INTRODUCTION

This issue, the second Israel Law Review published by the Minerva Center for Human Rights at the Hebrew University, comprises three parts. The first part contains the proceedings of a symposium held at the Hebrew University in late 2007 with Judge Richard Posner, on his book *Not a Suicide Pact: The Constitution in a Time of National Emergency* (OUP, 2006). Judge Posner opens the symposium with a short précis of the main arguments presented in the book, and explores their validity to the emergency situation existing in Israel. Prof. Alon Harel's contribution argues, however, that there are inherent methodological and jurisprudential difficulties associated with the balancing approach advocated by Judge Posner. Dr. Re'em Segev then challenges some of the specific balancing tests offered by Judge Posner, arguing, inter alia, that balancing security interests against liberty and privacy rights ignores differences of identity between the affected and the protected groups. The contribution by Prof. Mordechai Kremnitzer and Dr. Liat Levanon focuses on the issue of torture and criticizes Judge Posner's solution of encouraging civil disobedience by government officials in extreme circumstances. The symposium concludes with short remarks by Judge Posner, which take issue with some of the commentators' positions.

The second part of this issue contains two articles: Dr. Carmel Shalev criticizes the Dying Patient Law, 2005 and argues that it constitutes a withdrawal from earlier Israeli case law that had emphasized the notion of patient autonomy; Or Bassok introduces empirical research of television coverage of the Israel Supreme Court (1968-1992) and explores how it contributed to the nurturing of the Court's mythical image in Israeli society.

The third and final part of this issue includes three articles presented in a symposium on human dignity, jointly held in Jerusalem in September 2007 by the Hebrew University and Goettingen University (with the cooperation of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation). Prof. Kai Ambos advocates a broad prohibition against the use in one jurisdiction of evidence procured by torture in another jurisdiction, basing this on the offensiveness of torture and also its adverse and degrading effects on the administration of justice. Prof. Gunnar Duttge explores the challenges to the notion of dignity created by new advances in embryonic stem cell research, and Prof. Christoph Möllers discusses the tension between a morality-based understanding of human dignity and a more democracy-oriented approach to the issue.

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