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Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen

23. November – 09. Dezember 2009

1. Reaktionen auf den Siedlungsbaustopp

Am 25. November verfügte die israelische Regierung die Aussetzung von Baumaßnahmen in den jüdischen Siedlungen im Westjordanland für die nächsten zehn Monate. Damit reagierte Premierminister Netanjahu auf Druck aus Washington. Der Baustopp, der alle noch nicht begonnenen Bauvorhaben betrifft, schon begonnene Arbeiten jedoch ausspart, sei eine Geste, um Friedensgespräche mit den Palästinensern wieder aufnehmen zu können. Allerdings gilt der Baustopp für Ostjerusalem nicht. Palästinensische Vertreter reagierten dementsprechend negativ und zeigen sich auch weiterhin nicht zu Verhandlungen bereit.

In den Siedlungen weiten sich indes die Proteste aus. Es kam wiederholt zu Demonstrationen. Inspektoren, die Anordnungen zum Baustopp verteilen sollten, wurden am Zutritt zu Siedlungen gehindert. Auch Opposition und Mitglieder der Regierungskoalition äußerten ihre Kritik an Netanjahus Initiative.

Lessons not learned

"Israel agreed to stop all construction once the apartments currently being built are finished, except in Jerusalem. [...]"

What happened? The PA couldn't stand to see Israel being praised and doesn't want to negotiate peace anyway. So it threw a temper tantrum: riots in Jerusalem, threats by PA leader Mahmoud Abbas to resign, refusal to go to negotiations with Israel, and clamor for a unilateral declaration of independence. [...] Why make compromise peace with Israel when you can just claim everything you want, ensuring the door is kept open for a future struggle to wipe Israel off the map entirely? [...]"

Once again, we've seen that a concession doesn't lead to a concession by the other side nor does it lead to progress. It just produces a demand for more

concessions without giving any real credit to the last one."

Barry Rubin, JPO 22.12.09

There is no turning back

"It was hard to believe the prime minister Tuesday evening when he declared that the settlement freeze is a temporary one-time move, to be followed by resumed construction; a statement he made in a bid to mitigate the anger of the settlers. [...]"

Let's assume that in 10 months the international community is still unable to curb Iran's uranium enrichment facilities. Israel's need for US assistance in thwarting the 'existential danger' vis-à-vis Iran [...] will be even greater. Is it even thinkable that the Obama Administration will then allow Israel to resume construction in the territories? Does anyone think that Netanyahu will dare resist the American demand to continue the freeze?"

Shimon Shiffer, JED 02.12.90

The wink became a rebellion

"In the settlements [...] the waves of protest and opposition currently look like a tsunami in the making. The concern that it could eventually flood the country, sweeping aside everything in its path, is a serious one. [...] When Netanyahu decided on the limited freeze, I assume he thought the settlers would understand that this would prove that the Palestinians don't want to reach an agreement with Israel. But the settlers are not willing to play such dangerous games. That is why they do not want to wait 10 months to see whether Bibi will keep his promise. [...]"

We are now, for the first time, witnessing a confrontation that borders on rebellion or insurrection between an elected government and its citizens in the West Bank."

Yoel Marcus, HAA 08.12.09

Big show underway

“Dozens of settlers as well as Civil Administration officials presented the play known as ‘Inspector, I’m unloading a caravan’ across Judea and Samaria this past week.

The show [...] is mostly aimed for the American audience. It is meant to convince the viewers that the Netanyahu - Barak government is doing everything in its power in order to halt construction in the settlements. [...] Indeed, this is yet another show depicting the government and the settlers fighting each other, even though in reality they have been playing for the same team for years now. [...]

Yet the truth is that it does not quite matter what people in Judea and Samaria say. What truly matters is whether the American audience members will continue to buy tickets to this play, or whether at some point in time they will get sick and tired of the show.”

Asaf Geffen, JED 04.12.09

Peace or appeasement

“A freeze will not moderate – but will whet the appetite of - the PLO [...] or Hamas [...]; it will radicalize their demands and fuel their terrorism. [...]

