



## Schlaglicht Israel Nr. 12/08

### Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen

01. – 15. Juni 2008

#### 1. Waffenstillstand in Gaza?

*Nachdem wochenlang diskutiert worden war, wie mit der Situation im und um den Gazastreifen umzugehen sei – mit einer ausgeweiteten Militäroffensive oder einer von der ägyptischen Regierung vermittelten Kampfpause -, traf sich das israelische Sicherheitskabinett am 11. Juni, um das weitere Vorgehen zu beschließen. Es wurde entschieden, der Waffenstillstandsinitiative eine ‚Chance‘ zu geben. Der israelische Unterhändler Amos Gilad traf sich mit seinem ägyptischen Gegenpart, um die Details des Abkommens zu klären und eine mögliche Verbindung mit der Freilassung des israelischen Soldaten Gilad Shalit zu diskutieren. Währenddessen setzten sich die gewalttätigen Auseinandersetzungen jedoch unvermindert fort.*

#### No good reason for Gaza op

“There is no persuasive reason for a military action, except the fact that we cannot accept continued firing on Israel, and Hamas' continued arming. In contrast, there are a number of reasons for a cease-fire, however temporary.

The main reason is that Hamas can no more be eradicated than could Hezbollah. After all, both these organizations are first and foremost political movements and not only terror groups. [...] In any case, calm should be tried and its success judged with the passage of time, rather than trying war and judging its outcome after hundreds of casualties. In the twilight of his term, the prime minister should not attempt to take the country into another military operation. The Egyptian-sponsored cease-fire must not be delayed. “

HAA 11.06.08

#### Worte und Raketen

“Israel signalisiert und droht, erklärt und warnt, dass der Kassam- und Möserbomben-Regen [...] nicht ohne Reaktion bleiben kann. [...] Und die Hamas

nimmt die Signale auf und versteht sie sehr gut: Israel wird nicht schweigen. Es wird reden. Und plappern. Und warnen. Und erklären. [...] Israel wird sich nicht mit Kurzstrecken-Gerede begnügen, es wird auch Erklärungen und Ansprachen von George Bush und Angela Merkel zu seiner Unterstützung rekrutieren. Und wenn das nicht hilft, wird Israel die Waffe des Jüngsten Gerichtes anwenden: Eine Ansprache von Barak Obama, sogar er sagt, dass Israel das Recht hat, sich zu verteidigen. Worte gegen Raketen.

Und je mehr Zeit vergeht, desto genauer und tödlicher werden die Rakententreffer. [...]

Weiter leere Drohungen ohne Taten zu äußern, wird das Feuer nur schüren und auch eine Feuerpause weiter in die Ferne schieben.“

Uri Elitzur, HZO 11.06.08

#### An equation whispered in secret

“It is necessary to rebuild permanent Israeli security control in Gaza both in the field and via intelligence, and also to consider once again setting up settlements in the northern Gaza Strip along our southern border. It is from the ruins of these settlements that the Grads and the Qassams are being fired in the direction of Ashkelon. [...]

They fire at us from Gaza because we are not there. No one fires at [...] the Jerusalem neighborhood of Gilo, which is 500 meters from Bethlehem, because the IDF comes and goes whenever it wants, and thus has corrected the mistake of withdrawing from there during the Oslo Accord years. [...]

A renewed occupation would be costly but the longer we wait, the higher the price will be.“

Nadav Shragai, HAA 12.06.08

#### One decisive blow

“We see the old-new proposal back on the agenda [...]: Deliver one decisive blow, and then get out; a unique Israeli patent that has been duplicating itself time and again in the past decade. [...]

[But] this tango has two sides to it; two sides that over the years have learned to speak the same language. Both sides hold an affection for one big bang a moment before the agreement: We want one last military operation before the agreement that would produce heavy pressure on Hamas and the other groups in Gaza. They want to fire one last Grad rocket at Ashkelon. We want the other side to understand they need this deal like oxygen? So do they. We think that at the end of the day they only understand force? Surprisingly enough, they think the same thing. [...]

The proposal for one decisive blow should be replaced with creative ideas that would bring Gilad Shalit back home and expand the lull agreement, so it will have the potential of creating dramatic change in the region.

Ariella Ringel-Hoffman, JED 11.06.08

### **A unifying doctrine**

"Israeli policymakers need to enunciate a 'River-to-Sea Doctrine' declaring that this country will not tolerate on territory between the Mediterranean and the Jordan any foreign power that threatens the security of the Jewish state. [...] Fulfilling this doctrine, the IDF could then be directed to topple the Hamas regime by whatever stratagem works best. And an exit strategy? Once the top echelon of the Islamist leadership is eliminated, its forces decimated and the structures associated with it razed, the way would be paved for the Palestinian Authority to resume control over the area; for international aid to flow more smoothly and, with any luck, for the process of rebuilding and rehabilitation to begin. "

JPO 09.06.08

### **The government's plan for Gaza**

"For the government, a cease-fire is attractive politically. By providing a temporary respite from the jihadist missile attacks against southern Israel, the cease-fire will suspend the local media's coverage of the grave and gathering threat to Israel's security in the South. And the lull in media coverage of the Iranian threat in Gaza will provide breathing room for the scandal-ridden and deeply unpopular [...] government as it seeks desperately to avoid new general elections.

