben-Ari raised. When we speak of equal opportunity—and Lily, you spoke of full equality—there is no such thing. We must remember that women do not have a genuine right to choose. A woman cannot decide that her male partner will have her child, and therefore, we must speak of equal opportunity. There must be an understanding that equal does not mean identical. It is because of this that we need to understand the great uniqueness of women as opposed to men. There are, therefore, things that will never happen, it seems. And

so, Nili, the 2000 amendment to the Defense Service Law allows women to volunteer for combat roles. I think that this is certainly compatible with the processes that occurred here, because the army will be, we all hope, a peacetime army in the not-too-distant future.

■ **Ya'acov Amidror:** I suggest that each of us speak in his or her own name. The role of the army is to fight, not to make peace, and we must understand that. If it is ready to fight, it will prevent war. It is not its role to make peace.

■ **Henriette Dahan Kalev:** My work is in women's studies and political science. I would like to begin with the last point made, following the indecision or lack of agreement on it here. There is an essential difference of sorts here between the conception of a peacetime army and the conception of a wartime army. I do not think discussing the question of the nature of a peacetime army is the prime concern of this forum. I agree with Amia and would be pleased to sit and talk with her about content, but this does not seem to be the proper forum.

That brings me to my second point. What is the nature of this forum? Is it a brainstorming session? Is it supposed to produce a position paper or represent a policy? I have not received an answer to this question, and I am not asking for one. But it brings me to my main point. I have chosen to present questions more than to give answers, assuming that we will not provide all the answers here. There are deep problems here, in my view.

I would like to propose an intellectual exercise by saying that if the purpose of this discussion is to approach the subject of women in the army at the root level, then judging from the gist of Nili Eldar's remarks, the key question is, are we able to imagine an army led by a female chief of staff. If we wait another two or three years, and organize a conference in another five years, will we be able to say that we have improved so much that we can begin thinking about something realistic: an army that appoints a woman at its head and counts on her to be the architect for preserving the military security of the country? That is a question it is very important to discuss. To open the door to a role, or one profession or another, in a time of war seems to be a repetition of things that have already been said. We are exchanging words but not really dealing with the problem at the root level.

I suggest asking this question here and now. Using this question as a starting point, we can see how far we want to go on the issue of the place of women in the army.

I have not differentiated between the influencing factors. I agree with the previous speaker on the reciprocal effect. I would like to raise a few more points.

I was amazed that the chief of staff did not raise the question of sexual harassment for discussion. I think that the things are related. Sexual harassment in the army is part of the experience of women finding their place. It is not only a matter of equality, but also the freedom from harassment,

and the link between equality and freedom is a good one, not only for political philosophy; it is also essential to a woman's ability to choose in the army, to her ability to determine her fate, her path, her profession.

Therefore, I think that the solution to the problem of sexual harassment is, by nature, linked to coping with the question of the degree of equality we want to give to women. I am sure that each of us here has prejudices about women and men, because each of us grew up in a patriarchal society.

Brigadier General Suzy Yogev said that women are usually conformists. That is a stereotypical statement. After that, she mentioned, of course, Alice Miller. I think that the role of the army is to expose these mechanisms at the highest echelons; in addition, we need to relate to ourselves as women. In this regard, I am like Suzy; I also think very militaristically, and I also have many things that have stayed with me since my time in the army. Both men and women need to deal with this, it seems to me. Therefore, I would expect the chief of staff to add a section to his opening remarks, not only on the question of equality in the professions and formal aspects, but also on the non-formal aspects of repression of women. Not inequality, but repression of women.

■ **Shaul Mofaz:** The issue was included in my review, but I decided to remove it. The matter is being addressed very extensively by the army.

■ **Suzy Yogev:** We praised the Supreme Court because

changes have taken place in the army in the past two or three years, important changes in the area of sexual harassment. I don't think there is an organization in Israel that relates in such a strict way to sexual harassment. I agree with you that in very large measure, it is part of our culture. We are talking here about power differences.

■ **Henriette Dahan Kalev:** Everyone knows that there is still a lot of work to be done. I only wanted to make the link between equality, between the questions you raised, and this serious problem, and not only because one officer or another behaved in this way or that; rather as part of the overall perception of education in the army. I suggest that we do not separate these things.

The next point is: what will be the effect of opening professions or exposing women to military education? We are not speaking of instructors' positions or "pink" positions, but more militaristic education. Israeli society is already very militaristic, and here I am merely rewording the apprehension expressed by Lily Galili. Will a society that is already militaristic become even more militaristic if its population of women in military jobs increases significantly? I hope that the point is clear.

■ **Comment from the audience:** What is the alternative?

■ **Henriette Dahan Kalev:** I don't know. I raise questions. That is my function here.

An additional point is the stratification of Israeli society. I have already expressed my opinion of the Alice Miller case and its implications for the status of women in Israeli society. I claimed that even if the Supreme Court decision is revolutionary and groundbreaking, it is groundbreaking for a small percentage of women in Israeli society, leaving behind a very large population for whom becoming a pilot is only a theoretical option. In the army, they will continue to be what they have always been and the rifts in Israeli society will widen. Only very few women will turn to military professions and advance, and the gaps between men and women at the upper and lower levels will expand. I do not think it will contribute to narrowing the gaps in Israeli society.

A recent article shed light on the heavy price being paid by women in certain military professions. It turns out that because of social pressure, competition, and their desire to achieve and prove themselves, women are willing to pay the price of serious and irreversible physical health problems. In my humble opinion, this research must be conducted and monitored in all seriousness, because if we are speaking of irreversible damage to the health of many women as the price of equality, then to hell with equality.

Finally, Orna Sasson-Levi, who has completed her doctoral dissertation on the subject, should be invited to this discussion. She would explain these points very well.

■ **Arye Carmon:** I would like to return to the point that

I continue to stress. We are speaking about women in the army. In my estimation, we are creating a dissonance between our expectations of the status of women in the army—strengthening the value of equality, and so forth—and what is happening in society. One of the tasks of this forum is to deal with this dissonance.

■ **Yisrael Segal:** I will pick up the gauntlet that you dropped. A few weeks ago, another discussion took place around this table on [the political party] Shas and Israelis of Sephardic origin. One of the things that the researchers said here was that there is a correlation between the fact that in recent years more and more Israelis of Sephardic origin are serving in the army and filling command positions, and the lowered status of the army and criticism of it in Israeli society. I am reminded of that discussion given that an increasing number of women have also become a part of the army. I may be following the path of Professor Ben-Ari here in saying that there is a connection between this phenomenon and the fact that my son's army today, in the year 2000, is different from the army in which I served in 1964 from the point of view of values, of the national ethos.

A second comment: I am not sure that the army needs to be the Association for Civil Rights or even the school of education of a university in Jerusalem or Tel Aviv. I do not see how they can switch positions. That is, I do not see how the Association for Civil Rights can fill the role of the army, meaning to fight, or prevent war, or make peace.

I do not think that the army needs to take on the role of educating the generation. It would be very nice if it were possible to integrate everything, but realistically, why should I expect the army to be a social leader that brings about change in the societal structure of Israel? It is clear I am throwing stones at glass houses here. I always enjoy doing that, so I will do it this time as well.

I am not sure this is the role of the army. To the best of my knowledge, in most countries of the world the army is not exactly a social revolutionary. It is an indicator of societal trends. I am very pleased that this forum is taking place and I view it as an important start. I must also note the personal interest of the chief of staff in this subject. I would like all the respected generals sitting here to discretely ask themselves if they would be participating in this discussion without the chief of staff's presence and without an order by the chief of staff? I am not sure. Would the naval commander be participating in this sort of discussion? He should ask himself. So should those in the GHQ staff and others.

I am saying these things because I am not sure people here are personally convinced of the importance of the subject of women.

In the meantime, I have seen that women have had a great influence in the last two years. I am speaking of the non-military Four Mothers Association [which lobbied for getting the IDF out of Lebanon]. The most outstanding achievement

of women in Israeli society did not take place within the army, but, as it were, in opposition to the army, or to parts of the army.

There is another question that I would like you, chief of staff, to answer. You mentioned a number of things that are being done in the army. I would like to take the example of integrated male and female units. What I missed from the presentation is whether or not you are monitoring the situation. That also has to be examined empirically. Does the fact that you include more and more women in various functions contribute to the efficiency of the army and its professional functioning? Because, from the narrow point of view of a citizen—and not as an enlisted soldier—I want the army, first and foremost, to be efficient.

All the other questions—and I know I sound like a reactionary and admit to being narrow-minded—are minor in my view compared to this question. I would like to know if, in these mixed units of men and women, fighting ability has improved and motivation increased, or perhaps the opposite. I don't know.

■ **Ya'acov Amidror:** Much of what we have heard here was not said because people think that women will make the army more efficient, but because it is politically correct to say these things. I think that presenting women as equal to men, and therefore equal as well in military service, is a mistake on the part of the women, and I am saying this as the father of two former female army officers. I do not think this is right.

Women are not equal to men. Their army service does not need to be identical to that of men. Judging from the experience of other armies—the Canadian and American, for example—they will lose if they accept women to men's units. I am speaking of combat units.

The direction we should be taking, in my opinion, is the one mentioned by someone from the IDF Spokesperson's office: valuable service. What does this mean? It means valuable to the army as well as to the woman.

I will give you an example. I was the commander of an intelligence officers course, and I was asked if I would be willing to accept female cadets to the course. Before I was appointed commander of the intelligence officers course, there were no female cadets. I agreed to take on the first four, and today, a third of those enrolled in the course are women. Many of the capabilities of the Intelligence Corps are based on women. Why? These are permanent bases that meet the needs of women, just as women meet the needs of the bases. The same is true for men. As someone who has four women at home and one son, it's clear to me that the needs are different, and no one can tell me anything else. In these places, it is possible to meet the needs of women. I am not saying they are more open or numerous; I am just saying they are different. Women can be given the chance to achieve great things, and it is not for naught that the commander of Training Base 15 is a woman. I promoted her to the rank of lieutenant colonel in the Research Brigade.

It is an enormous mistake to place women in combat units, and I am not speaking about side effects. The tension in these units, based on the experience of armies that have been doing this for some time, will harm the quality of the units. If a strictly female company were to be established, that would be a different story.

This is not the place for women to make real achievements, because physical strength is a central part of it. And even if we try to be liberal, it is different. I am not saying it is better or worse. I am saying it is different. Therefore, this is not the place for exceptional women. In any case, there are very few of them, and it is not worth jeopardizing the whole thing on their behalf.

The appropriate solution is quality service. I would significantly reduce the number of female office workers in the army and balance the number of males and females in these jobs. There is no reason why men should not serve as office workers and women in communications, intelligence, research, and the like. But I would not place women in combat units.

We must take into account something else that is being ignored here and was only mentioned in passing. Nili Eldar said that a religious school would not permit women to come dressed in pants. I think we must respect religious schools and visit them dressed in a way that does not hurt the people who study there.

If we place women in combat units, we will be working against the desire of the army to increase recruitment from the religious sector. The religious sector cannot be recruited to units that demand it to violate clear *halakhah* because women and men are serving in them together. Someone has to decide what the priorities are. This is true of the ultra-Orthodox, but I am telling you that it is also true of the modern Orthodox, graduates of hesder yeshivas [that combine military service with religious studies] and pre-military preparatory courses too. Fifty percent of the graduates of pre-military preparatory courses become officers. They will not be able to serve on a tank team that includes a woman. I am not saying whether this is good or bad. But this information must be taken into account. Someone will have to make the decision. The decision may be that if it bothers these men, they shouldn't enlist.