A freeze re-entrenches the misperception of Jewish presence in Judea and Samaria as an obstacle to peace. It diverts attention and resources from the crucial threat to peace: Abbas-engineered hate education - the manufacturing line of terrorists - and Arab rejection of the existence – and not just the size – of the Jewish state. A freeze and the adherence to presidential dictate will not transform the White House position on Iran-related matters. [...] In fact, a freeze and a serial submission to presidential pressure – just like any other form of retreat - erode Israel's strategic posture in Washington and in the Middle East. Freeze of Jewish construction in Judea and Samaria is not a peace-enhancer; it is an appeasement-enhancer.”

Yoram Ettinger, JED 30.11.09

The State of Yesha heads to battle

“All this government has to do is take a deep breath for the next 10 months, chase after people with freeze orders and wait until the illness passes. It won't have to destroy one house or remove one illegal outpost, nor even stop the paving of roads to future settlements. It only has to stop the peace process for 10 months, plain and simple. The government understands this, the settlers know the name of the game and so do the Palestinians and the Americans. [...]

The concern on the west side of the Green Line should be different - that the construction freeze will become the ultimate symbol of Israeli concessions to the Palestinians and the United States, of the terrible sacrifice for which nothing real was given in exchange; that it will be impossible to ask such a sacrifice again from Israel. [...] No one will be able to demand further ‘concessions,’ because such a ‘trauma’ must not happen again. Therefore this pseudo-trauma must be magnified. [...] The moratorium on construction must be presented immediately as no less than a national disaster, a real holocaust, so that 10 months from now no one will ever consider demanding that the freeze continue. [...] No more chances must be taken in such a struggle, and the settlers are taking none. This state has 300,000 citizens, and those who want a peace process will have to negotiate with its leaders, not with the Palestinians or Americans.”

Zvi Bar'el, HAA 06.12.09

2. Welchen Preis für Gilad Shalit?

Während die geheimen Verhandlungen über einen Gefangenaustausch zwischen israelischer Regierung und der Hamas unter der Vermittlung eines deutschen Geheimdienstmitarbeiters weitergehen, wird in der israelischen Öffentlichkeit die Debatte um den richtigen Preis für den im Gazastreifen gefangen gehaltenen Soldaten Gilad Shalit geführt. Insbesondere die Freilassung von Palästinensern, die führend an Anschlägen mit hohen Opferzahlen beteiligt waren, stößt auf Widerstand. Eine Organisation für Angehörige von Terroropfern hatte eine Petition beim Obersten Gerichtshof eingereicht, damit die Details eines möglichen Abkommens offen gelegt werden. Es ging dabei in erster Linie darum, der Öffentlichkeit die Namen der freizulassenden palästinensischen Gefangenen zugänglich zu machen. Aus Gründen der nationalen Sicherheit lehnte der Oberste Gerichtshof die Petition jedoch ab.

Schalit: The details matter

“No [...] overwhelming consensus exists regarding the price which a sovereign responsible government should pay for Schalit's release, given the risks of further kidnappings and killings orchestrated by those Palestinian terrorists who could go free in a prisoner exchange.

Precisely because of widespread concerns over the terms and costs of a deal, Prime Minister Binyamin

Netanyahu repeatedly promised full disclosure and a comprehensive public debate on the specifics of any swap.

Yet precisely the opposite is happening, with the formal sanction, as of this week, of a Supreme Court ruling. Rather than informing the citizenry, whose lives may be on the line because of the number and caliber of convicted killers slated to be let loose imminently, censorship is being employed to prevent us from finding out the specifics. [...]

Besides, can anyone still buy the line that keeping our population in the dark will keep Hamas from adopting yet more uncompromising positions? [...] Surely, if anything, the reverse is true. Surely, the resonance of any public misgivings over such a step would prompt greater Hamas urgency and flexibility over a deal, amid fear that Israeli public pressure would stymie it."

JPO 02.12.09

An image of weakness

"The question that emerges in earnest at this time, when Gilad Shalit's freedom is on the line, is whether his release through capitulation to Hamas' conditions will in all likelihood prompt more abductions in the future.

In the name of which set of morals should we choose Gilad Shalit's life over the lives of people to be abducted in the future because of the surrender that prompted his release? [...]

