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Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen

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1. Gilad Shalit - Video

Nach mehr als drei Jahren in Gefangenschaft ist erstmals ein visuelles Lebenszeichen des 2006 von der Hamas in den Gazastreifen entführten israelischen Soldaten Gilad Shalit veröffentlicht worden. Die Videobotschaft hatte Israel unter der Vermittlung eines deutschen Mittelsmannes im Austausch für die Freilassung 20 weiblicher palästinensischer Gefangener erhalten. Nachdem lange keine Fortschritte in den Verhandlungen erzielt werden konnten, waren die Bemühungen in den letzten Wochen verstärkt worden. Während Vertreter der Hamas sagten, ein Gefangenenaustausch könne in wenigen Monaten abgeschlossen werden, gaben sich israelische Stellen jedoch skeptischer.

Make them pay

“From now on, I expect those calling for Shalit’s release to note how they intend to do it. [...] I do not believe that we should pay ‘any price.’ Actually, maybe I do believe it – yet those asked to pay should be the residents of Gaza. After all, they were the ones who chose to be led by a terror organization. Don’t they bear minimal responsibility for the results of their actions? [...] We can exert unbearable pressure on the Palestinians that will turn the Shalit affair from our problem to their problem. As long as they’re holding him, their lives would be hell.”

Assaf Wohl, JED 05.10.09

Signs of life

“The onus has always been on kidnapers to prove that their hostages are alive and well. Yet this week, the government of Binyamin Netanyahu paid Hamas to do just that.

Rather than tell Hamas that unless it could prove Gilad Shalit was in good condition there was nothing to negotiate, Israel agreed to release 20 Palestinian women prisoners [...]. While paying

Hamas’s price will end the Shalit family’s ordeal, it will also have two perilous repercussions: Some of Hamas’s most able ‘engineers’ and tacticians will resume their careers; and the movement’s standing within the Palestinian polity - and in the international arena - will further solidify. [...]

Much as we Israelis welcome a sign of life from the soldier whose fate is so much in our hearts, it is the government’s duty to pursue his freedom mindful of the many other lives at stake down the road.”

JPO 01.10.09

We are not animals

“The brief Gilad Shalit video was produced by Hamas with precision. It was meant to convey an impression to viewers in Israel and abroad: We, the members of Hamas who are holding Gilad Shalit, are not animals. [...] We [...] represent a humane approach. We are treating Gilad Shalit as one treats a prisoner of war. The fact is that Gilad is wearing a uniform, alive and well, without visible signs of physical or emotional torture. [...]

The grand swap Hamas aspires to seal now [...] includes a component that was absent from other such deals: Legitimacy. After two years of dictatorial rule in Gaza, Hamas needs a breakthrough that will let it out of the Gaza ghetto it trapped itself in along with the Strip’s population. [...]

Through a lone 23-year-old soldier, Hamas hopes to salvage itself, take front stage among Arabs and Palestinians, and gain recognition as a relatively sane political organization that can be a legitimate party in any regime to be established in the territories.”

Sever Plocker, JED 04.10.09

Jetzt zum “Real Thing”

“Es muss verstanden werden, dass sich das “Nebengeschäft”, das gestern abgeschlossen wurde, nicht auf den Erhalt eines Lebenszeichens von Gilad als Gegenleistung für die Freilassung der weiblichen

Häftlinge beschränkt. Es handelt sich hier um eine vertrauensbildende Maßnahme im Vorfeld der wahren Entscheidung. [...]

Beide Seiten geben zu, dass es Hindernisse gibt. Aber [...] nach der gegenseitigen Geste wird es sowohl der Hamas als auch Israel schwer fallen, einen Rückzieher zu machen."