■ **Didi Arazi:** My record is about fourteen years of regular service and fourteen years of hi-tech. My military career is relatively similar to the early years of General Ya'acov Amidror's career. We both came from the Intelligence Corps, and it was entirely clear to both of us that this was a classic corps that had and still has value for women. I think we are using our intelligence abilities wisely and realistically. By contrast, hi-tech, the world in which I worked intensively until two years ago, does not employ enough women. The situation is beginning to improve today, as more and more young high school women register for the four- and five-point matriculation exam in mathematics. This allows them to

enter technological professions later. Today, there are still not enough women in hi-tech firms. Their ability is still not being sufficiently tapped. In my opinion, there is not much that can be done about this at the national level. If hi-tech is perceived as a place for opportunity, excellence, and self-fulfillment, women will probably find their way there sooner or later.

I would like to make one comment. Jobs must reflect ability, everywhere, not only in the army. I think that women—and, again, I apologize for stereotyping—have a higher I.Q. than men. There are enough jobs in the army that women can do in an optimal fashion. Women have greater abilities than men in many spheres, except in the physical sphere, which limits their suitability for certain functions. I think we need to check carefully before we place women in such jobs.

I would like to touch upon another question, and with that I will end. Does the army have a significant social role, or does it not? This, to me, is an unnecessary question. The army has always had a place in Israeli society, as a leader and source of assistance. One of the greatest things about the army is equality in its recruitment. Today this is obvious, but it wasn't always this way. There is no reason that the army today should not play a very basic role in the social processes taking place in Israel.

Everyone serves in the army, just as everyone goes to high school. After high school, everyone is inducted into the army. We are speaking about those who served in the army. The

army takes up two or three years of the lives of young people and thus has a great ability to influence social trends. There is no argument, I think, about its importance.

■ **Shulamit Amichai:** I think that I am the one and only woman out of eighteen directors-general. In the directors-general forum, I am the only woman; at most other executive forums I am the only woman, unless an assistant or secretary to the director-general is present. While this could be seen as quite complimentary, it is actually embarrassing. I send notes to whoever I think can help. It is inconceivable that this is the situation in an enlightened country such as ours. People talk and talk and talk, but in the end, when you reach the top, you are among men. Of the forty-five members of the ministry of education's management staff, only eight are women—eight women out of forty-five members who occupy the most senior positions in the ministry of education.

This is the ministry of education in which the teachers are female, the supervisors are female, and the principals of elementary schools at least are female. But when you get to the senior positions in the ministry of education, most are occupied by men. In this sphere we are crawling toward change. By contrast, there are hundreds of chairwomen and female human resource directors, while in the past there were only state-employed female secretaries.

I am mentioning all this in order to say that I admire the army very much for raising the issue. As Didi Arazzi said earlier, the

army has always taken it upon itself to influence social issues. As for efficiency, it is doubtful that Rafal's [former chief of staff Raphael Eitan] boys symbolize the army's efficiency in combat any better. Nonetheless we invested a lot in them. Even today, the chief of staff invests in things whose efficacy is not proven: more soldiers with high school diplomas, more educated soldiers in the army. In the long run, perhaps, this also contributes to society, and therefore it is important and good that this issue has gotten to the army.

The problem is not only the army's. It pertains to the entire society. It begins in school; Nili was correct in saying that it begins with education. We define the issue of sexual equality, but like a fig leaf, just skimming the surface. By the way, sexual equality does not mean there are no differences between the sexes. There are differences, but there is still sexual equality. We expect the professional literature, the statements of teachers, and so forth, to come from a perspective of equality. I cannot say that we should be proud of what we do. For elementary and kindergarten teachers, there are no lessons in sexual equality. It must be part of the culture and education of every educator, no matter what the subject taught. This is a difficult issue because it does not exist in this society.

All things considered, I can say that the army has a wide field in which to operate. By the way, I personally, as the mother of four children, am not thrilled by the images of women in combat. I admit that I'm not sure I would want to see my daughter on some tank, covered in grease, etc. But if

a woman really wants this, I'm happy she has the chance. To say this is the flag we must wave—not at all, in my opinion.

What is true? All female high school graduates who finally succeed (and in this we are really making progress) in physics, mathematics, and hi-tech, must be integrated into suitable professions; i.e., they should not be given jobs in the army such as secretary or assistant. There must be a suitable career path for women. This in turn would motivate the educational system and would encourage women to do well in it.

I must say something about the frustration level in some jobs. I work with youth movements. Who is at the head of youth movements? Men. Not women. Why? Were we women not counselors? We were counselors, and we were equal to the male counselors. But when you're talking about the top, the head of the No'ar Ha'oved youth movement is a man, just as the head of the scouts is a man and the director of Dor Shalem Doresh Shalom is a man.

Ilan Schiff: There is no doubt that there is discrimination against women in Israeli society. There is no doubt that they deserve equality, and there is no doubt that the military needs to act on behalf of women's equality in the army, and I will return to this later. Nevertheless, when reading the figures in the attractive folder we received, I reached the conclusion that the situation in the army is much better than I had thought, and I admit that I had thought the situation was terrible.

I am not a statistics expert, but the figures need to be examined. They indicate that 16% of all army officers are female, if I have read correctly. That is the percentage of women on the staffs in academia, and it is an exceptional achievement. Why? Because in academia, most of the students are female; in the army, most of the recruits are men and only 32% or 33% are women. If we have reached the point in the army where 16% of the officers are women—by the way, if I read the data correctly, 13% of those in the regular service are women, and 16% of career officers are women—the situation is satisfactory. In my opinion, there is room for improvement, particularly in the upper ranks.

The main idea is that even if the situation in the army is relatively good, we must aim for greater equality for women, for a number of reasons. First, it is an ethical matter; it is appropriate to demand that the army be a people's army. Second, in the end, greater equality for women will make for a better army. Third, and I will not go into details due to time limitations, I think it will also contribute to the betterment of society. There is another reason as well: it will improve the status of the army. Simply addressing the subject of women's equality in enlightened Israeli society will greatly heighten the status of the army in society and will improve society in the end, due to the reciprocal relationship between army and society.

The final reason, which is directed, perhaps, more toward Yisrael Segal and General Ya'acov Amidror: if the army does

not do this of its own will, it will be compelled to do so, in my view, by society, through legal measures.

I think that if we require a model for women's equality in the army, we can think about equality in non-combat units. Regarding field or combat units, we can conduct an experiment and examine the results.

By the way, we should recall that the Supreme Court ruling in the Alice Miller case did not call for women's equality in combat units. It only called upon the army to experiment with the issue, for all the reasons it cited in the case. I assume that someone is attending to the matter, and in any case, we need to continue the experiment, and not only in the air force. It is already clear that there are units to which the idea of equality can be applied. As a model, I point to the idea adopted in other laws—the model of striving for suitable representation of women or a suitable voice for women.

In my opinion, we should devote much of our discussion here to the concept of a suitable voice. This is also the most appropriate place for discussing the meaning of suitable representation. Should suitable representation be examined according to numbers? Should it be examined as I understand it, as a flexible voice dependent on circumstances, on units, on the nature of the service, etc., that needs to be adapted to each unit separately?

If and when we reach the conclusion that we should have

a suitable voice or suitable representation for women, we need to remember one thing. Experience demonstrates that if we really want to achieve equality, it is not enough to make a decision that women and men, minorities or non-minorities, will be related to equally.

In the enlightened world, equality is attained with the help of affirmative action policies. Once called “reverse discrimination,” it is now called “affirmative action,” and it is a subject of great debate. What is the meaning of affirmative action in the army? The ideological justification for affirmative action was once stated by American Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackmun. He said that if you want to relate to a particular population or to particular people as equal, you have to relate to them as different. This is the idea of affirmative action, since if there is no affirmative action, there will be no equality. And now for the big question, the \$64,000 question: what is affirmative action in the army?

It is clear to me that affirmative action in the army is not necessarily similar to affirmative action in government companies. When affirmative action is applied to a government company and someone less qualified is appointed as director or in any other role, there may be negative consequences. However, in most instances, their appointments will not lead to disaster. This is not the case when, as a result of affirmative action, we recruit someone less qualified to the army. It is clear, however, that if people are equally qualified, affirmative action must be applied. In my opinion, affirmative action

should not be applied when the gap is large; in this case, should a woman be chosen if the gap is very small, or is the most qualified person chosen in any case? By the way, the Supreme Court decision on the directorates of government companies, in light of the charter of these companies calling for suitable representation of women, is that if the gap is small, the woman is to be given preference. I raise this issue for discussion and ask if it is at all possible to think about a model such as this for the army.

■ **Mordechai Kremnitzer:** There is a question that was bypassed by the Supreme Court in the matter of Alice Miller and which there is a tendency to ignore: does society want female combat soldiers? I think that if we want to reap any benefit from this meeting, we should speak about this issue specifically.

In my view, this is still the question, perhaps the primary question. I am not sure that the legislature that made the decision listened to the murmurs of society's heart. Likewise, I am not sure to what degree these normative decisions must be implemented in one way or another. That is the key question. The question is whether society wants women to be combat soldiers.

It is a question we back away from because there is no rational way of answering it. In the end, the answer is based on gut feeling. I do not know if anyone is interested, but I would like to share my gut feeling with you. I do not think the idea of

female combat soldiers is a good one. We should examine the issue. My gut feeling is not important, but the gut feeling of society is important. If the army is one in which women do not serve as combat soldiers, except in a few esoteric cases, then all the talk about equality is irrelevant. In such a case, there is no equality. It is absolutely clear that there can be no equality in an organization whose stated goal is to prepare for war and fight when needed. We are speaking about other things and not about equality. Therefore, I would also not rush to speak about equal obligations and equal partnership. I am not certain that a mistake is not being made, and I would not raise hopes about something there is no chance of achieving. That is the key question, and we should discuss it and examine people's feelings in a more professional way.

One point to clarify my feelings: the process of encouraging women, in the name of equality, to be men, is very bad. That is not the idea of the value of equality, as General Ilan Schiff said. The idea of the value of equality is to behave equally toward different people, to respect their differences, and to let their different voices be heard. We are not speaking about creating one kind of homogenous person. My fear is that this new fashion entices women or encourages them, perhaps even pushes them, to realize their womanhood by adopting the male model. I am not certain this is a correct, healthy, or positive course of action. I would like to state this explicitly.

There is something the army can do, and I hear it is already doing it. It can open wide other areas, and there are many of

these. And this is the place to say that the true test of the army is the number of women in command positions. If you want to bring about change in the internal organizational culture or send some sort of message to society at large, that is the test—the number of women in the most senior ranks. There are now, as I understand it, more than a few women in mid-level positions in some places, and there is certainly still an opportunity to promote women to senior positions. In this, I include something that I consider essential: representation of women in the General Headquarters.

I will tell you about a first-hand experience I had in the police. In 1994 I presented the police with a report that included, among other things, a recommendation that women be integrated into patrol and detective functions. The idea behind this recommendation was that women have special qualities that may serve to prevent violence in these kinds of situations. The command staff at the time was purely male—it was before a woman was appointed human resources director for the police, an example worth thinking about. There were certain statements made, to which I responded: in another few years, when you read the chauvinistic record of the things that you said here, you won't believe it. You will deny having said these things. It is therefore essential that a woman be included in this important decision-making forum.

