

Shalom uVracha.

Due to worsening work conditions culminating in *Arutz Sheva's* recently declared moratorium on opinion, and with high regard for the dignity of my profession, dedicating myself to uphold the honor of the press, I feel that I cannot preserve my self-respect and continue working in the English team under Yoni Kempinski. I would like to set out the reasons for this decision and suggest possible alternatives for continued collaboration between us...

...On February 17th, I posted an op-ed entitled *Response to Rabbi Steinberg* that was well-written, factual, and non-polemical. Rather than post a fact-based response to the piece, as befits free people in a democratic society who scrutinize the marketplace of ideas and are assumed to be intelligent enough to distinguish truth from demagoguery, *Arutz Sheva* decided to take the unprecedented step of officially suppressing opinion and silencing voices.

First, a "disclaimer" was attached to the top and bottom of the op-ed, stating: "*Arutz Sheva* expresses full support for the vaccination campaign and calls on the public to obey the instructions of the Ministry of Health and the professionals. In the op-ed section, we provide an open forum for a variety of opinions in order to provoke thought and discussion."

One day after this disclaimer appeared, it was announced (internally) that *Arutz Sheva* will not provide an open forum for a variety of opinions, in order to stifle thought and discussion.

On February 19th, Yoni wrote: "Every single anti-vaccine story must be run by me first. No one is to post any opeds on that issue."

Ever since then, *Arutz Sheva* has carried the most outrageous articles I've ever seen claiming to be factual. Content demonizing whole swaths of the nation that in normal times would not be allowed in the op-ed section, today are presented as factual reportage.

It seems a new, different spirit has descended upon *Arutz Sheva*, that reflects the surrender to totalitarianism that has swept the entire society, with the guidance and direction of the media, including *Arutz Sheva*.

Instead of scrutinizing every Health Ministry utterance for lies, contradiction, and inconsistency, of which there are plenty and which is the proper role of the journalist, we have been told that our default editorial policy is to accept and transmit all government communiqués as factual truth. I will not be party to foisting raw government propaganda upon my readers.

My job should be to give my readers the truth without fear or prejudice. *Arutz Sheva's* new policy is the diametric opposite of this ideal, and I will not help to propagate the

dishonest impression that “we provide an open forum for a variety of opinions in order to provoke thought and discussion.”

I have stated before: I refuse to serve as a docile conduit for government disinformation. I was hired to write quality news and commentary, not to act as a public relations arm for the Israel Health Ministry, an institution with a dark history, under Binyamin Netanyahu, a man in power by virtue of his [promises to apply sovereignty in Judea and Samaria](#) for the past three election campaigns.

With more and more information emerging about COVID-19 vaccine dangers and official coverups, and increasing numbers of serious experts around the world calling this a “genocide,” is *Arutz Sheva* not worried about what might eventually emerge from a commission of inquiry? What if it turns out that the vaccine actually did cause unnecessary deaths, as independent doctors worldwide are claiming? Will *Arutz Sheva* still be so proud to be on record expressing “full support for the vaccination campaign and calling on the public to obey the instructions of the Ministry of Health”?

Although Yoni has admitted to me in several written and voice conversations, *Arutz Sheva* does indeed have an agenda, this does not stop him from repeatedly accusing *me* of “pushing an agenda” and “going on a crusade.”

There is only one crusade, one agenda. It has nothing to do with vaccines per se, but can be seen in the context, for example, of Israel government acquiescence in Palestinian Authority training for attacks on Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria. One time it may have had to do with the government selling babies and telling the parents their child died.

If exposing these evils comprises an “agenda”, is called לא תעמוד על דם רעך - Do not stand idly by thy brother's blood. It's the second thing my mother ע"ה taught me, after the reality of the Creator. It finds expression in telling the story of those who have no voice, because reporting their cause might taint the respectability of a news outlet intent on gaining favor by scoring political correctness points.

Arutz Sheva may be the first outlet in Israel to publicly admit that it has an agenda, and that its role is not to provide balance, which I think is more honest, because until now people (logically) assumed that that is its role. It is honest, even if it is the most cowardly thing I've ever seen in print, and shows that *Arutz Sheva's* main consideration is protecting its respectability, not reporting the entire truth. This, even as disproportionate numbers of people are dying immediately after the shot, and there is by no means a consensus among experts as to why. It makes me think that if a Yemenite child was kidnapped and sold in front of our noses, with the parents being told by medical staff that the baby died, we'd maintain silence until *Israel Hayom* said something first.

As I stated before beginning my employment here, I believe that *Arutz Sheva* is the most important news outlet in the world, for the simple reason that for better or worse, it

represents Judea and Samaria, the very center of past Jewish history and Jewish renewal today. I want to continue writing for *Arutz Sheva*. I do not seek to change anything at *Arutz Sheva*; my only wish is to be left alone to produce my work, and let others produce theirs. Battles can be fought in the op-ed pages, and the public can decide which position has merit.

Yoni has related to us that Rabbi Melamed in principle disapproves suppression of information and opinions, as doing so would show that we fear the truth; rather, the truth will speak for itself and be recognized. I don't see this worldview expressed in *Arutz Sheva* policy or practice.

I'm not privy to the information but I estimate that my articles, when left unchanged, get good click results and shifts that had me as Main Page Coordinator did well compared to others. I have a sizable international following who would be sorely disappointed to lose my reporting on *Arutz Sheva*...

...I end with the words of George Orwell, that I find most appropriate for this occasion:

"The journalist is unfree, and is conscious of unfreedom, when he is forced to write lies or suppress what seems to him important news: the imaginative writer is unfree when he has to falsify his subjective feelings, which from his point of view are facts. He may distort and caricature reality in order to make his meaning clearer, but he cannot misrepresent the scenery of his own mind: he cannot say with any conviction that he likes what he dislikes or believes what he disbelieves. If he is forced to do so, the only result is that his creative faculties dry up. Nor can he solve the problem by keeping away from controversial topics. There is no such thing as genuinely non-political literature, and least of all in an age like our own, when fears, hatreds, and loyalties of a directly political kind are near to the surface of everyone's consciousness. Even a single taboo can have an all-round crippling effect on the mind, because there is always the danger that any thought which is freely followed up may lead to the forbidden thought."

Sincerely,

Mordechai Sones