

At this time, we are unable to come to any conclusion in accordance with Knesset committee 75% agreement clause. There is a fundamental discrepancy in Israeli society that prevents the passing of this bill.

A large portion of Israeli secular society feels that the Charedim and Arabs must serve in the army for two reasons: practical and personal. Practically, (specifically pertinent to Charedim) the Charedim joining the workforce would benefit all Israelis, especially considering their augmenting and already large population. The persisting philosophy is that in the way Israel is set up, the army is the bridge to the workforce. Personally, many Israelis feel that the Charedim and Arabs must serve since it is only fair as they maintain citizenship as well.

The other faction in the population argues for their individual reasons how participation in the army would present certain difficulties. After all, Arabs may have mixed feelings about combat given the likelihood of relatives and friends on both sides of the border. At the same time, Charedim argue that they serve the country through Torah learning and prayer, and that serving in the army will damage their way of life.

The few moderates on this issue also disagree on penalties for dodging the draft. The Kadima party holds that those who avoid the mandatory service should serve time in jail, whereas the Likud party holds that there should be no strict punishment necessarily set forth.

We have come to this deadlock due to partisan stubbornness and political extremism. The only agreement made over the past weeks is that the willingness to compromise must increase, lest the Knesset fall into the patterns of our ally across the Atlantic. Perhaps a radical reform of the parliamentary system of Israel must change in order to effectively get anything done. Alternatively, the committee recommends an education reform for the entire country, aimed at increasing nationalism, unification, and willingness to work for the greater whole. This way, we will not suffer this kind of gridlock again.