One final point: I support General Ya'acov Amidror's idea that the army can contribute to break down the stereotype of female office workers. If the army can break down this

stereotype—part of society's image was shaped by the army—this will be a significant contribution.

■ **Ami Erel:** I said that I would not be speaking in this discussion, but I cannot help but make one remark. I will say something radical and perhaps not very popular. I agree with many parts of this discussion, but it nevertheless seems to be a discussion of the question of why there are no women on the Olympic weightlifting team. Of all organizations—and I am not saying, heaven forbid, that the army is an army of muscle and nothing more—that have to deal with the issue of equality between men and women, to choose the army in particular is a bit like choosing the weightlifting team. The question raised in Part Two [of this book] deals with the way the army relates to women. But there is another question: the way women relate to the army. If we are to really listen to a society in which women constitute 50%, we have a duty to clarify what they want, and not only what their representatives, who have reached high-level positions in the army, think they want.

I will tell you about a survey I conducted in my home. I have two children, a son and a daughter. They both grew up in the same house, both headed scout troops. My daughter was a troop leader because her brother served in that role. But before his recruitment, he ran around the neighborhood with a stretcher, and she did not. She never understood what it meant to have the bug. Therefore, I think we need to examine if women are really interested in this machismo thing, and only then deal with the matter.

I would like to go back to the remarks of Nili Eldar, principal of the Reali School. We have investments in thirty-four companies; we may be the largest investment firm in Israel. In all of these companies, there is not a single female CEO. That is the problem. Here, there is no problem of men and women together under one roof. Here, the problem is that we need to deal with Israeli society.

Sometimes I read in the newspaper about the problems of the army. Let's leave it to the army to worry about that and make sure that office workers are not only women. We will make sure that rather than sitting and polishing their nails, women instead carry out important roles. Any woman for whom no job is found will not be drafted.

■ **Arye Carmon:** On the subject of affirmative action, I was asked to mention that The Israel Democracy Institute is today publishing a position paper on the issue, written by Hilly Moodrik Even-Khen under the guidance of Professors Mordechai Kremnitzer and David Nachmias, and you are all invited to read it.

■ **Mordechai Green:** I would like to say something cynical. I, unlike all other participants in the discussion, have one obvious advantage: I have no prejudices. When I say I have no prejudices, I mean that I have no opinions whatsoever about the issue, because I am not acquainted with it; neither am I acquainted with the military system. For medical reasons, I did not serve in the IDF, and therefore the system and issues

raised here are not familiar to me.

To my surprise, I have discovered something very novel that runs through everything that has been said: the army, the IDF, is not only the Israel Defense Forces. The function of the army is not only to ensure the security of citizens, which must be protected due to the serious security situation in the country. The army transmits values, functions as a melting pot, contributes to societal cohesion, shapes personalities, and does other things of this sort. I am not sure that this is the true role of the IDF. To my understanding, the IDF is supposed to protect Israeli security and to do so in the best way possible. Therefore, when we gather to discuss the issue of women in the IDF, I wonder. If women in the IDF contribute to security, the more the merrier. If women in the IDF do not contribute to security, there should be as few women as possible. The consideration must be completely blind. Men, women, it doesn't matter—the consideration must be based purely on security, because the army has one aim and one function: to protect the security of Israeli citizens.

It may be that the attempt to see the army as a tool, a system, to use it for issues of identity, the status of women, and egalitarianism, is to use it incorrectly.

From the little I know it is clear from research on military service in general and on women serving in the military in particular, that the influence is highly significant. All the speakers have said that service affects the shaping of personalities, value systems, viewpoints, attitudes toward life, and so on. We can

all admit that despite its many positive influences, there are also negative influences to military service. There is no doubt about this fact. It cannot be otherwise. Every system has negative influences as well.

Many research studies explain why Israel and its culture are the way they are, why its citizens act as they do, why there are so many traffic accidents, and why there is violence against women. Some of the explanations relate to the influence of the military. When the participation of women in the military is examined, this angle should also be explored. We have to ask ourselves whether we want women who participate equally in the military system to be exposed to the negative aspects too, in the same way as men? It may be that men are exposed to the negative aspects because they have no choice. Perhaps it is better that women remain protected from such exposure.

■ **Shaul Mofaz:** I would like to make a comment about women in combat units. This issue has occupied too large a place in the debate about giving equal opportunity to women and placing women in influential positions in the army. We have no intention, at least not at the present time, to establish Golani brigades consisting of women. We said that there were volunteer positions in combat units, and that women can enter these. There are also places, instructional positions, for example, in which women fill functions such as training [male] combat soldiers. Those same soldiers enter combat units. We also have other units which include female combat soldiers whose

contribution goes beyond their assigned place in that unit. Therefore, it is wrong to talk about egalitarianism only in the context of combat units or women serving in combat units. We are saying that we want to open more and more functions to women in the IDF. We want to see more and more women in the upper ranks of the army. But we are not saying that we are going to establish combat battalions composed of women.

■ **Arye Carmon:** We are now going to connect with a brigadier general in the American army by means of video conferencing.

It is an honor and pleasure to introduce Brigadier General Barbara Doornink, Director of Planning, Operations and Automation in the office of the deputy chief of staff for logistics. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Senator Sam Nunn for helping us facilitate your participation in this very important forum of ours. Brigadier General Doornink, sitting here around The George Schultz Round Table of The Israel Democracy Institute in Jerusalem are the chief of staff and the high command of the IDF and a group of representatives from different walks of Israeli society. This is the first meeting of The Army and Society Forum. The Forum intends to discuss a series of issues that lie at the juncture between the army and society in Israel. We have chosen to start with the issue of women in the army. Thank you for agreeing to enrich us with the American experience on this issue.

Summary of Barbara Doornink's historical overview of women in military service in the United States

General Doornink's general message was that 'women in the army' is no longer just an expression, but a reality. World War II gave women in the United States opportunities to serve, and following the war they started being recruited for regular service. In 1968 the first female master sergeant was appointed, and in 1970 two female generals were appointed. There has been a significant increase since 1970 in the number of women in the army and in the willingness of women to serve. Women have entered military academies. The generations of the 1980s are those who are now starting to reach high officer ranks—brigadier general, etc. There are now women at every level of the army. The army reflects the American social reality; that is, men and women do things together and they do the same things. Women do not have to be encouraged to join the army; rather, they are streaming into army recruitment offices. The segregation that once existed is diminishing. There are those who oppose this and who mourn the days of the good old-fashioned army.

Brigadier General Doornink reflected on the relationship between black, Hispanic and white women at the level of enlisted soldier and at officer level. Her impression was that there are more blacks, and perhaps Hispanics, in logistics and administration than in the air force.

Regarding women in senior ranks, Barbara Doornink said

there had been a female lieutenant general at the three-star rank, but she retired. Of the 149 generals in the U.S. army, there are seven to nine females. She saw this as evidence that things were moving in the right direction and expressed her hope that someday there would be a female chief of staff of the land army.

As for women in combat units and the lessons learned from women fighting in the Gulf War, Barbara Doornink said there was no model in the American army of a women's combat unit. Likewise, women are not put on the front lines. They are not found in companies themselves, but are to be found at the brigade and division headquarters levels, in communications, logistics, and combat intelligence. In the Gulf War there were truck drivers and pilots and medical assistants. They know how to use weapons and they are trained to respond and defend themselves. In the Gulf War women were killed and taken prisoner of war. Women serve as attack helicopter pilots and as Patriot missile engineers.

Regarding the question of society's attitude to women in military service, an example was given of the U.S.S. Cole missile destroyer that was struck, killing seventeen sailors, two of them women. In this tragedy, the fact that two women were killed was not emphasized. It was seen as self-evident that if women serve their country, it will sometimes come at the cost of human life.

Overall, out of 226 professions in the U.S. military, 194 are

open to women. This is a very high percentage, close to 92% of all military professions. Looking at the percentage of women in the U.S. army according to category, the number of women in adjutancy positions is high. There are women in the military advocate's office, in the chaplaincy, and in the medical corps. In combat support positions—for example communications, engineering, military police, and intelligence—the numbers are lower. In aviation, artillery, and anti-aircraft, the number is small.

Success stories about women in the army abound in America. Women are judged by their ability and contribution, not by virtue of the fact that they are women. There has been great progress in dealing with the issue of sexual harassment in the army, more so than in American society in general, because in the army the law can be enforced with greater ease than in society. If the army says “no” to sexual harassment, or to racism, or to any behavior that infringes on religious sensibilities, the rule is enforced more easily.

Closing Plenary Session

Introductory Remarks:

Supreme Court Justice Dalia Dorner

Participants:

Professor Arye Carmon President, The Israel Democracy Institute

General Yehuda Segev Head of Human Resources, IDF

Professor Yaron Ezrahi

Senior Fellow, The Israel Democracy Institute; Hebrew University

Brigadier General Dalia Gonen CO Women's Corps, IDF

Professor Aviezer Ravitzky

Senior Fellow, The Israel Democracy Institute; Hebrew University

Mrs. Ronit Lev-Ari

Director General, Authority for the Status of Women,
Office of the Prime Minister

Brigadier General Gil Regev

Deputy Head of Human Resources,
IDF (Branch Head from July 2001)

Dr. Ila Glicksberg Wife of the Chief Rabbi of Givatayim

Colonel Einat Geffner CO Training Base 12

Brigadier General Relik Shafir Air Force Base Commander

Mrs. Emunah Elon Columnist, *Yedioth Aharanoth* daily

Uri Dromi Director of Publications, The Israel Democracy Institute

Dr. Yishai Bar

Former Reserve Division Commander;
Hebrew University Faculty of Law

Brigadier General Ron Kitry IDF Spokesperson

General Moshe Ya'alon Deputy Chief of Staff

Discussion

Introductory Remarks:

■ Dalia Dorner:

Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to let you in on a secret. Women are different from men. The French say, “Vive la difference.” Usually, women are less physically strong than men. They are limited in their biological strength, by pregnancy, by birth and by breast-feeding. These differences were intrinsic to society’s role divisions, in which the man defends the family and gathers food, and the woman remains at home. This is the basis on which the patriarchal family was formed and remains, even after economic and technological changes have obviated the need for such role divisions.

In the Hebrew encyclopedia, under the entry for “woman,” I read: “Battle remained a man’s area of activity, even when continual, back-breaking guard duty was replaced by outbursts of feverish activity, and when an explosion set off by pressing a trigger or entering digits replaced throwing a spear and face-to-face knife fighting....It is appropriate to mention that a woman’s strength and ability to exert herself are assessed in most cases according to the ability of a pregnant, nursing, and infant-caring woman. And the abilities of young women on one hand, and women who have stopped menstruating on the other, are also characterized by a lack of strength and less agile movement related to their period of fertility. By contrast, the yardstick for assessing the strength of a man is the ability

of the ideal hunter and fighter, that is, the young, unmarried male.”

It can be said that many of our professional ideals are determined for men according to masculinity, as opposed to fatherhood, and for women according to motherhood, as opposed to femininity.

In the patriarchal family, property belonged to the husband, and the wife was treated as a minor. She had no rights; she moved from the guardianship of her father to the guardianship of her husband and inherited nothing. According to Hebrew law, that is the situation today as well; the inheritance law has not changed. Involvement in politics, and all the more so in law, was thought, of course, to be unnatural for a woman.

I found an American court decision that says that advocacy runs contrary to the gentle nature of a woman and pregnancy, and the thought of a woman being a lawyer was repellent to the judge. This has changed a great deal, at least in our world. In Israel, the rule forbidding discrimination against women based on sex is winning its place as a basic legal principle, and the legal rhetoric is being translated into the reality of life. This starts, of course, with our declaration of independence, which charges the State of Israel with granting full and equal governmental and social rights to all its citizens, regardless of race, religion, or sex.