Amit Cohen, MAA 01.10.09

A priceless minute

"A total of 1,194 days and nights of expecting a sign of life from Gilad Shalit are contained in a one-minute videotape. This minute is priceless. This minute is beyond words that have to do with transactions and their worth. This minute where Gilad will be seen alive and breathing and talking is the very little we must grant the Shalit family, which has been suffering for more than three horrible years. [...] There is no price for a sign of life and no price for letting the parents of a captive soldier see the face of their child and make out what he's going through. There is no way to return a captive alive to his family and to grant him the life of freedom he deserves without payment, and the payment comes in the framework of a swap that both sides can accept."

Anat Meidan, 01.10.09

Kein Geschäft, sondern eine Farce

„An keinem anderen Ort der Welt hätte es so etwas gegeben. [...] Denn niemand auf der Welt hätte Terroristen freigelassen, um eine Videokassette mit Aufnahmen eines entführten Soldaten zu bekommen. [...] Nur hier bei uns konnte die Sache in etwas so Monströses, so Dummes, Überflüssiges ausarten. [...]

Die Hamas wird das Geschäft, wenn es letzten Endes zustande kommt, zu Recht als weiteren himmlischen Sieg feiern. Hunderte von Terroristen werden uns ins Gesicht spucken. Abu Masen wird von der Hamas an den Rand der Geschichte gedrängt werden, während die nächste Entführung schon vorbereitet wird.“

Ben Caspit, 05.10.09

A vital visit

"The videotape of him that was aired on Friday, after more than 1,200 days in Hamas captivity in an unknown location, does nothing to mitigate the severity of the abuse done to Shalit and his family by withholding all information about his situation. [...] The difference between releasing this video and allowing Red Cross personnel to meet Shalit is

enormous. [...] At the very least it must be remembered that the video was not handed over so as to meet some minimal international requirement, but rather in exchange for the release of female Palestinian prisoners who were convicted of serious crimes. [...]

Israel must continue to insist that Red Cross personnel be allowed to visit the captive soldier. Indeed, such a visit must be the next step."

Ze'ev Segal, HAA 05.10.09

2. Neue Verhandlungen mit dem Iran

Zum ersten Mal seit vielen Jahren waren die USA direkt an Verhandlungen um das umstrittene iranische Nuklearprogramm beteiligt. Vertreter des Irans waren in Genf mit Delegierten aus den USA; Deutschland, Russland, Großbritannien, China und Frankreich zusammengetroffen. Als Ergebnis des Treffens stimmte der Iran einer Inspektion seiner zweiten Uranaufbereitungsanlage zu, deren Existenz erst kurz vorher zugegeben wurde.

In den israelischen Medien wurde dies jedoch größtenteils als Verzögerungstaktik interpretiert. Für Unruhe sorgte außerdem, dass der Iran wenige Tage vor Verhandlungsbeginn Raketen mit Reichweite bis Israel getestet hatte.

The Israeli challenge

"The options of deterrence and retaliation are not available in face of the Iranian terror regime, which sacrificed hundreds of thousands of its people during the 1980-88 war against Iraq. The only option available is that of prevention and preemption. [...]

An Iranian nuclear cloud, hovering above Israel, would not require the launching of a nuclear bomb, in order to wreck domestic and external confidence in the future of the Jewish state. Aliya (immigration of Jews) would come to a halt, emigration would surge dramatically, Israel's credit rating and growth projection would collapse, and oversea investors would stay away, causing economic, social and security devastation. Therefore, the Jewish state cannot await a smoking nuclear gun in the hand of Teheran; the Jewish state must prevent the nuclear gun from reaching Teheran's hand."

Yoram Ettinger, JED 07.10.09

The president, Iran and the 'or else' factor

"It is widely claimed that the meeting in Geneva last week between the US - along with Russia, China, France, Britain and Germany - and Iran obtained

three great achievements toward ending the Iranian nuclear campaign. [...] The account we are getting of the meeting's significance is too good to be true. After all, one must take into context the nature and ideology behind the Teheran regime as well as its immediate need to consolidate power at home and defuse pressure from abroad. If ever there was a situation that seemed ripe for trickery this is it. [...] From Teheran's viewpoint, in just seven hours of talks it made the threat of sanctions go away for months without taking any significant action. Indeed, Iran and those it met with have a common interest: to make the public and confrontational aspects of the problem go away. [...]