A greater problem is the fact that people who abduct Israelis are going on with their lives while feeling nothing bad will happen to them and that they won't have to pay any price for their acts. [...] The Hamas leaders who hold Gilad Shalit are sleeping in their beds, sitting in their offices, and traveling worldwide as if there is nothing wrong with their acts and conduct. [...] The State of Israel no longer scares anyone, and many in the Arab world feel that they can do anything against it, without paying any price for their actions, as grave as these may be."

Mordechi Kedar, JED 24.11.09

Release Barghouti

"With excessive fastidiousness, some cabinet members, most of them on the right, are trying to set criteria to determine whether it is permissible to release a given prisoner.

The amount of blood the terrorists have spilled, or the danger of future terrorist attacks inherent in their release, are among the main criteria. [...] It seems that at least regarding one prisoner, Fatah's Marwan Barghouti, the foolishness is particularly apparent.

Barghouti is considered a Palestinian leader. [...] Anyone who thinks that keeping him behind bars will contain his political power and standing is welcome to learn from South Africa, which imprisoned Nelson Mandela for decades only to see him become president. [...] Even if we accept the argument that Barghouti is a dangerous terrorist, he is certainly not the worst of the murderers to be released in an exchange. And the chance he will be able to move the diplomatic process forward overshadows the value of keeping him behind bars."

HAA 29.11.09

Stop the fear mongering

"We must keep in mind that objectors to the release of prisoners who spilled blood ignore a fact that apparently has no significance for them, adopting a self-righteous attitude and completely disregarding reality. Many of them treat the Palestinians as though they are not human and as if our own killing and the blood we spilled with our smart weapons apparently do not count. As if their blood is not on our hands. [...] Those who sow terror and fear among us by speaking about the terrorists to be freed should the deal materialize would do well to stop threatening us. [...]

The danger of attacks will grow even if no detainees are released. The protest by their parents and the public who supports them will not end. If we do not release them, the danger may grow."

Shulamit Aloni, JED 02.12.09

One for one

"This country urgently needs a policy regarding captive exchanges. Once, we had one: It was no negotiations with terrorists. Period. That has morphed today into absurd horse-trading of the 'any price' variety, including 20 female terrorists for a videocassette. [...]

One for one. [...] Israel should announce its new unyielding and ironclad policy: We will do everything possible to prevent future kidnappings, and our policy remains not to reward terrorists for their crimes. However, the most we will ever agree to under any circumstances in any future exchange will be one. We can negotiate over the who in such a case, but never on the how many. This should be codified by legislation.

What the security wall has become to untold dozens of would-be mass murderers, 'one for one' can be to those who plot future kidnappings.

We absolutely must stand firm."

Charely J. Levine, JPO 25.11.09

Wie soll man den Shalit-Deal erklären?

„In Washington ist man sich der destruktiven Wirkung bewusst, die der Deal auf Abu Masen und alle anderen moderaten Kräfte haben könnte. [...] [Netanjahu] weiß, dass die Hamas nun als großer Sieger dastehen wird, und was dies für die arabische Überzeugung, Israel verstehe nur Gewalt, bedeutet. Das trifft übrigens zu. Wir verstehen nur Gewalt und das beweisen wir immer wieder aufs Neue. Wenn alles okay ist, sind wir große Helden. Wenn es schwierig wird, laufen wir davon.“
Ben Caspit, MAA 02.12.09

3. Der Demjanjuk-Prozess

1993 wurde John Demjanjuk, dem vorgeworfen worden war im Konzentrationslager Treblinka unzählige Gräueltaten begangen zu haben, von einem israelischen Gericht aus Mangel an Beweisen freigesprochen. Nun steht der gebürtige Ukrainer, der jahrzehntelang in den USA lebte, in Deutschland vor Gericht, diesmal aufgrund seiner Rolle als Wachmann im Vernichtungslager Sobibor. Er wird der Beihilfe zu Mord in 27.900 Fällen angeklagt. In Israel wird das Verfahren, wahrscheinlich eines der letzten seiner Art, mit Interesse beobachtet und weitestgehend begrüßt. Es gibt jedoch auch Kritik an der Tatsache, dass Deutschland nun über einen ausländischen Täter des niedrigsten Ranges richtet, während viele deutsche Planer und Ausführer des Holocausts ungestraft blieben.