We have a series of laws that I jotted down that are designed to

ensure equal rights. The first is the Women's Equal Rights Law of 1951, which stated in Section 1: "The same law will apply to a man and a woman concerning any legal act. Any law that discriminates against a woman as such shall be null and void."

There are also later laws, such as The Male and Female Workers Equal Pay Law of 1964, which states in Section 1: "The employer shall pay a female employee a salary equal to that of a male employee in the same place of work and for the same work."

Section 2 of the Equal Employment Opportunity Law of 1988 states that "an employer shall not discriminate among his workers, or among those seeking work, on the basis of sex."

The Supreme Court verdict added something of its own by establishing a substantive interpretative principle by which, in the absence of an explicit law, every law is to be interpreted as forbidding discrimination against women. That is, any law that determines jobs, appointments, and the like, if it does not state otherwise, is to be interpreted as preserving equality. This ruling was handed down before the Basic Law was enacted, and the question is: what is the legal situation today? That interpretation, of course, did not relate to legislation. The legislation could have been discriminatory, and was discriminatory, and there were also discriminatory laws. I will not speak about them, because they are no source of pride. But they existed and were not changed, and the verdict could only translate the words and add interpretative principles.

In 1992, Basic Law: Human Dignity and Liberty was enacted, which encompassed the right to dignity but not the right to equality, due to a lack of national consensus. I do not want to go into the legal matters, but it is clear, in my view, that today as well, there is no lack of consensus among the justices of the Supreme Court that the right to dignity includes an obligation to ban degrading discrimination—not administrative discrimination, but degrading discrimination—such as, of course, discrimination based on race, nationality, and so forth. That is because discrimination of this type ascribes an inferior status to the person discriminated against and creates stereotypes. A vicious circle is formed: he is discriminated against because he is considered inferior, which forms a stereotype that serves as an excuse to discriminate against him, and so on. The same is true for women and for other groups.

Now I come to the army. I will not speak about the question of women as combat soldiers on the frontline. That departs from the subject I want to address. It is a complex social, sociological, and cultural question. We have not addressed it in the Supreme Court, because each decision relates to opening professions to women. The question was not whether to send Ms. Alice Miller into battle; the question was whether to allow her to be a pilot. The matter was not discussed, and I do not want to express an opinion on it. But the principle of closing a profession to a person based on his or her sex—what message does this send? That the group is inferior, that the person belonging to it is not capable of

working in the profession. This is clearly one way to create the same degrading stereotype that I spoke about earlier.

If the Basic Law guards against discrimination, it guards against discrimination on the basis of sex as a right included in the Basic Law, and it demands sexual equality.

What is sexual equality? The right to dignity, as any right, is not an absolute right. We create balances. In order to know what to balance, we need to ask ourselves what sexual equality is in light of the fact that women are, indeed, different from men.

Aristotle had a classic definition: equality is the adoption of an equal relationship to things which are equal, and a different relationship to things which are different, in accordance with their degree of difference. This definition, which we included in our decision in the 1960s, requires us, I believe, to relate differently when differences are relevant. But it does not include a true measure of relevance. What is the required relevance? The minute we say a woman is different from a man, the difference can be relevant across the board and in every profession.

Therefore, in the absence of a measure, there is a danger, which has become a reality more than once, that whatever measure is used will reflect the discriminatory stereotypes we spoke of. If we say, for example, that a woman is too gentle to be an attorney, she will not be accepted to this profession because she is different. And, according to the stereotype,

the fact that she is different is definitely relevant to the profession.

In the United States—we heard Brigadier General Doornink, and I am happy things have changed—laws were passed requiring that women be related to differently, with the justification that their differences are relevant to a woman's role as mother and housewife. For the same reason, a law was passed requiring military service for men only, although the heads of the army were definitely interested in extending this law to women in a practical sense. But this was not appropriate for a cultured woman.

Moreover, the definition makes the distinction between the relevance of the differences and their measurability. That is, if there are differences, and if they are relevant, the question is whether it is possible to lessen the blow to the right to dignity or equality and limit it to instances in which it is demanded in the right measure, at minimum.

Therefore, in my opinion, in circumstances in which the decision is based on a consideration of sex—which is also appropriate, of course, to other minority groups, but we will speak here only of women—we have to put the Aristotelian definition to a double test. First, we have to examine if the sex consideration is relevant, and second, based on the assumption that the consideration is relevant, to examine if taking it into account is justified, given the prevailing circumstances.

If it is justified, according to my system, discrimination against a person based on affiliation with a particular group, or against a woman because she is a woman, harms her right to dignity, a right protected by the Basic Law. But this right, as mentioned, is not absolute; it is relative, and we must draw a balance between it and other values and legitimate interests. That is, there may be instances in which infringing the equality between men and women—discriminating against women—is likely to be justified in the prevailing circumstances. It could be possible that these are balances and measurability, and I will expand on this.

This system allows us to examine the justification for discrimination, according to Aristotle's method. The moment the difference is relevant, the examination is halted. The method is cut-and-dried: there is no discrimination without a good reason. If there is a good reason, that is the end of the matter.

How do we choose? How do we make the balances? Our Basic Law includes a limiting clause, which is directed at other laws. It says that a law will be judged invalid if it infringes human rights, in our case dignity—one cause of sexual discrimination. However, this is permitted by a law that is consistent with the values of Israel and is suited to its aims, to the extent that it does not go beyond what is necessary or required by law, on the basis of detailed authority.

We ruled that we are also applying these measures to

examine administrative decisions, and it is therefore possible to examine the decisions of the chief of staff, for example, according to the same principles.

We will analyze the limiting clause and examine the issue of closing professions to women in the army.

- First of all, the first principle, which reflects the principle of legality, determines that the harm must be in the law or according to the law. This sort of law, according to our ruling, must be interpreted in a very narrow sense in order to allow a minimum degree of harm. Therefore, the authority to discriminate against women must be defined in the law, and a general instruction which allows the authority to decide is insufficient. It must be remembered that the assumption is that the authority must exercise its power of authority while honoring basic rights, including prohibition of discrimination against women, unless it is specifically authorized by law. That is the first principle.
- The second principle is that the harm must be appropriate to the values of the State of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state. This was not analyzed and not encountered in daily life.
- The third principle is that the harm must be for a worthy cause.
- The fourth principle, and the most important, is that it must be measurable when we are speaking of a worthy cause not according to the law, but a worthy cause according to an administrative decision. The worthy cause must first be

the cause of the authorizing law. An authority cannot harm the rights of a person to discriminate unless the law permits it, and the aim of the authorizing law must be examined.

Let us translate this to the topic of our discussion. First, as we begin to ascertain the proper balance when deciding to treat women differently from men because reaching the goal requires different treatment, there are a number of possible models for examining the matter in order to achieve balance. At one end of the spectrum is the asymmetrical model. Women receive special treatment. She is a housewife, a mother; she is gentle, she needs to be at home, to care for the children. That certainly closes the profession to her. At the other end of the spectrum is the symmetrical model: gender blindness; complete equality between men and women, despite their differences. Then what is pregnancy? Pregnancy is a sort of disease. A man is ill, a woman is pregnant. The result is that women have special needs. If women did not become pregnant and give birth, then there would be no men. So we need to permit them these things. However, relating to the symmetry leads to the same result as relating to the asymmetry. A very large number of women are not able to meet these demands without society allowing them, through legislation, to fulfill their biological roles.

We need, therefore, a model in the center. That is, we must take into account that women are different but are entitled to participate in political life, social life and the army in every possible role. The system should be planned such that it can also absorb women with special needs.

We know that in Israel, and in Western European countries, an employer takes into account that women, because of their differences from men, are likely to interrupt their careers because of pregnancy, birth, breast-feeding, and childcare. They may want to cease working for a year because they have an infant at home. We do not yet have equality, that is, the possibility of a man going on paternity leave. It is usually the woman who goes on maternity leave. The employer copes with this; it costs money, but it is the law.

We have a women's employment law from 1954 stipulating that women have the right to maternity leave, the right to be absent from work during pregnancy on medical grounds, and the right to return to work within a year of giving birth. This middle ground model costs money. It makes planning more difficult. The costs must sometimes be borne by private employers with the help of the National Insurance Institute. This obligation rests, all the more, with the government, and with the IDF as a very important part of our country.

As an example, I would like to speak about the demand that religious belief be taken into account. In Israel this is taken for granted. But in countries in which Jews are in the minority, the situation is different. In the United States, this is an acceptable demand. Justice Kister wrote that we are permitted to learn from the American approach to law and judgment, an approach that takes into account in large part the religious views of the employee. He cannot even be required to work overtime hours on his day of rest. The employer must arrange

for a replacement if the matter contradicts the religious outlook of the employee. And the factory must adapt itself, as much as possible, to his religious views. I emphasize here that we are speaking of a private factory and not a government office, but it is a kind of commitment.

In Israel, the Work Hours and Rest Law, as amended in 1981, forbids employers to refuse to hire a person because he is unwilling to work on a day of rest as dictated by his religion.

Now, I would like to see how the IDF distinguishes between the sexes as reflected in the concept of limitation on these same foundations.

The first foundation we spoke of is explicit consent by law. The Defense Service Law distinguishes between a man and a woman to the extent that it is relevant to the obligation to serve. While there is clearly discrimination here, the law is preserved. You know that the Basic Law does not apply to laws passed before 1992. While they are considered valid, the Supreme Court interprets them in light of the Basic Law.

In any case, the shortening of service, the stereotypes, and the place of women as perceived by the military command, these also influenced the distribution of roles but did not technically enter the picture. We were willing to assume that there was a technical authority for change and a need for such an authority for relevant cases.

Regarding the appropriateness of the country's values, a democratic and Jewish state, we assumed that excluding women from a profession does not necessarily contradict these values. In any case, we have heard no such argument.

We have reached the third fundamental—the appropriate aim. When a profession is closed to women, it is usually due to technical considerations. People point to the fact that a woman's service is shorter and that she does not serve in the reserves, and so forth. When a woman relinquishes these rights and serves as a volunteer, there are times when she is pregnant, giving birth, and so forth. Planning considerations certainly serve the important interests of the country, and it cannot be said that the aim is not appropriate from this point of view. I would say that these considerations are also relevant. That is, the women's differences are definitely relevant here. This was the decision we made in the Alice Miller case.

The fourth foundation, and the most important: no means beyond what is required are to be used to achieve this aim. The aim is not accomplished in this way, and I will explain. As we mentioned regarding civilian employers, it is possible to plan the system that has already been designed to take into account pauses in the service of men. In the case of pilots as well, there are breaks for various reasons. This can be done while taking into account the differences between men and women. This is the middle ground model that has a price. Human rights of all kinds have a price, but a price that society is willing to pay. Here the cost is balanced, in my opinion, by the benefits.

We cannot force an employer to take a female worker's needs into account yet free the army from this responsibility. The opposite is true. The army, as a central organization in the country, needs to be interested in achieving equality and striving towards opening professions to women.

I would like to emphasize here that the exclusion of women from certain military professions due to planning considerations does not, in the long run, result in the anticipated gain; both the military and society are the poorer for it.