Obama's response to this matter shows his strategy. He will support Iran doing reprocessing in exchange for the regime pursuing a peaceful nuclear energy option. Remember that this is what Iran has insisted it has been doing the whole time and will go on insisting until the day that nuclear weapons are obtained. Obama [...] is empowering the Iranian narrative."

Barry Rubin, JPO 04.10.09

Eine Grenze für den Iraner

"In ganz Europa verliert der Iran zunehmend an Legitimation. [...] Europa ist des Dialogs mit dem Iran überdrüssig, sagen die Europäer. Anders als die USA, die mit einer neuen Regierung und einer positive Haltung an die Sache herantreten, waren wir die ganzen letzten Jahre dabei. [...] Europa glaubt an den Dialog, fühlt sich jetzt jedoch betrogen. Seit über zehn Jahren wird mit dem Iran verhandelt und alle zwei Jahre merken die Europäer, dass sie hinters Licht geführt wurden. [...] Darüber hinaus haben die Europäer Angst vor Israel und dem, was es tun könnte. [...]

Für die Europäer sind Sanktionen der Weg, eine gefährliche neue Eskalation zu verhindern. Sie wollen streng mit dem Iran sein, damit Israel oder die USA nicht noch strenger werden."

Nadav Eyal, MAA 02.10.09

The last chance

"The people who are fully convinced of our ability to deliver a devastating blow against the Iranians have no clue what we are dealing with here, or what such war entails (and this will be war!) [...]

Iran has, or will soon possess, a nuclear bomb. The Iranians have long-range missiles. The Iranians have a mad leadership headed by a madman. The Iranians also turned us into the nemesis, a military target, and their doomsday vision. [...]

The Free World doesn't have too many options, and mostly it has no time to waste. The opposite is true: The sand in the hourglass is running out. What is left to do now, immediately, is to tighten the sanctions and enlist the entire world to this cause. [...]

Perhaps if we saw the establishment of a global headquarters, and had dozens of states endorse the sanctions, maybe we could have done something. The time has come for the world to enlist to the cause – yet the world is silent. Get to work already!"

Eitan Haber, JED 01.10.09

In praise of balance of terror

"They like to scare us with words like 'strategic change' and 'balance of terror,' but after 50 unbalanced years where we had nuclear ambiguity and the other side had nothing, perhaps it's not such a bad idea. The world existed for more than 40 years in the shadow of a balance of terror and survived. In the Middle East, a cold war could be a refurbishing change after all the sweaty wars we've been through. [...] They tell us that as opposed to others, the Iranians are simply crazy, yet in the US and Soviet Union people thought the same terrible things about each other. Mostly because there was someone there to convince them to think like that.

In retrospect, most Cold War damages were not caused by actual battles, but rather, by paranoia. Perhaps we need to learn the lesson and stop worrying about the Iranian bomb. On the other hand, after all those years, it won't be easy to find a new hobby."

Asaf Gefen, JED 02.10.09

Peace in exchange for the bomb

"Let us assume that tomorrow Iran informs its American interlocutors that it will cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency, abide by all United Nations resolutions relating to nuclear weapons, and recognize Israel - but on two conditions: first, [...] the international community [...] will immediately act to implement UN resolutions calling for the establishment of a Palestinian state in territories conquered in 1967; secondly, that Israel be forced to open its reactor in Dimona to IAEA inspectors, to ensure that the country has developed nuclear energy solely for peaceful purposes rather than for producing dozens of atomic bombs. [...]

Is this a case of naivete? Perhaps. [...]

But what will we do if the Iranians surprise Obama with an offer to rid the Middle East of nuclear weapons and to help establish peace throughout the entire region? [...] Netanyahu needs to prepare

himself for the possibility that Iran will redeem its concessions vis-a-vis its nuclear program with Israeli concessions over the territories.”

