



Name of program: **Ben and Emanuel**

Radio station: **Radio Lelo Hafsaka**

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**Subject: Prohibiting the use of *alte zachen* horses (cart horses)**

**Emanuel:** It is possible that the era of the rag and bone man with the horse and cart is coming to an end. Welcome to Sigal Bukstein, spokesperson of Hakol Chai Association.

**Sigal:** Good evening.

**Emanuel:** On the one hand, you have done a favor to the horses, but on the other hand it has an effect on nostalgia, on *alte zachen*, on the landscape of our childhood. How will we live without these sights, that take us back to the good old days of the carter, of Sallah Shabati and the like?

**Ben:** Lupo and the road.

**Emanuel:** Lupo, yes.

**Sigal:** First of all, we have not harmed nostalgia, just made an effort to keep it in its place, in the sphere of nostalgia and not in the present, because that is where it belongs. We have progressed many years beyond the days of the *alte zachen* horses that were a common sight in our streets. Today there are plentiful alternatives, and because we are talking about very, very, very severe mistreatment of the horses themselves, I think this is something that we can give up.

**Ben:** So just a minute, let's first tell our listeners what we're talking about? What is happening now with the rag and bone men?

**Sigal:** The *alte zachen* carts, which are a sight that we are all familiar with and some of us even tend to relate to in the past tense even though they continue to exist, are a very, very problematic issue for all kinds of reasons that I will go into later.

**Ben:** No, we know that, but has some law been passed? What has happened?

**Sigal:** What has happened is that Hakol Chai has been waging a determined struggle on this issue, as part of which we appealed to the Minister of Transport and the Transport Ministry, as those responsible in fact for vehicles on the road, to deal with the matter in a way that would take them off the roads in towns and off the intercity roads.

**Ben:** And will they be eliminated?

**Sigal:** Our eventual aim, of course, is yes, and the reason that we are talking now is because our struggle



is bearing its first fruit. This first fruit is that the Transport Ministry has announced that it is adopting this decision and beginning to act to draw up regulations that will eventually eradicate the phenomenon.

**Ben:** Many more horses will suffer and die until the regulations are drawn up.

**Sigal:** The aim is as few as possible, but unfortunately it is not dependent on Hakol Chai but on the Transport Ministry...

**Ben:** Do we know how many rag and bone men operate in Israel, or in Tel Aviv, or how many horses?

**Sigal:** That's a good question, because there are no records and no way of knowing how many we are talking about, and so a year ago we launched a project called '*Alte zachen* intelligence', and we asked every...

**Emanuel:** That's sometimes what the Intelligence Service itself looks like.

**Sigal:** But thanks to this intelligence, we have a picture of the situation and we are talking about hundreds...

**Ben:** Do you have a list of the *alte zachen* horses, where they are, how many of them are beaten, and so on?

**Sigal:** I don't have a list of horses, I have a list of towns that allow them in their area.

**Emanuel:** Tell me, I want to ask from the horse's viewpoint for a moment. We all know that there is such an animal as a carthorse. In other words, they...

**Sigal:** True.

**Emanuel:** Is it necessarily every horse that is pulling something, after all there are horses that carry riders, some of whom aren't exactly slim.

**Sigal:** True. We...

**Emanuel:** So is every horse pulling a cart necessarily a horse that is suffering?

**Sigal:** The thing is this - first of all, in this fight we are against the phenomenon of horse-drawn carts in town centers. That is, where there is an alternative. We are not talking at the moment about agricultural use or things like that. It is important to make the distinction.

**Emanuel:** Good.

**Sigal:** Secondly, let's not forget that these horses, in the end, are the absolute property of the carters, and the carters use horses to avoid financial expenses. In this framework...



**Ben:** In most cases when we see them, we see that the horse is skinny and is being beaten, and what I feel like doing is taking the rag and bone man himself and harnessing him to the cart, and beating him until he bleeds... May God forgive me.

**Emanuel:** No, let the carter drag the horse and not...

**Sigal:** Good. So in fact, this feeling that you have expressed just now explains the basis for our struggle.

**Ben:** Incidentally, who are the carters, who is the average rag and bone man? Once they were all kinds of Polish refugees from the Holocaust and so on. I imagine that the human fabric has changed somewhat.

**Sigal:** I imagine that the average carter comes from a not very good social economic situation, and this is why he make use of a horse and not a slightly more advanced vehicle. I don't have a profile of the average rag and bone man, other than the fact that we know for a certainty, in light of the many complaints we receive, that these horses are in a state of advanced neglect.

**Ben:** Terrible. In which towns is it particularly common?

**Sigal:** Tel Aviv and Jaffa, of course, Ramat Gan, Bnei Brak, Givatayim, Hadera, Gedera, Acco, Tiberias, Nahariya. Shall I go on?

**Emanuel:** No. What would you say to those who earn a living from this, and will say to you, you've saved the horses but killed us?

**Sigal:** Heaven forbid, we have nothing against the welcome phenomenon of the rag and bone man, which has a very strong environmental dimension...

**Ben:** And one day, Emanuel, the rag and bone man will come and take you too.

**Emanuel:** Yes, yes. But it would take a very healthy horse because of my weight.

**Sigal:** So I would say to them that just as we have made progress in many other ways in Israel, because of the era we live in, the time has come for you to move forward as well. There is no shortage of alternatives, and by the way there are rag and bone men in pickups today.

**Emanuel:** We congratulate you, of course, and now go on to save a few humans who may need it as well.

**Sigal:** We will continue to focus on animals for the moment. Thank you.