Therefore, the exclusion of female soldiers hurts and humiliates them, and positions them as inferior to their male peers. The two went to school together and came to the army filled with good intentions. Secondly, the potential of one-half the population is not being exploited. In my opinion in the Alice Miller case, I said that this humiliating phenomenon must be abolished. It used to be common to quip: "The good guys are pilots, the good girls are for the pilots." What we need is: "the good guys are pilots and the good girls are pilots," each case according to the individual soldier's abilities. That is an example. I can say this about every other function. That is only an example, because in this decision, we made history, in my view. Later, there were sailors, and so forth.

An additional point: when women are about to be discriminated against by being refused entrance to courses, the army must prove with "high certainty" that the absorption of women in the profession would harm the security of the

country. If this is the situation, the decision is justified. There is no argument about it. But it has to be proven.

In the case of Alice Miller, no proof was presented, only estimations. An air force commander at that time believed it was so, and his predecessor believed it was so. These things are, without a doubt, conjecture and not proof. But with no proof, and when life experience and common sense do not lead to the same conclusion—because that conclusion can be reached logically, without technical proof—then exclusion of women should be avoided, and more than that, new professions should be opened to them.

■ **Arye Carmon:** Thank you very much. I think that was an instructive and fascinating contribution to the discussion. In light of these things, I would like to open the second round of our discussion with a question from the last round. Should the army be an agent of change? I think that in the previous round we focused heavily on the army and what it does. But it is clear from what some of the speakers said that there is a sort of dissonance between the army's expectations of itself and the culture of the society, and between what is happening in other organizations. We heard the director general of the ministry of education, who looked, for comparison purposes, at high-level government positions. We heard Professor Amia Lieblich on the proportion of women on academic staffs. I would like to ask the question at this point: should the army be expected to be an agent of change for society? This is related to a more basic question: does Israeli society want equality?

■ **Yehuda Segev:** We are avoiding the real discussion, and I will try to explain why on several levels. The first is the discussion of the army model, what sort of army society wants to have. There is no discussion about this—at least no real discussion—between society and the army, between the government and the army, or between any of these elements individually or combined.

We have decided for ourselves that we want to continue to be a people's army, but I am not sure this is what we are. Seventy percent of males are recruited to the army; thirty percent are not. Sixty percent of females are recruited to the army; forty percent are not. The army continues to perform national tasks that it performed in the years of the country's establishment. We are recruiting borderline youth. We take up where someone else failed. We deal with absorbing new immigrants and invest many millions in this. We employ thousands of soldiers for instructional assignments. We train soldiers prior to their discharge in all sorts of courses that have no connection to the country's security. We do many things connected with the fact that we decided we are a people's army. It is a situation that has prevailed since the country's establishment.

After we have clarified which is the right model for an army and the type of army society wants, then we can address the question, or the second level: the service of women. If we are speaking of equality, why not begin this discussion with the question of length of service? Many commanders I know

are debating a shorter duration of service in light of society's demand to be better, more professional. It is impossible to train professional female soldiers for the functions (technological, combat and combat support) spoken about in nineteen to twenty-one months.

The army established policy in this area, as the chief of staff described. We have opened all professions. There are one or two professions that we have not opened: kashrut [kosher laws] inspector and non-commissioned officer. All other professions are open. On November 30, 2000, we are opening the one profession that remains closed: infantry combat soldier. The future commander of this first male-female division is sitting here now.

This third level—the decision about equality that we are speaking about this evening—affects military service and the nature of military service. This society is highly polarized, and I will give some examples of the issues that the head of Human Resources must deal with.

Let us take, for example, the issue of secular and religious Jews, which General Amidror spoke about. This same group of religious soldiers—it is difficult to define what a religious soldier is, but for purposes of the example—is asking serious questions. It is asking us to conduct a dialogue on the nature of service that integrates men and women. Or, for example, how does the presence of a woman affect a group of combat soldiers, or any group? There are male soldiers who tell us

when they reach the recruitment base that if women are present, they won't be. We should know that there are groups like these, too. How does it affect other issues that are part of the polarity in Israeli society?

That is the third level, and it is not self-contained when we are speaking of women's service. It must be discussed in the general framework of factors that affect the service of women in the IDF. To summarize, I will tell you what results when there is no dialogue such as this. The result is that General Headquarters determines the model for the army and the relationship between the society and the army. I, as a uniformed officer, can tell you that it does not have to be like this. Society has to tell us what sort of army it wants and what sort of service it wants for women, and it must take into account all the influences that I hinted at here.

Arye Carmon: The last comments you made essentially challenge the question of the army as a pioneer leading the way.

■ **Yaron Ezrahi:** Historically, a good army is considered an army whose soldiers are willing to sacrifice their lives to win a war. It is perceived as a combination of physical strength and motivation. The generals, of course, not the soldiers, needed to be geniuses.

In Sparta, as opposed to Athens, the emphasis was on a test of strength and motivation. Historically, we see that this has

changed. What makes for motivation? In earlier times, it was knighthood, machismo, religious faith or patriotism. All these are involved in the strong motivation to sacrifice and endanger one's life.

I would like to raise the question of whether the masculine ethos, which is very central to our discussion here, is relevant to the function of an advanced army in the twenty-first century. I will give a partial answer to this question by saying that if it is relevant, then it is to a much lesser degree than in the past. The test of willingness to sacrifice and fight is not relevant to the test of the quality of the decisions of commanders and soldiers. From this perspective, I was very pleased to hear the chief of staff, who emphasized the test of quality. Not that I belittle, or that anyone else here belittles, the test of motivation. But when we are speaking of the quality of an army in this era, high motivation to sacrifice can be balanced with other values. In evaluations of doctoral students at the university, for example, to say the student has high motivation is usually a sign of a negative evaluation, as opposed to an evaluation that cites ability.

The test of motivation is not automatically compatible with the test of results in a small and smart army at a time of war in this era.

If the test of motivation were the supreme test, it would not only take precedence over the test of quality, it would also be consistent with the test of legitimacy of the army. And here I

am speaking about the things Arye wanted to relate to—the legitimacy of the army as a societal institution.

It seems to me that the test of legitimacy depends on the nature of the society. And the interesting question is: what are the army's tests of legitimacy in Israeli society today? In my opinion, if the test of motivation were the cardinal test, Israeli society would want an army that was male and religious. But given the conditions in Israel, an army composed entirely of units like those of the hesder yeshivas would suffer from serious de-legitimization in a society with a secular majority that is undergoing a process of feminization. By a process of feminization, I mean that values or qualities that were identified with women have become a natural part of male identity and behavior (for example, crying at funerals).

Here, as in other places in the world, the earlier view of masculinity was perceived as something that usually characterizes poorly educated social groups around the world. Moreover, the legitimization of masculinity as something military is devalued the more that society perceives that there is no definitive military solution to our conflict with the Arabs.

There is something deeper here connected with society itself. It is not society that will tell you what to do, because it speaks in many voices, even conflicting voices. Historically, it was the IDF that shaped the image of the Israeli male versus the Israeli female, and this had enormous repercussions in many

areas, such as relations with females and connections among males.

In Israeli society, the forces working to change male and female identity are so powerful that they challenge the status of the IDF as a shaper of the male image in Israel. Accordingly, the entrance of women into IDF roles is not at all an option, since it is a policy question. As Yisrael Segal said, we are not talking about lowering the status of the army, rather about an essential process of the IDF adjusting to new bases for granting legitimacy to this institution in Israeli society.

■ **Dalia Gonen:** I wanted to raise the question of whether our entire relationship is not based on our paradigms. We have a paradigm of the combat soldier, of the battlefield. This is the soldier who crawls under the barbed wire fence, charges forward with an explosive. We know that fighting today is different. The battlefield is nearby. The line separating outside and inside, the borders of peace and the borders of war, are becoming faint. That is, the fighting is close to home. In the Gulf War as well, when the men were in Lebanon or elsewhere, it was women who managed things at home. The battlefield is changing; the image of the combat soldier is changing. We are speaking about a communications combat soldier: Colonel Gal Heersht, for example, a communications brigade commander. We are speaking about the need for changing decisions and changing estimations of the situation. Technology is changing the nature of fighting. Perhaps the time has come to talk about a different image of a combat soldier or about different characteristics of the combat

soldier, and not about a particular combat soldier. This new perspective allows women to take advantage of their abilities and become integrated into combat units.

Secondly, if women are trained to be combat soldiers, and women volunteer to be combat soldiers, what is the use if they are not allowed near the sword's edge or the heart of the profession for which they were trained? This is a sort of double message for society; it is a sort of double message for new recruits.

Thirdly, examples of children were given, a girl and boy, where the boy trains for fighting and the girl does not. I am familiar with last year's particularly high number of recruits. I know that women train for battle with youth instructors, and they are actually preparing to become combat soldiers. There is a process of examining their suitability, which will take about five years. Only then will we be able to say if it was a success.

The border guards, for example, began recruiting women five years ago. Today, no one asks if a female police officer can be a member of the force; they ask if she has been placed according to need. This is a socialization process in which both commanders and the organizational society take part. It is a very long process.

And it will take place. In the Jewish religion—and I am not here to criticize the religion—a man gives a prayer of thanks

for not having been made a woman. He does not give thanks for having been made a man. Is man's identity judged on the basis of not being someone else, or does he have his own identity which comes from inside himself?

■ **Aviezer Ravitzky:** I will be brief since I agree with much of what was said here. There were two lines of thought, and I identify with one in particular. But I would like to emphasize one aspect that was missing here.

As long as we are speaking of non-discrimination, I definitely agree that it is our duty to ensure that everywhere in Israel, including the army, there is justice, non-discrimination, and fairness. But Justice Dorner went further and suggested a completely different angle, an angle that would see the army as an arena for social revolution, for repairing society—the army as an educational shaper of the Israeli image, or the image of the Israel female. I have my doubts about this angle. I will present it here in somewhat radical form, even though what I say will express only one aspect and not the full picture.

I would like to remind you what an army is. An army is an aggressive body, hierarchical, undemocratic, violent, devoid of liberty, forceful, and not tolerant of individual choice. We need an army because we want to survive, and it seems that in the modern reality and in the Middle Eastern reality, this body is needed. At the same time, this is a very negative body. It is terribly sad that young men and women need to be a part

of it between the ages of eighteen to twenty-one. It is one of the saddest things in the history of Zionism, but we have no choice.

The army is essential, unfortunately, but it is not the place in which a revolution will take place in the education, equality, spirit, and culture of Israeli society. Israeli society pays a very heavy price for the need for military service. Professor Yaron Ezrahi spoke, rightly, about “who is a man” and about the ways we behave, myself included, when no one is looking. I would like to balance the discussion here, because we might think the army is the peak of social spirituality of the Jewish people and humanism in general. Professor Amia Lieblich spoke about the need to extend service for women in the name of equality. I do not agree. If you say that preserving the security of the Israeli people demands that women serve three years, I would agree. If you talk about women’s unique contribution to the army, by virtue of the fact that they are different from men and have abilities that a man lacks, I would agree with that as well. If you tell me that equalizing the length of service would reduce the period that men serve, I would also agree. But I do not agree that, for the sake of equality, we must lengthen the period of military service, which is negative from a cultural and educational perspective.

I would like to say that there are too few women in academia, hi-tech, the arts, economics, and the world of Torah in Israeli society. And we are talking about increasing their presence in the most violent arena—an essential arena but nevertheless the

most violent. We also heard from the American general that we are exceptional in this way. We are the Chosen People because we are the only people with mandatory service for women. If we never before knew what it means to be 'chosen', now we know. But I am not sure we need to go to such extremes.