Akiva Eldar, HAA 05.10.09

3. Unruhen in Jerusalem

Einmal mehr sind Tempelberg und Al Aqsa-Moschee im Konflikt zwischen Israel und den Palästinensern zum Austragungsort neuer Unruhen geworden. Nachdem Jerusalem seit Wochen im Mittelpunkt der Auseinandersetzung um die Voraussetzungen für eine erneute Aufnahme von Friedensgesprächen steht, kam es an Yom Kippur, dem jüdischen Versöhnungstag, zu gewalttätigen Ausschreitungen. Palästinensischen Quellen zufolge hatten jüdische Extremisten einen Marsch auf das Gelände der Al Aqsa-Moschee geplant.

Laut der israelischen Version waren diese Extremisten jedoch an einem Betreten des Tempelberges gehindert worden, woraufhin Palästinenser eine Touristengruppe angegriffen hätten. Auch an den folgenden Tagen kam es zu Unruhen. Wegen Anstiftung zu Gewalttaten wurde schließlich Scheich Ra'ad Salah, der Führer des Nordflügels der Islamischen Bewegung in Israel, verhaftet. Er hatte Muslime dazu aufgerufen, zur Al Aqsa – Moschee zu kommen, um sie zu verteidigen.

Restraint in a delicate place

“The Israeli government and ‘the security infrastructure’ accused the Palestinian Authority and Salah’s organization of attempts to incite their constituencies [...]. The PA, Salah and Muslim clerics in Arab states, for their part, tried to rally the international community and public opinion against the ‘Judaization of Jerusalem’ and what they described as an attempt to do injury to the Al-Aqsa Mosque.

For the parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict, Jerusalem and its sacred sites are a guaranteed means of inflaming national passions and creating tension and confrontation in times of political duress. [...] Both sides must show restraint and focus on renewing negotiations toward a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict instead of igniting a fire at this sensitive site and risking another violent confrontation. Israel has a unique responsibility due to its control over Jerusalem, and it must use utmost caution and avoid provocations and insensitive remarks.”

HAA 07.10.09

The right to be free

“The pent-up anger and frustration are apparent recently, with the rightist government going too far in terms of expelling Palestinians from their homes and replacing them with settler families in Ras al-Amud, Silwan, and Sheikh Jarah.

These acts undermined the dignity and mostly the rights of every Palestinian. The same is true for the ongoing declarations about the ‘Judaization’ of Jerusalem and the apparent dead-end under the Netanyahu-Barak-Lieberman government, which pushes away the two-state vision. On top of this we have seen rabbis’ declarations and the ‘visits’ of Jews at the al-Aqsa compound.

All of the above prompted the current angry outburst. [...] The anger and frustration are the fuel, and Israel’s aggression is the spark. [...]

We have no interest or desire in a clash – the opposite is true. Popular protest is legitimate. However, we shall never accept a situation whereby one side feels like a knight while the other feels like the horse; one side is the master and ruler while the other is the servant and slave.”

Ahmad Tibi, JED 06.10.09

The factor behind the Temple Mount riots

“The unrest [...] is not spontaneous and is not occurring in a vacuum.

The riots are being directly incited by the PA, whose official media outlets and institutions are stoking Arab flames by claiming right-wing extremist Jews are attempting to threaten Al-Aksa Mosque. [...]

The PA is not just inciting violence; its officials also assist the riots. [...] The PA-aligned Islamic Movement is reportedly even sponsoring buses to transport young, riled-up Israeli Arabs to Jerusalem and the Temple Mount from Umm el-Fahm. [...] So why the current clashes?

During his speech to the UN General Assembly days before the riots, Obama used strongly worded language to call for the creation of a ‘viable, independent Palestinian state with contiguous territory that ends the occupation that began in 1967. [...] It seems the PA, emboldened by Obama’s speech, may be using the riots as a pressure tactic to send a clear message to Israel - if negotiations do not create a state in the near future, expect another intifada.”