Gifted politicians that they are, Olmert, Livni and Barak know that if they decide Tuesday to reject the IDF's pleas to conduct a military campaign [...], they will be properly accused of political opportunism and cowardice by the media and their political

opponents. So to sign on to a deal with Hamas, they need military cover.

[...] That smokescreen will likely be what Olmert, Livni, Barak and their surrogates refer to as a 'medium-sized military option' against Hamas. The aim of their preferred military approach is not to defeat Hamas. [...] What their preferred military option involves is committing IDF forces to battle in numbers insufficient to defeat Hamas. IDF forces will be killed in battle and in the end, Hamas will still control Gaza. But in their public speeches they will claim victory arguing that now that they have 'sent Hamas a message' they can sign the cease-fire agreement."

Caroline Glick, JPO 09.06.08

## **2. US- Wahlkampf**

*Der amerikanische Wahlkampf, der nach dem Ausscheiden Hillary Clintons und der Festlegung Barack Obamas als demokratischen Kandidaten in die heiße Phase geht, beschäftigt auch die israelischen Medien. Es wird diskutiert, welcher Kandidat – McCain oder Obama – besser für Israel sei und welche Auswirkungen die Präsidentschaft auf den Nahostkonflikt haben könnte. Insbesondere Obama wird in Israel mit Skepsis begegnet, hauptsächlich, weil er als dem Iran gegenüber verhandlungsbereit dargestellt wird. Nachdem der demokratische Kandidat jedoch eine Rede vor der Lobbygruppe AIPAC gehalten hatte, in der er seine Freundschaft zu Israel und seine Unterstützung für ein 'ungeteiltes' Jerusalem zum Ausdruck brachte, räumten viele Kommentatoren Lob ein.*

### **Obama vs. McCain on the ME**

"How do the two leading candidates for US president differ in their approach to Israel and related topics? [...]

A [...] difference concerns the importance of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Obama presented it as an 'open wound'; [...] its lack of resolution 'provides an excuse for anti-American militant jihadists to engage in inexcusable actions.'

Asked about Obama's statement, McCain slammed the idea that radical Islam results mainly from the Arab-Israeli confrontation. [...] The two disagree on the importance of Israelis continuing to live on the West Bank. Obama places great emphasis on the topic, commenting that if their numbers continue to grow, 'we're going to be stuck in the same status quo that we've been stuck in for decades now.'

McCain acknowledged this as a major issue but quickly changed the topic to the Hamas campaign of shelling Sderot [...].

Major-party candidates for the US presidency must still pay homage to warm American ties to Israel, no matter how, as in Obama's case, dramatically this may contradict their previously-held views. [But] whereas McCain is secure on the topic, Obama worries about winning the pro-Israel vote. "

Daniel Pipes, JPO 04.06.08

### Edgy about Obama

"Even my centrist friends in Israel, young and old, smart and smarter, seem edgy about Obama. [...] What's the problem? Perhaps there is something about Obama's hybridized identity that does not quite fit the social logic Israelis think vaguely consistent with Zionism. [...] If democratic standards can make a black man a mainstream American, can it not also make an Arab a mainstream Israeli? [...]

Will Obama, so the argument goes, be another Jimmy Carter - you know, another peacemaker out of his depth? The fact that Carter actually achieved a peace treaty [...] is beside the point. [...]

The most obvious problem with Obama, however, is more immediate. He has had the brass to insist on persistent diplomacy, not military action, against Iran. [...] Obama, in other words, represents a change Israelis are not sure we know how to live with after 40 years of talk about our strategic military alliance."

Bernard Avishai, HAA 13.06.08

### Obama als Präsident – eine negative Entwicklung

„Man darf seine ausdrückliche Freundschaft gegenüber Israel nicht in Frage stellen. [Trotzdem] wäre es eine äußerst negative Entwicklung, wenn er im November zum Präsidenten gewählt würde. [...]

Die Wahl Obamas [...] würde mit einem Schlag den Druck vom Iran nehmen [...], es bestehen Zweifel, ob die militärische Option [...] nicht ganz von der Tagesordnung verschwinden würde. [...]

Um zu verstehen, was im Falle seiner Präsidentschaft auf uns zukommt, muss man sehen, welche Kräfte weltweit und innerhalb der demokratischen Partei in Aktion treten würden. Obama wurde von den radikalsten Gruppen der demokratischen Partei als Kandidat erfasst. Dies Gruppen sind eindeutig und klar erkenntlich pro-palästinensisch [...], und sie sehen die atomare Aufrüstung des Iran als regionale Angelegenheit und

sogar als gutes Recht eines souveränen Staates an."

Amnon Lord, HZO 10.06.08

### History will tell

"[O]nly two major candidates are running in America – and even the one less good for Israel is not shaping up to be a dangerous enemy to Israel. [...]