I would like to return to something Lily Galili said. Some of what has been said derives from the perspective of early feminism, that is, whatever a man can do, a woman can do too, only better. I understand that the progressive stance is that women make a unique contribution, and it is in this contribution that they need to excel. If I were told that women make a unique contribution to the army, that would be legitimate in my opinion, even if I do not understand it. Should we hold up the image of the combat soldier as a model? The Supreme Court decision in the Alice Miller case was right; however, I do not understand why this model was chosen. That, of course, is a personal question, and I respect the decision of every individual.

In short, I think that some of the discussion was influenced by two archaic concepts. One is the view that the army must shape and educate society. I am certain that the army must provide security. In discussing the subject of the army and society, we must examine whether we see the army as an agent for social and educational change, or as an army whose function is to provide security. Secondly, we heard the conservative feminist perspective on the equality of women.

This is conservative—I would even say masculine—feminism, which holds that whatever men can do, women can do. This is feminism that sees men as the exclusive image and does not relate to the other voice and its particular contribution.

■ **Arye Carmon:** I must say that this is one of the few times I find myself dramatically disagreeing with you. Historians, particularly in nascent societies, look at the process of creating tools and preserving security as they look at the arena in which the deepest ethics develop into culture, values, commitments. That is, to present the military only as something essential but condemnable and violent is going too far.

■ **Comment from the audience:** I understand that the whole idea of heroism is associated, in your view, with materialism only and contains no element of spirituality.

■ **Aviezer Ravitzky:** I stand by what I said. This perspective was lacking in the discussion—the perspective of the damage that the army does, the fact that the basis of the army is hell. On one hand, service is mandatory, and because it is mandatory, it is also a right. But there is also a very sad side, and that is that our sons—primarily our sons but also our daughters—must serve at that age. I wanted to recall this fact, which was, for some reason, pushed to the margins of this discussion.

■ **Ronit Lev-Ari:** Over the course of ten years, from 1986 to 1996, I was the defense minister's representative on

a committee that can reduce by half the prison sentence of soldiers who have been incarcerated for over a year. This is a committee headed by a colonel, a female military judge, and a representative of the chief of staff. For ten years that committee led me to debate the question of the role of the IDF. There, I saw the problems of Israeli society, and that's putting it mildly. The army recruits illiterates, children who ate in the chicken coop on the moshav because there was nothing else to eat, and so forth. That is, the army recruits about a third of the product of the welfare and educational systems, about a third that continue for years. More than once, I imagined the induction base turning out an entire population of illiterate recruits. That is, every few months, it would force Israeli society to look in the mirror and see itself as it really is.

The head of the Human Resources department threw down an important gauntlet here, and I hope the chief of staff will pick it up. In her marvelous lecture, Justice Dalia Dorner spoke about the potential of women. Today, we have what we call a one-way ticket: everything concerned with the status of women in general, in highly conservative societies as well, is advancing and developing. It is true in ultra-Orthodox society and in traditional Arab society. It is a fact in the year 2000. We are blessed with a chief of staff who is thought to be an enlightened commander among senior IDF staff. This chief of staff is promoting the process of removing blocks, and I think that the decision not to see a military past as a condition for entering a particular profession is, without a doubt, a dramatic one.

I would like to emphasize here that this activism is essential to promoting the advancement of women. I will allow myself to speak about the army as a place of work. I will not say how many tenured workers there are in this workplace, but it is clear that it is a very significant workplace in Israeli society. It is a workplace in which people serve, and it is an important symbol in Israeli society. The chief of staff called on career officers not to stay late at work, but to return home in time to see their children before bedtime. I think we can relate to what Didi Arazzi said and speak of elite technological companies, which are not equipped to hire highly talented women who cannot cope with the work-hour demands. We need to talk about how to organize society to allow women to fulfill their potential, about greater equality, and about additional methods that the chief of staff mentioned to allow women, as women, to enter a different cultural atmosphere and truly realize themselves.

A final request: the subject of sexual harassment was raised, and we heard about thousands of female soldiers serving in the civilian sector. Then, we began to talk about the function of the army in treating the problem, and General Segev spoke about various other functions that the army has taken upon itself. If in the meantime, cutbacks have not been decided on because of the complexity of the issue, I ask that we begin to talk about male soldier teachers and male instructors.

■ **Yehuda Segev:** There are male instructor-soldiers.

■ **Ronit Lev-Ari:** I ask that their number be significantly increased. The director general of the education ministry would be pleased, in my opinion, to see male images in the educational system, and that step would also promote equality.

■ **Gil Regev:** There are three populations at this forum: military staff, academics, and a significant number of legal experts. I noticed that the academics state their opinions, sometimes in the extreme, which is their right. Yisrael Segal also spoke in extreme terms, as it were, for purposes of discussion.

However, there are military staff whose primary responsibility is the security of Israel. We can behave in the way mentioned by the head of Human Resources—teach Hebrew, assist new immigrants, build outposts, work to reduce rifts, but first and foremost we need to be able to provide security today for the Netzarim Corridor, and you don't do this in a 'buttons war', with apologies to the women here. Anyone who speaks here of a peacetime army ... I want to update you and say that we are still crawling underneath barbed wire fences, still shooting at close range, and still required to exert great physical effort, still required to be aggressive.

In recent years, the IDF has been more influenced than influential, and perhaps this is good. But I ask Shulamit Amichai: if you have not succeeded in bringing the revolution to the ministry of education, how can you expect us in the IDF, which is a hierarchical body, to bring about the revolution?

Our most important aim is to provide security. And security means shooting people and hurting them.

I have my doubts about whether we will pick up the gauntlet. It is possible to look at the matter from a different angle. The Defense Service Law presents us with a difficult problem. It obliges us to find meaningful positions for women and to utilize their abilities. In this regard, we have not done enough. They want to be combat soldiers because we explained that combat jobs are meaningful.

Let us not be confused. I tell you that women are excellent pilots of remotely piloted planes, and they can take command of any technical, logistical, or technological matter. Today, we have a difficult time holding on to combat soldiers who want to serve in the field of technology. Take note of what an absurd situation we have reached.

There is the question of a professional army; we have not talked about that today. This is a weighty question and we must not evade it. The discussion with the American general centered on a professional army, and we saw the numbers involved in such an army. I have no doubt that a professional army will allow us to fully utilize the abilities of women. If they are talented, we will call on them to serve, just as today we are looking for people with technological capabilities, for example, of whom we do not have enough. That, perhaps, is the discussion that has to take place. The head of Human Resources spoke of the army model, and I suppose that this is

what he was referring to. The issue of the reserves also needs to be discussed, and in my opinion, this takes precedence over the current discussion.

A week ago, I visited Hebron and met two female soldiers from the military police next to the *shalalot*, the alleyways outside Hebron where you can “hear the noise and feel the bottles.” They were a distance of 200-300 meters from me. I asked how they were. One of them was completely bald, both of them very delicate. They said, “Not good,” and I asked why. When we went to visit, we wore bullet-proof vests. We, from Human Resources, donned bullet-proof vests, while the girls were relaxed. I said it looked pretty dangerous where they were standing. They said: “There’s no action.” They meant that they were not allowed to go near the alley, in the line of fire, but they wanted to carry out the objective that we had set for them: to shoot and kill. They wanted rubber bullets, if not live ammunition.

I looked at the scene and asked myself, as a father of daughters and as a citizen: was this really our intention? That is, to give permission to the army to kill; to require the army to cause harm? This matter must be handed over to a very small professional group, not spread out unnecessarily. That is what I thought in this situation. What have we done to these wonderful girls that they thirst for ‘real action?’ It worries me.

One note about what was said by the chief of staff about talent. The aim of the army is to provide security and to

fight. The IDF has a tradition of what is called 'core' and the core is explicitly connected to the paths that are connected to this difficult channel, connected to the battlefield and fighting. Perhaps for this reason, there will always be a chief of staff who comes from this world, because it is the heart of the matter. We must act carefully in the matter of roles according to qualifications, and we must dissociate this issue from the core path. We must examine the roles carefully that the chief of staff suggested to us as examples. We should not be mistaken in thinking that people who did not spring from the combat channel and thus understand it, can manage the situation. We are not talking about managing it on a cognitive level, but on a level of deep understanding. And the IDF is devoting much thought to the matter. We need to approach this extremely carefully.

One more word about the male experience. There is such a thing. I suppose there is also a female experience. There is such a thing at ages eighteen, twenty and twenty-two, a desire to be part of a group of men. Am I saying anything new here? I am talking about soldiers. The head of Human Resources mentioned this in his remarks. We also have to approach this issue with sensitivity. It is very important to them, and it is important that we understand that the issue is not trivial, certainly not in the eyes of the male soldiers. It may also be related to the way we educated them, starting at summer camps. That may have had an influence. Today, the boundaries are becoming blurred and you don't always know who is standing in front of you. The sexes are becoming

mixed in looks and in the spoken language as well. This is something else that needs to be examined here: do we want to completely blur the boundaries, or do we want the boundaries to be more closely defined when we are speaking of combat?

The second issue is, of course, promotion. There must be real activity to promote women, not artificially, in all channels that are not from within the combat core.

In closing, I would like to relate an embarrassing, but interesting, story. My wife works for the Maccabbi health fund. The sensitivity of the health fund on women's issues is so lacking that sometimes, in some situations, women have no choice but to resign or give in. One evening, I dared to suggest that if there are enough of them, they should organize, because it is more difficult to suppress a group than an individual. There are thirty women in total working there, and the clinic would not open in the morning if they did not turn up. My wife checked with the other women to see if this were possible and returned shamefully. None of them were willing to put their jobs on the line.

That is embarrassing because if you want to start a revolution, you have to act bravely and take risks. Women make up fifty percent of Israel, but this is not what our political map reflects. It is not the IDF that has to lead the way, but society.

■ **Ila Glicksberg:** My words address two interactive aspects

of my position: the interaction between my profession—philosophy—and my role as the wife of the chief rabbi of Givatayim, who is also a member of the Rabbinical Council of Israel. My connection to the army is based on my lectures to female officers before their promotion, and as the mother of a son who has a military career as a rabbi.

And now to our topic of discussion. I learned a great deal here. I learned that changes have taken place in the perception of women in the army, as in society and every sector within society. I sit here and feel a sense of great satisfaction because men are beginning to debate the question of the place of women. More than twenty years ago, I published an M.A. thesis on the place of women, a comparative study from a religious, philosophical, and social perspective. My main argument was that as long as only women deal with the issue of equality, there will be no hint of equality. The fact that men as well are disturbed by this is a sign of positive social thinking.

From the point of view of my faith, as a religious woman with a religious outlook, I have serious reservations about the service of women in the IDF. This is not only from a rabbinical point of view. Justice Kister also wrote that he opposes women's service in the IDF.

I will put aside for now the theoretical and move to the operative. Women serve in the IDF; that is a given. How do they remain whole, body and soul? How do they give their all to the army? How do they produce the best in themselves?

These are the questions on the agenda. From an intellectual point of view, the statement “What you can do, I can do better” is superfluous, because intellectually, women are on the same plane as men anyway. Professor Ravitzky, you know as well as I that from a spiritual point of view, women and men are on the same plane according to our Jewish sources. Moreover, even the patriarch Abraham was told that he should listen to Sarah’s words because, in addition to everything else, she had instincts and an inner sensibility.

In a conversation I had with a former CO of the Women’s Corps, Orit Adato, she updated me on the enormous breakthroughs in awareness of the advancement of women, a subject which I will now address.