Aaron Klein, JPO 07.10.09

Stones won’t make a difference

“It was clear that the PA, as well as Hamas, will seek the first opportunity to again set Jerusalem on

fire and attempt to display its sovereignty in the east of the city in general and on the Temple Mount in particular. The demand of US and European leaders to stop Israeli construction in Jerusalem, as if it was an unauthorized settlement, was the boost Palestinians needed in order to get going. If America is talking like this, what should the Palestinian Authority say? [...]

The Israel Police and its commanders did well by rushing to reinforce their presence in Jerusalem in order to suppress the riots. Closing Temple Mount to visitors and limiting the number of Muslim worshippers were necessary precautions in order to calm tensions in the world's most volatile area. In all of Jerusalem's neighborhoods and quarters, including Temple Mount, there is only one government authority that can decide what is allowed and what isn't – the State of Israel. Similarly, there is only one authority that is allowed to enforce the law – the Israel Police.”

Avi Dichter, JED 06.10.09

Third intifada?

“For a few hours yesterday, it looked like Palestinian leaders were about to unleash a third intifada. That they didn't is perhaps attributable to a recognition that centrally-planned terrorism [...] is now as passé as their previous tactic of airline hijackings. Still, there's plenty of room for spontaneous violence, inspired though not coordinated from above. [...]

Israeli authorities foster coexistence and maintain free access to the holy sites. Palestinian factions, by contrast, want just the opposite. Jews do not deny the religious significance of the Muslim sites on the Temple Mount. Yet Palestinians can't abide the fact that the Jewish presence in Jerusalem antedated the Muslim arrival in 636 CE by well over a millennia. [...]

Nothing brings Fatah [...], Hamas [...], and the Islamic Movement's Northern Branch in the Galilee more into harmony than 'protecting' the Haram al-Sharif from [...] 'radical Jew colonizers.' [...].”

JPO 05.10.09

Täuschende Ruhe

“In der letzten Zeit sind wir Zeuge einer Reihe von Berichten, die den dramatischen Veränderungen bei den Palästinensern unter der Führung von Abu Masen ihr Lob aussprechen. [...] Aber es handelt sich um eine Irreführung. [...]

Wenn man eine frische, konkrete Darstellung dafür haben möchte, dass sich nichts bei den palästinensischen Partnern geändert hat, genügt es, zu

beobachten, was sich in der letzten Woche um den Tempelberg abgespielt hat. Die Unruhen sind Ergebnis der Arbeit von Abu Masen und seinen Leuten. Die Sprecher der PA haben nach der Rückkehr Abu Masens aus Washington eine neue anti-zionistische Lügengeschichte erfunden, der zufolge Israel die Fundamente der Moschee zu Fall bringen will. [...]

Die Hetze, die Gewalt, die versteckten Absichten – alles nach der besten Tradition der Manipulation der PLO. Dies ist die Herausforderung für die Regierung Netanjahu, die entscheiden muss, ob sie das Spiel, in dem wir immer verlieren, mitspielen will oder es an der Zeit ist, die Lügenmaske vom Gesicht der Palästinenser zu reißen.“

Nadav Haetzni, MAA 01.10.09

4. Wahlen in Deutschland

Auch in Israel wurden die Bundestagswahlen in Deutschland mit Interesse beobachtet. Der Erfolg der CDU wurde begrüßt, da Angela Merkel als sehr Israel-freundlich gilt. Mit größerer Skepsis wurde die voraussichtliche Ernennung des FDP-Vorsitzenden Westerwelle zum Außenminister betrachtet. Die FDP hatte in der Vergangenheit wegen antisemitischer Statements ihres ehemaligen Vorsitzenden Möllemann sowie einer in Israel als pro-arabisch verstandenen Außenpolitik Genschers teilweise ein schwieriges Verhältnis zu Israel gehabt.

