

-----Original Message-----

From: Manuel Trajtenberg
Sent: Friday, July 31, 2009 5:26 PM
To: Gidi Grinstein
Subject: letter of appreciation

Dear Gidi,

Having concluded my 3-years tenure as (first) Head of the National Economic Council at the Prime Minister's Office, I would like to reflect on the way I see the contribution of "Reut" to policy making in Israel.

Anybody who works in some capacity at the government knows that one is constantly assaulted by a multitude of issues that claim to be "urgent," and that call for attention, often times from the highest-ranking officials, including the PM himself. Thus, it is key to be able to sort things out and keep the focus on what's really important, not what's more pressing. At the National Economic Council we tried hard to do precisely that, and hold on to the strategic issues that affect the economy and society in Israel.

"Reut" was highly instrumental precisely for that purpose: by providing background work on those key issues, and constantly reminding both the wider public and policy makers that we should keep the eyes on the ball, with a clear sense of purpose and direction. "Israel 15" is a powerful focusing device, and it works!

I also deeply appreciate the fact that Reut has a unique modus operandi that is extremely "user friendly", non-intrusive, modest, and hence very effective. Reut does not try to get credit or public recognition for what it does, or explicit manifestations of influence. Rather, it is always willing to operate in a variety of "modes" depending on the circumstances, ranging from being an innovative think tank, a facilitator, a research unit, or a clever cheerleader...Such flexibility and versatility allows it to find the most effective avenues of influence, without being overbearing or intrusive, quite to the contrary. I believe that Reut's vision is already being felt widely, and with persistence it will become an integral part of policy making in Israel.

Reut's staff is always ready to help, and it is really a matter of just opening up to its good services. Finally, a word about you, Gidi: I hope you don't blush if I say that you are an extremely talented person in many dimensions, with a deeply ingrained sense of public duty, and an array of personal attributes such as dedication, honesty and determination. I appreciate very much what you have done so far, and I am sure that your work will have a cumulative effect that will help propel forward our beloved country .

With deep respect and friendship,

Manuel Trajtenberg

Prof. Manuel Trajtenberg - homepage: <http://www.tau.ac.il/~manuel>
Eitan Berglas School of Economics
Tel Aviv University
Tel Aviv 69978 - Israel