I have been a volunteer lecturer in the army since we were in the Sinai, before the Israeli withdrawal, and I am acquainted with the professions of female officers in the IDF. One of the complaints of female officers is that they are stuck at the rank of major, and that there is an enormous gap between the promotion of male and female officers, not because of their qualifications, but because of their connections—or lack of connections. The problem is in the perception of the direction of advancement:

- Should advancement be comprehensive, reaching out in all directions?
- Should advancement be upward, along a professional ladder?

The difficulties with comprehensive advancement relate to mentality and outlook. Men prefer to join other men and to

promote them. Women are a group in and of themselves. General Amidror related to the special demands of religious male soldiers and the issue of integrating them with women. We must pay attention to his words. Before speaking about comprehensiveness, we must give female officers, where they exist, an elevator that will carry them upward. This can be done if we give it thought and work for affirmative action. For example, administration is made up of 42% women and computers only 3%. Women should be launched into the field of computers.

Moreover, affirmative action means the integration of women in every decision-making forum, even when there is no standard role division. A woman can, practically speaking, be at the required level for the job at hand. In this way, the women's point of view regarding need is also given expression. It is well known that friends bring other friends, so a woman friend should be able to bring another woman friend.

I would like to change the yardsticks. We heard from the chief of staff that the measurements for promotion are being changed. That is, there is no longer a demand for combat training, and it is possible to advance without the whole combat track. A lack of experience in physical combat does not have to prevent the advancement of women according to their abilities in other spheres.

■ **Shaul Mofaz:** For some functions, the most important measure is quality.

■ **Ila Glicksberg:** That is clear, but the issue is that it is more difficult to measure quality than technical achievement. I rely on you to do this in the best way possible.

It was said here that a female officer cannot work after 8 p.m. There is a concept that has yet to be understood here, but which exists in the U.S.: job-sharing. When one person is not able to devote more than a certain number of hours a day to a particular job or function, the working time can be divided between two people. In computer work, for example, two female officers can share the same job, and thus both of them can advance. Food for thought.

From meetings with female soldiers, I have learned that there is a difference between military service and a civilian job. Dissatisfaction with one's job or a lack of advancement allows for mobility in seeking other jobs. By contrast, there are no outside replacements for army personnel; the resources are internal. As long as there are women serving in the IDF, their talents, abilities, willingness, and motivation should be utilized. What this means is that we are at an advanced stage, which is good not only for women alone, but for all society.

■ **Einat Geffner:** One of the most prominent phenomena of our times, or in women's changing approaches to military service and participation in other areas as well, is the demand that we examine our opinions and perceptions so as to allow for fruitful discussion. Justice Dorner called this the text of proof. We need to seriously discuss the obstacles placed in our path

from the outset as a result of traditional opinions or division of labor. One of the most significant obstacles, both inside and outside the army, are traditional opinions or what seem to be facts at first glance, which are not empirically based, but which nevertheless serve as a basis for decision-making.

For years the popular theory has been that more women in the army meant less security. There is a need to examine the role of both men and women, at the conceptual level and at the concrete level. We must end discussion about the differences between them. There are differences between women and men that are relevant, but our discussion must focus on separation and not on treating men and women as one single group. There are all kinds of abilities and qualities in our midst, and we must be able to examine them seriously.

It was stated here more than once, and quite justifiably, that the trap is mainly sociological, not physiological. Therefore, we should examine our opinions and the traditional perceptions we face. The usefulness of women is worth examining. At the start of the twentieth century, women were not allowed to study at universities; a century later there is still a lower percentage of female professors than male professors in Israeli universities. Change does not take place like a revolution; it is a gradual process, and we have to have the opportunity to examine the true abilities of women in roles that are new to them. In the 1920s, in many places, women were not allowed to vote; they had not yet been given the opportunity to express their opinions. How do we know what women are

capable of? We need to let things happen and afterwards we can examine the outcome.

I agree that when there is a threat to life, the issue must be examined with care. But we do need to examine the issue in order to know if the army gains or loses from utilizing women. It may well turn out that in some instances, it loses, and then it will retreat. But in most instances, it will gain. Women have already entered all sorts of professions in the army, and the army has benefited from, for example, instructors in the armored corps. This is not a result of political correctness or feminism, but because women answered a real need. There is a need today as well. The army competes for quality personnel. It is quite clear that it is not only men who are capable of filling that need.

As to what was said about change: was the intention that women fight, be killed, etc.? That is a continuation of the patriarchal model of those who decide where women will be and where they will not be. I do not want my son nor do I want my daughter to be there. But if that is the reality, women will choose where they want to be, and if they have the ability, all the more reason that they should.

We need to break away from this way of thinking and be able to look at the issue more clearly, to make reasonable claims and not make decisions for these women. Women as a group, men as a group, and each person individually has the strength to advance in society according to their abilities. We must let

them do this without imposing the patterns that we believed in or grew up with.

Relik Shafir: In my opinion, the army has a social function in Israeli society: it creates an ethos. This was its role in the past, and continues to be its role today. It enables social mobility and in this way softens many conflicts. We, as commanders, are part of the experience, and our experience and motivation in command positions is to be partners to the creation of an ethos and to influence society. That is the reason that many of my friends deal with the subject of command positions, not only as commanders themselves. It is part of their motivation to serve. I get up in the morning and influence people to be better soldiers and better citizens, and that gives me motivation and pleasure in my position.

The second thing is that in no workplace does anyone say to a person: “Endanger your life—that’s an order!”

Now I would like to speak about the ethos of women and men. In choirs, very few women sing bass. That is also true in the ethos of solving conflicts. Men do it by using violence; the women’s ethos is to solve conflicts through dialogue. That is a very great generalization. The women’s system is better in my view, of course. Therefore, in places where the essence of the profession is to solve conflicts through the use of violence, the masculine is dominant. The advantage of the woman’s ethos, employing assertiveness and conflict management skills, can find excellent expression in politics and in the army itself

in a wide range of functions. One place in which women's methods are at a disadvantage is in places where they say, "Let's go, attack, run them down," whether it is with knives or with rifles, or in any other violent act that resolves conflicts through violence and the potential to have to take human life.

Therefore, at the core of the experience of the female soldier, nothing has changed for thousands of years, ever since people first engaged in battle. This has remained the core of the army, and developments have followed suit. I can promise you that in the next fifteen years, there will not be a female aviation commander, because there are still no female pilots. Therefore, we can have affirmative action, but we will not take the first female pilot and appoint her an aviation commander because she is a second lieutenant. That is, there are some places where you have to use simple logic. There is no point in contradicting reasonable judgment, and allowing women to progress in every role. This would harm the military process. A soldier serving as a paratrooper who as a result of affirmative action is considered to be equal to a female soldier, feels uncomfortable. It is enough that he should feel this way. What will his friends, to whom he said, "After me" just a minute ago, think? It will be hard for them to find an expression for the sacrifice that is a central part of their main ethos. Therefore, it is not so easy to say there is no difference between a man and a woman. So let's have affirmative action.

I call on all of us in this matter, everyone related to the profession, to use healthy logic regarding places in which it is possible to integrate women, and to avoid carrying the issue to extremes, which, in the end, chips away at the integrity of the whole.

■ **Emunah Elon:** The IDF is not a negative, sad organization, but positive and happy. It is very pleasing that the Jewish People is able to defend itself today.

I wanted to make one comment. We have heard a lot here about equality in terms of identity, in terms of the progress of the feminist movement—equality of women, meaning that women do what men do. I am not sure that the model of what men do is necessarily the model for promoting the status of women. The emphasis must be on finding more meaningful roles for young women so that they feel that they are, indeed, making a contribution to the IDF and that their service is not a waste.

There is another aspect of equality for women and promotion of the status of women in the IDF which I have not heard enough about this evening. Has the IDF made progress in the matter of relating respectfully to women? By this I mean advancing the status of women by treating them as people and not as objects. I am not necessarily speaking about sexual harassment. Progress has been made on this front and the IDF is a lot more aware of this issue than it was in the past. I am speaking about an overall atmosphere that is considered

legitimate, an atmosphere that I hear about and imagine that others have heard about. It hurts me not because I am a religious woman, but because I am a woman and think women are important. I would like to know if the IDF is working to develop respectful ways of relating to women.

■ **Uri Dromi:** One comment about what the American general said. About six months ago, I had the opportunity to accompany a group of visiting generals and admirals, and one of them was a former commander of the renowned 101st Airborne Division. He told me that in his division, the head of Human Resources was a woman. That woman spent most of her time arguing with her department because she did not want women sent to the division. Why? They told her that 1,000 soldiers were needed, and that they were not interested in whether they were male or female. Her response was that female soldiers were not able to carry the ammunition cases, and would ask the men to carry them for them. That was not fair. She answered, “You think that my division has a thousand soldiers, but it really doesn’t.” A woman said these things.

In the reserves, I fly a Hercules aircraft. Ten years ago, I was at a flight competition in the U.S., and I was coupled with a Greek pilot. We saw many women wearing flight jumpsuits. The Greek pilot said to me quietly, “How good it is that in our air force and in the Israeli air force we don’t have this nonsense.” We got in a helicopter that was taking us someplace, and suddenly I see a blonde braid poking out from underneath

the helicopter captain's helmet. After take-off, I turn to the Greek and say, "Look who's flying the helicopter!" He got tense and became hysterical. I said, "If I hadn't said anything, you would never have known if a man or a woman was flying this plane." He was not convinced.

True, women want to fulfill themselves. They want to do this on their terms. They want to be in places that are important to men and not in places that men think women want to be. For the first time, a female flight instructor has been assigned to our division. Her appearance led to a drastic change. The language changed on the spot. You women don't know what happens in the cockpit of a Hercules in the course of a normal flight and what the pilots talk about. That stopped immediately. Secondly, male instructors must not make mistakes, and men are not allowed to ask questions. They are supposed to know everything. And here, suddenly, we saw that when this young woman did not know something, she asked. All of a sudden we were exposed to another culture. Unfortunately, she did not remain with us.

We need to use a magnifying glass to find places in which women can function, in which aggressiveness is not the most important factor. The work itself does not require aggressiveness. It demands teamwork, thinking, professional knowledge—areas in which women can definitely become integrated. At the same time, women must be less militant; they do not have to go any place at any price. Female fighter pilots who can withstand the pressure of 7G or 9G (7-9 times

the force of gravity) are likely to suffer irreversible physical harm. In short, women must be given a chance to advance, but it must be done thoughtfully and with less militancy.

■ **Yishai Bar:** In the first round, the issue of shattering the myth of the female office worker was raised. In my division, we have a female adjutancy officer. The more interesting part of the story is that her secretary is male. When you enter the adjutancy office, first you see a male office worker and then a female adjutancy officer, and that works just fine. People are no longer amazed, and that is really a badge of honor for the army.

I asked to speak because of a question raised by Professor Mordechai Kremnitzer that I was not pleased with. The relevant question for discussion, he said, is whether Israeli society wants to see female combat soldiers. The question is different, in my opinion, and has two aspects. One question that was already raised is how we cope with those women who want to volunteer. We must not adopt society's paternalistic perspective, but rather examine the issue from the point of view of the client: the young woman who wants to volunteer, as did Alice Miller. Another question which was raised by the chief of staff in his opening remarks is how the army must, or can cope with this desire and whether or not it is right to do this.

