

ERWIN S. SHIMRON – *IN MEMORIAM*

*Meir Shamgar**

We have gathered this afternoon to honour the memory of our dear friend Erwin Shimron. It seems most appropriate that the organizers of this meeting have dedicated it to a series of lectures which aim to deepen our understanding of certain developments in specified areas of science and technology and their applicability and influence on law and legal administration. The two different disciplines of science and law do not necessarily advance in co-ordination and unison. The accelerating role of scientific and technological change in the world too often makes the pace of legal change look like a tortoise racing a hare. But sooner or later scientific developments will revolutionize the relationship both between individuals and between man and government, and both of these relationships are the subject-matter of law. Law will have to catch up with developments not only because specified legal questions which have been posed will demand their solution, but because of the impact of science on sociological and political developments, which nourish and are nourished by the law. Legal systems necessarily incorporate the ethical and political values of the society which surrounds them and these values thoroughly reflect the severe test caused by the influence, and even the influx, of science and technology on our lives.

The dilemmas and problems thereby caused need not create a law, technically complex; on the contrary, we must try and turn technology into an ally of the law. Our aim should be to be aided by science and technology in order to broaden the scope of their applicability and to strengthen their expediency. Technology should serve to create better *accuracy* and greater *diffusion* of the law, as well as better *supervision* of law enforcement and thus efficient *protection* of both the individual and the community. All these represent the aims and goals to which the late Erwin Shimron would have aspired. Erwin was a legal realist, interested in the law as it functions in society. He never adopted the inflexible cast of

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mind which cuts lawyers off from other social sciences, and he did not close himself off from contact with political thought and administrative activity. His primary aim was the public good, and therefore he was able to shake off the fetters of a most lucrative private practice in order to serve his people and his State when most needed – whether serving as chairman of a public commission of inquiry, heading legal advice in re-unified Jerusalem in one of the most precarious situations of our history, signing up for military service at the military headquarters of Judea and Samaria in order to head one of the most important departments or volunteering for strenuous and dangerous missions on behalf of the State.

He will always remain dear in our memory as the dynamic example of law in action, as the dedicated spokesman of reform and change in our social and legal reality and, above all, as a beloved friend.

May his memory be blessed.