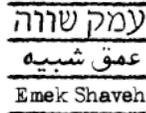

Press Release: Jerusalem Municipal Committee Halts Discussion of Expropriations for Cable Car

1 message

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September 9, 2020**Press Release:**

The Jerusalem Municipality's Planning and Building Committee halted discussion of confiscation of private land intended for constructing the cable car

The issue was removed from the agenda on the premise that confiscations cannot be approved prior to the High Court decision. There is a clear majority for the ultra orthodox parties in the committee. The ultra orthodox members expressed concern that people from the priestly cast of Kohanim (whose last name is often 'Cohen') will be defiled through contact with the dead (because the cable car route is slated to pass over a Karaite cemetery). It seems that they are signalling to the prime minister that he should not take ultra orthodox support for granted.

Today, the Jerusalem Municipality's planning and building committee was scheduled to discuss the expropriation of private properties for the construction of the cable car (See press release from 7/9/20 [here](#)). Just moments before the committee was set to convene, Chairman of the Committee Eliezer Rauchberg decided to cancel the discussion until a decision by the High Court is reached. The ultra orthodox committee member Yochanan Weissman made a passionate plea to the chairman saying the cable car will cause Kohanim to become defiled by proximity to the dead. The Halachic (Jewish law) problem noted by the ultra orthodox refers to the route of the cable car which will pass over a Karaite cemetery. The Kohanim (many of whose last name is 'Cohen') must refrain from impurity, which is caused by proximity to the dead. This is also the reason why a Kohen cannot, according to Jewish law, enter a cemetery.

It's possible that the expropriations were postponed as a signal by the ultra orthodox to the prime minister that they are not necessarily aligning themselves with all his goals and that this is an extension of the tensions between the prime minister and the ultra orthodox factions in the government.

Emek Shaveh: We are pleased that the municipality and members of the committee have shown responsibility and stopped the deplorable attempt by the promoters of the cable car to advance the expropriation of private property before the High Court even rules on the matter.

We thank the promoters for disclosing how the cable car will look and who will

pay the price for its construction: the cable car pillars will be constructed inside the yards of the residents of Silwan and the cars will sail directly over their heads.

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