Merkel win good for Israel

“Two days ago in Germany, Angela Merkel again won the premiership, and in this case we can say without hesitation that this is indeed good for Israel. It's even very good. [...]

Merkel is not a blind follower, and in some cases she expressed reservations in the face of various plans and moves adopted by various Israeli governments. Yet nonetheless, she was the first European leader who grasped Israel's problems within the giant Muslim world in general and within the Arab Middle East in particular. She also made an effort to assist Israel with these problems. [...]

The German chancellor realized that when it comes to Islam's plans and worldview, Israel is no more than a means for achieving the end goal: Taking over the Christian world.”

Noah Klieger, 29.09.09

Ein anderes Deutschland

„Was Israel beunruhigt ist der ideologische Lehrer Westerwelles, der ehemalige Außenminister [...] Hans-Dietrich Genscher. In Jerusalem erinnert man sich an ihn in erster Linie wegen der gescheiterten Rettungsaktion der israelischen Sportler bei der Münchner Olympiade im Jahr 1972, sowie seiner guten Beziehungen zu radikalen arabischen Führern.“

Eldad Beck, JED 29.09.09

Der Außenminister: Ein offener Homosexueller

„Im Gegensatz zu dem scheidenden Außenminister Frank-Walter Steinmeier [...] wird Westerwelle seine Sympathien zu Israel wahrscheinlich offener zum Ausdruck bringen. Ohne den kritischen Blick [Steinmeiers] wird sich dann auch Bundeskanzlerin Merkel freier zu ihrer pro-israelischen Haltung bekennen können. [...]

Zum ersten Mal wird ein geouteter Homosexueller deutscher Außenminister, was jedoch die politischen Beziehungen Deutschlands zu streng religiösen muslimischen Staaten wie Saudi Arabien erschweren könnte“

Jakob Achimeir, IHY 29.09.09

Merkels Shas Partei

„Seinen beeindruckenden Wahlerfolg verdankt Westerwelle demselben politischen Trick, den auch die Shas vor den letzten Wahlen in Israel angewandt hat, als sie erklärte, sie werde Benjamin Netanjahu den Vorzug geben [...]. In den entscheidenden Phasen des Wahlkampfes in Deutschland erklärte Westerwelle klipp und klar, er werde sich nur einer Koalition mit der Unionspartei anschließen. [...]

Frank-Walter Steinmeier [...] wird in Kürze das Außenministerium in Berlin verlassen. Israel hat guten Grund, sein Ausscheiden zu bedauern. In Deutschland gab es keinen Kanzler, der Israel so verpflichtet war wie Angela Merkel. Genauso kann man sagen, dass die SPD noch keinen Israel-freundlicheren und verständnisvolleren Führer hatte als Steinmeier. Seine Standpunkte, die sich auf ein tiefes persönliches Verständnis der Ereignisse im Nahen Osten stützen, waren wie eine frische Brise. Gut, dass Steinmeier wenigstens nicht zurücktritt, sondern als Oppositionsführer fungieren wird.“

Eldad Beck, JED 29.09.09

Celebrating the German model

„If anyone wanted evidence that we are not in the mental and political world of the Great Depression,

the German election result and its outcome - a stable government of the center-right - should be a clincher. [...] Conventional wisdom suggests that incumbent parties and politicians are punished by voters in times of economic distress. But this time, there was never any doubt about the position or popularity of Chancellor Merkel. [...] In Germany in 2009, not only was there was no swing to political extremism of the right: There was no sign of any support for a radical right at all. [...] The sense that Germany had an opportunity to show off the unique strengths of the "German model" was a key to Merkel's appeal, and she repeatedly noted the tough line she had taken against the banks. In coming years, the German government is likely to be more vocal in European and global debates, presenting the German model as something that corresponds more closely to what the world needs in the aftermath of the financial crisis.“

Harold James, HAA 09.10.09

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