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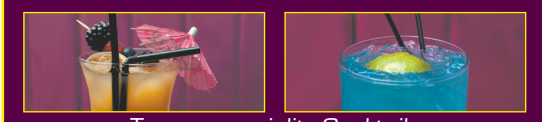
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Sunday Roast starts this Sunday, 24th Feb
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ISRAELI POLITICS

PHOTO: FLASH 90

Danon's big ideas? Draft Arabs and reject two states

INTERVIEW
BY JENNI FRAZER

► LIKUD KNESSET member Danny Danon is nothing if not bullish. His political opinions are, to put it mildly, at odds even with his own party leader. In the last Knesset he was deputy speaker but he has managed to disagree with the political establishment on almost every important issue, from vehemently opposing the disengagement from Gaza when Ariel Sharon was in charge, to attacking the principle of a two-state solution, to which even Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu subscribes.

Mr Danon's views are laid out in a new book, *Israel, The Will To Prevail*, aimed primarily at an American readership. "Talks on the establishment of a Palestinian state must cease, effective immediately," he writes. Expanding on this theme in a Tel Aviv coffee shop, Mr Danon declares: "The main issue is that there should not be a Palestinian state in Judea and Samaria. You can see what's happening in Gaza. I'm not saying we should not negotiate, but we should come up with a different solution."

His book describes a vision of a "three-state solution" in which Israel, Jordan and Egypt will be involved. "Our goal is to have the majority of land in Judea and Samaria without a Palestinian population, which includes Jewish communities and the vacant land. We would not annex those areas heavily populated with Palestinians. What we would do is offer Palestinians connection with Palestinian towns, where they would be able to travel freely from place to place without being stopped by roadblocks... as for civil issues, different regional centres would run the daily civic life of Palestinians."

> There should not be a Palestinian state in Judea and Samaria

I wondered how Mr Danon thought this scheme would play with President Barack Obama, due to make his first visit as president to Israel in the coming months. But the MK sidestepped the question, instead claiming that his first approach to Mr Obama would be to ask him to release the convicted US spy, Jonathan Pollard.

I ask what else might be on his "shopping list" of requests to Mr Obama. Iran, Mr Danon says, is top of the list. He wants America to apply "crippling sanctions" to Iran.

Inevitably our discussion comes round to "sharing the burden" of national service. Mr Danon would like Israeli Arabs to do national service, too, he says. "They could be in the army or they could be firefighters. They should give something back to the country. We shouldn't force them to do this, to put them on a bus or something, but we should tell them — sharing the burden can be to their benefit."

Yesh Atid starts 'constituency surgery'

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the strictly Orthodox.

For Rabbi Lipman, the lightning-rod moment came when he went to see what was going on at a demonstration held in Beit Shemesh over the apparent desecration of graves. "People started throwing stones and rocks at the police. One of the rocks hit me on the leg, and it was bleeding. I thought, what is going on here, that Jews will be throwing rocks at other Jews in Israel? I believe that the average Orthodox person will not be violent — but that the state of Israeli society had enabled the violence to happen."

The rabbi picked up the rock, which sits today in his Knesset office, a symbol of what turned him into an activist in Beit Shemesh and then a campaigner for Mr Lapid.

As only the third "Anglo" to be elected as an MK, Rabbi Lipman has an entirely different political heritage on which to draw. "When I was younger I worked as an intern for the Michigan Congressman, John Dingell. So I understood about forging a relationship with constituents." Accordingly, he has introduced a "constituency surgery" to be held in his Knesset office on Sunday mornings. "170,000 Anglo-Saxon voters in Israel have never had anyone to speak to directly. That's going to change."

Each of the 19 Yesh Atid Knesset members, Rabbi Lipman explained, "have divided the country into regions and will be responsible for different areas. This is the new politics."