The long election campaign in America will bring many [...] groundless analysis. [...] Predictions by those who already know that Obama/McCain will certainly be less/more friendly than President Bush. In most cases this is not a prediction – it is political spin."

Shmuel Rosner, HAA 12.06.08

## 3. Streit um Konvertierungen

*Die Frage, wer ein Jude ist bzw. wie man Jude wird, wird in Israel immer wieder kontrovers diskutiert. Die Konvertierung zum Judentum ist ein langwieriger Prozess und innerhalb des Landes nur unter orthodoxer Anleitung anerkannt. Dies ist durchaus umstritten, da es inzwischen zehntausende von nichtjüdischen Immigranten gibt, die mit einer Konvertierung leichter zu integrieren wären.*

*Vor einigen Wochen entschied das Oberste Rabbinatsgericht nun, die Konvertierungen, die von Rabbi Haim Druckmann, dem Vorsitzenden der Konvertierungsbehörde, durchgeführt wurden, zu annullieren. Als Grund dafür wurde angegeben, er habe Konvertierungen leichtfertig zugelassen und die Kandidaten nicht dazu angehalten, sich nach der Konvertierung an das jüdische Religionsgesetz (Halacha) zu halten.*

*Dieses Thema wurde nun auch deswegen intensiv diskutierte, weil während des Wochenfestes, das vergangene Woche stattfand, an die biblische Ruth erinnert wird, die zum Judentum konvertierte.*

### The convert's holiday

„Converts were, and still are, a great blessing to the spiritual treasures of Jewish culture. [...]

Conversion that excludes everything secular and modern totally subverts the intent of the ancient lawmaker. Why demand a convert keep Jewish commandments that Israelis who are Jews by birth are not required to keep? [...]

Why should the general public in Israel not demand responsibility for the processes involved in making converts partners to its destiny? [...] The time has come to start an active civil rebellion against the 'identity thug' zealots, to take back responsibility for

Israeli identity from closed and backward groups and return it to the free majority. [...] From now on, let the holiday of Shavuot be a national holiday honoring converts and conversion, the 'other' who enrich us."

Avraham Burg, HAA 08.06.08

### **On Halacha, no compromises**

„Needless to say, most mainstream journalists are totally lacking the ability to read, much less evaluate, the halachic sources upon which the Rabbinical High Court based its decision, and could care less about the halachic issues involved. As a consequence, they [...] reported it like a sports match or political contest: In this corner the 'tolerant' Rabbi Druckman, and in the other corner 'hard-hearted' [ultra-orthodox] judges engaged, as always, in ruthless power grabs. [...]

The overwhelming consensus of halachic opinion [is] that a mere pro forma declaration of one's commitment to full [Jewish law] observance is inadequate. [...]

[Ultra-orthodox Jews] would be thrilled if tens of thousands of non-Jewish Israelis made the monumental commitment to truly accept the [Jewish laws]. But until then we are deeply skeptical that the miraculous individual decision to join the Jewish people [...] can ever be mass produced or subjected to numerical goals of the Israeli government. "

Jonathan Rosenbum, JPO 02.06.08

### **An obsolete monopoly**

"The demand that anyone who becomes Jewish must become Orthodox, rather than secular or traditional, implies that Orthodoxy is the 'standard' of Jewish identity, and any other version of Jewish culture can perhaps be tolerated if absolutely necessary, but is not legitimate - and is certainly not of equal value. [...]

[But] there is no need for any religious rite, Orthodox or non-Orthodox, [...] in order to join the Jewish people. A large number of people who are non-Jewish, but have Jewish relatives, have come to Israel and received citizenship under the Law of Return. [...] The integration of this large population into Israeli society is no simple challenge. However, despite a few exceptions, some of them grave, the overall picture is positive. [...]

This is exactly how joining a sovereign nation is supposed to be accomplished: immigration and the acquisition of citizenship, adoption of the nation's language and culture, integration into the country and identification with it. [...]

Anyone who adopts Jewish culture in its religious variant is rightly considered, even by most secular people, to have joined the Jewish nation. However, this is not the only way to join."

Alexander Jakobson, HAA 11.06.08

### **Bearing the yoke**

"Undeniably, the rabbis who work in the Conversion Authority - almost all of whom are religious Zionists - view conversions as a national priority. [...]

Some 300,000 non-Jews have immigrated to Israel from the former Soviet Union under the Law of Return [...]. These immigrants have integrated into Israeli society. They attend state schools, serve in the IDF, study at universities and participate in the labor market. [...]

A rift is liable to be created between totally secular Jews willing to marry non-Jewish immigrants [...] and religious Jews who will not marry gentiles. Eventually, the Jewish people of Israel will be split into two separate peoples who are unwilling to marry one another. [...]

If rabbis could convert en masse non-Jewish immigrants to Israel and their gentile offspring, they could head off the inevitable social rupture that would result from a reality in which one segment of the society is unwilling to marry another. "

Matthew Wagner, JPO 08.06.08

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