This is the time to comment on something that the head of Human Resources hinted at. The chief of staff said that

our concept of security rests mainly on the reserves. That assessment is clear to all. We need to understand that the reserve army is principally an army of volunteers, with no connection to the question of a professional or non-professional army. That is a fact. Those serving today in the reserves are, essentially, volunteers, and the rhetoric is the rhetoric of regular service. In effect, those who do not want to answer a reserve callup, do not come. That is the name of the game today in the reserves, and it is pretty much the situation in command functions at the company commander and regiment commander levels. This is a trend that began in the 1980s. It is a fissure that resulted from the Yom Kippur War and is a phenomenon that reached its peak at the height of the Lebanon war (called Peace in the Galilee).

The army erred. It should have understood that because the trend was toward a volunteer army made up of talented people who give of their own initiative and energy, it cannot ignore this human treasure of young women who are a very important resource. Because the army did not understand this, it was required to accept it in the form of a Supreme Court decision that employed the rhetoric of human dignity and liberty. The army should have understood this as early as 1992, when the Basic Law was passed. To the army's credit, it was said that it internalized the matter and learned. Basically, the Supreme Court helped the army understand, and in this way contributed to the military system.

Internalizing the message is very important. You don't need

forums such as this to determine what to accept and what not to accept. Should young women be placed in a Golani platoon or not? The chief of staff said that according to his understanding, this would not work; perhaps in ten years' time another chief of staff will think differently. Army and human resources personnel are dealing with the matter in a controlled process of research and experimentation. There will surely be places in which it will fail and other places in which it will succeed. The proper balance will be found. I do not think it is something to be accomplished in this forum.

What does have to be discussed by this forum is whether the army needs to be a leader in this area. Does it have to take a position of social leadership? Another aspect of this was expressed by the head of Human Resources. He complained that Israeli society does not define what it wants from the army. This definition could serve as a basis for intelligent discussion here. It appears to me that, in light of a process in which its profile is being lowered, the army must understand the messages that society is sending it.

In a democratic society, the army must understand its place and its function. It is possible to understand through laws, and also through the very prosaic aspect of budget. The trends are clear. In the past, Israel allocated a fourth of its budget to security, and today it allocates a third. There is a clear statement here: in our democratic society in the year 2000, the army needs to do less than it did in the past. The army must concentrate on its central task, which is to

provide security. The heads of the army cannot come with complaints about the lack of funding for bullet-proof vests. The ministry of education must educate. Education is done in early childhood. With all due respect to the motivation of female soldier-teachers, they have neither the ability nor the qualifications, and it is also too late. My heart breaks when I hear stories about eighteen- and nineteen-year olds who enter the army “with no education.” The army must deal with the minimum. Society tells us this by way of the budget, but we do not want to understand. In a democratic society the budget carries a message. That’s the whole story; that is what society gives us, and with that we have to purchase one thing: security according to priorities.

■ **Ron Kitry:** I enjoyed the parable we heard at the start of the evening about weight-lifting, but not for the intended reasons. Today weight-lifting is an Olympic sport for men and for women, but it has been adapted to the abilities and dimensions of women and to their ability to lift weights. Here, there is both equality and adaptation to differences between men and women.

■ **Dalia Dornier:** Historical experience demonstrates that when an enemy is at the gates, the people gather all their forces, including women, to fight at sea, in the air, and on the ground. In Russia in World War II, there were a great number of female pilots. When you come back to a different reality, different social norms are at play. In essence, the question is not what the army will do, because we are all in the midst of a

process. Our judicial rulings are also in the midst of a process. That decision would not have been handed down a few years ago. The process is taking place in the Western world. In the past, there were religious people who did not want to sit next to women or appear before women in courts of law. Things are changing.

The army is part of life in Israel and it will continue to be so in the future. Its influence, with all the changes that have taken place in our society, is still very strong; young people—both men and women—begin their lives there. If this process is taking place in society, it will also take place in the army, and the army will change. I am very optimistic and hope for the best.

Moshe Ya'alon: Before touching upon the issue itself, I would like to try to relate to the question of the army as a social conduit. We come to these forums in order to find a cure before the disease strikes, that is, to try to prevent finding ourselves coping with issues like that addressed by the Supreme Court in the case of Alice Miller, which taught us that we had failed to notice that society had changed. The involvement of parents in the army, the issue of bereaved families ... these are also evidence of the essential, daily connection between the army and society. We are here in order to be attentive to what is happening in society and to influence, to some degree, what is happening.

The army in Israel—even if it has not been given a social

role in the daily order or by law—has this sort of role by virtue of the fact that service in the army is mandatory. Most of the population still goes through it, and there are other components of internal Israeli politics that mean the army cannot be ignored. Therefore, whether we want it or not, the army is a social conduit. It has been given functions that were unknown to it in the beginning. It is true that the army is first and foremost a combat organization that is required to provide security. However, since most young people pass through it, there is an educational element to it. Given that this is the case, it is best that we influence, and that we influence positively.

Regarding the issue of women, Uri Dromi expressed my sentiments entirely: a change has undoubtedly taken place in Israeli society in relation to the status of women. We, as an army, must first and foremost be attentive to the change and find a way to allow women to express themselves through military service. This must be done in a way that answers the needs of both the army and the individual—in this case, the woman who enlists. Regarding implementation, theoretically I agree with the idea of a female chief of staff, but realistically speaking, I do not think this will happen in the next few years because a process must first be undertaken.

I would not begin with a female chief of staff. I would start only after there is a female combat soldier in a military policy platoon. As someone who dealt with this in my role as a command general, I saw a combat company composed of

men and women. When you start with the practical aspects and pull in the direction of principle, the thing explodes, falls apart. If the matter is approached in a positive way, a confrontation can be avoided. And there is a confrontation between the needs of religious male soldiers and the service of women in mixed platoons. I prefer not to raise the subject for discussion because the whole business will explode immediately. We have contact with rabbis and avoid putting religious soldiers to the test by not placing them in military police platoons that include women. Solutions can be found.

On the subject of women and military police companies, we must, of course, create conditions there that answer the needs of women. That is an investment, and they are investing and building to make this division a separate division within the company from the point of view of living arrangements. But the patrol—and this is the start of the thing, the operational need—is mixed, men and women, because the operational need demands it. Therefore, in the end, it is indeed possible to find expression for the abilities of women.

This is what happened with observers. We thought it right to place women in observational roles on the front line, and then we discovered that male soldiers needed to enter the observation point, which is difficult for religious men. The rabbis will not accept this, and we must find a solution. The women are serving in an outpost that includes men. In the Jordan Valley the women served with male reservists that change shifts every three weeks. In Israel, there is a problem

with young women. We are beginning to hear complaints about verbal harassment and so forth. A solution must be found. Regular soldiers are better educated, and we have a greater influence over them. They do not change shifts every three weeks.

Women have their own needs at an outpost. When women serve as observers, this becomes clear, but solutions can be found. There is no need to go to extremes from the standpoint of principles, until the point is reached where young women break down and are unable to function.

I am saying all this to emphasize that if a woman wants to be a pilot, she must be allowed to do so without a Supreme Court order. Mobilization at absorption bases today does not present us with a dilemma about whether to create integrated parachute companies or Golani companies. We are far from that.

As a rule, I support opening all functions. For women in combat functions, a practical means must be found that does not harm the mobilization of religious male soldiers in Golani or parachute companies. A creative solution must be found. It must be done gradually and not radically.

The policy of promoting women begins with the fact that today we have female regimental adjutants, something which was not taken for granted earlier. When the question arose in combat battalions whether a female adjutant would enter

Lebanon, the answer given from above was that if a man in a particular role entered, a woman in the same role would enter. The same is true in the territories, unless we are speaking about the actual front. We have female ammunition officers, female intelligence officers, and female maintenance officers. They serve at the brigade level and at the division level, and there is already a colonel. This is a positive process, and it is progressing in the direction of equal opportunity. The solution is in a pragmatic approach, and not in going to extremes, because that is when things fall apart.

■ **Shaul Mofaz:** I would like to briefly touch on three issues. One is the social role of the army: should the army also lead the way in educational and social areas? It is not by chance that the IDF is called a people's army. Beyond its organizational responsibility to provide security and win wars, it is charged with educating in value areas because we educate male and female soldiers. This education also has an effect beyond the period of service in the IDF. A week ago my daughter was discharged from the army. When I need to give her a ride someplace, and I'm running late, she tells me that in the army she was taught to be on time. My son enlisted four days ago. He came home for Shabbat. He is still at the absorption base, and I see him playing with his beret, trying to "style" it correctly. When I told him that wasn't necessary, he told me I don't understand and that's what the company commander at the base told him to do. Know that the influence of army commanders on recruits goes beyond the bounds of the service period itself.

Accordingly, the values issue of equal opportunity and non-discrimination should be handled in the framework of the army, because it is a people's army, and the IDF had and has a social role in shaping the national ethos of Israel. There are certain things within the area of norms and values of Israel for which the army should take a leading role.

The second issue strayed a bit from the area we planned to address: What is the meaning of equal opportunity for women in the army? Do we intend to set a framework for affirmative action in which a woman will fill a role that was, until now, filled by men, only because she is a woman? The answer is no.

There were those who carried this further and spoke about a desire to change the ethos of the army as a combat body based on the premise that we want to establish female combat units. That is not the question. The question is if we are creating an opportunity for meaningful service for women in the IDF, as an expression of the value of equal opportunity, to which the answer is yes. I think we are going in the right direction.

Moreover, if the army continues to be an organization that provides security and wins wars, it must make better use of the human resource it has at its disposal. If there are highly qualified women in the army, they must reach the positions that make use of their abilities, positions in which they contribute more to the security and victory provided by the army, even if these are not combat positions. In my view,

the two are not contradictory. A woman does not have to be a flight commander, but if she reaches this position one day, that is very good indeed.

As for placing women in positions in which they can influence decision-making, according to the army's considerations, there is no need to do this through affirmative action. The sole criterion must be quality. This does not apply to every function. If a woman is not a licensed pilot and she lacks the qualifications to be a pilot, even if she is of higher quality than a man in the air force, she certainly cannot be a flight commander. For that, we will not institute affirmative action.

As to the question of whether the army can and must be an agent of change for value issues in society, my answer is yes. My answer is positive as long as it is done in a way consistent with the country's values and certainly within the framework of the law.

Among the other things I heard here was the example of female versus male security service recruits. I would like to both comment on and add to this. On the subject of the dignity of female soldiers and sexual harassment, very intensive work has been done by the army. We decided that anyone convicted of sexual harassment in the IDF would no longer continue to serve. The figures from last year are in the range of forty-five non-commissioned officers and officers who were released from military service after being convicted. The chief of staff has an advisory committee whose recommendations he can accept or reject.

There is no place for automatic equality, in my opinion. Instead, we need to promote equal opportunity.

In summary, the IDF is a bridge and an agent of change in value areas, including the granting of equal opportunity for women.

■ **Arye Carmon:** Thank you very much. Allow me to read you a sentence that Shaul (Mofaz) and I wrote as a summary statement for this entire discussion: “The connection between contribution to security and meaningful service must guide the utilization of the resource of women in the army, while realizing the value of egalitarianism on the basis of quality.” That statement places the army at the spearhead of social change, from every possible angle.

On behalf of all citizens, I would like to express my enormous, heartfelt appreciation for the fact that, in these difficult days, the command staff was able to join us here for such a lengthy period. That is a statement in itself, and I hope that when we gather again at the start of next year, as Chief of Staff Shaul Mofaz just mentioned, the political atmosphere will be different, and that we will be able to discuss the topic of human dignity with greater peace of mind.

Thank you all.