The Demjanjuk disgrace

“Though more than 60 years have passed since the Holocaust, there is something reassuring about the fact that its perpetrators are still being made to answer for their actions. Normally speaking, the way of the world is to move on and forget. [...] But the Demjanjuk trial proves once again that the atrocities inflicted on our people in the killing fields of Europe have not become just a stale detail of history. [...] Fortunately, Demjanjuk’s trial will also serve as an important educational tool for a new generation of Germans. It will help to inform them about what their forefathers did to the Jewish people, and remind them of the everlasting debt they owe to our nation. [...] Despite it all, I can’t help but feel that there is something deeply unsettling about this trial. [...] It is the location of this tribunal that disturbs me. With all due respect to the German prosecutor, the trial of John Demjanjuk should have taken place in Jerusalem and not in Munich. [...]

The State of Israel knowingly and willfully allowed a participant in the Nazi murder machine to escape prosecution in Jerusalem, leaving it to others to do the job. This was nothing less than a disgrace. There was clearly enough evidence to justify putting the Sadist of Sobibor on trial in Israel at the time, but politics and public relations appear to have gotten in the way. [...] Israel had this murderer in its hands, and instead we let him go. And for that, there can be no forgiveness.”

Michael Freud, JPO 02.12.09

Ivan the Miserable

“In this last trial of its kind on German soil, a non-German has been accused of crimes against humanity; the proceedings will end, at best, with the moral that there were also wicked Slavs. Listeners to a German radio station or viewers of German television on Monday might have believed that Josef Mengele was going on trial, or that a criminal who regrettably wasn’t hanged at Nuremberg after the war had finally been caught. But the man in the wheelchair [...] was merely one of tens of thousands of Nazi collaborator. [...]

The last chapter in Germany’s legal proceedings against Nazi criminals will be the trial of Ivan the Miserable. Heinrich Himmler thought that mass murder was not a simple matter for German refinement to handle [...]. So he assigned the Slavs to do the dirty work in the death camps. He could have chuckled over this trial and said that the Slavs really did the job. The German judicial system would have done better to refrain from this self-debasement.”

Yitzhak Laor, HAA 02.12.09

No mercy for Demjanjuk

“Demjanjuk has turned into an old and possibly sick man. But does age and one’s health condition erase his guilt? Do they wash away crimes that cannot be described in words? Should a man suspected of mass murder be forgiven just because he sometimes requires the use of a wheelchair?

The answer to the above questions is clearly ‘no.’ [...] Age does not remedy anything, and in any case there is nothing to fix. How exactly can anyone rectify the extermination of about 800,000 Jews within less than a year in Treblinka or the extermination of 250,000 Jews in Sobibor? [...]

Ivan Demjanjuk [...] was not even a senior SS man, but rather, a guard, the lowest rank in the German execution units at the time. However, according to the indictment, he was a cog in the immense

extermination machine [...]. Without those cogs, the machine would not have been able to work as efficiently as it did, and therefore there is no forgiveness, no amnesty, and no mercy.”

Noah Klieger, JED 30.11.09

A terrible Ivan

“Many, in Germany and beyond, are discomfited by what they perceive as the hounding of an old and dying man. Many are suggesting that this may prove to be the last headline-making Nazi war crimes case.

In fact, new allegations against suspected Nazi war criminals continue to emerge, hundreds of investigations are ongoing in over a dozen countries, and there have been numerous convictions and legal victories in recent years, relating to members of murderous security police units and concentration camp guards. [...] The crucial morality at the heart of the new Demjanjuk trial lies in its message that the passage of time in no way diminishes the gravity of the crime and the guilt of its perpetrators, and that there can be no reward for having evaded justice through the decades and into old age.”

JPO 30.11.09

Steht dort nicht allein

“Es ist klar, dass die Architekten der Endlösung vor Gericht gestellt, verurteilt und an den Galgen gebracht werden mussten. Und es ist klar, dass die Ideologen des NS-Rassismus ebenso schuldig sind wie die Mörder. Und auch Sadisten wie Mengele müssen den Preis zahlen. Aber Demjanjuk ist nicht wie sie. Er war nur ein einfacher Wachmann. Ein Ergebnis der Nazi-Besatzung, eine Schraube in der Vernichtungsmaschinerie. [...]

Und das ist der Punkt. Gerade die kleine Rolle des Angeklagten im Vernichtungsapparat verleiht dem Demjanjuk-Prozess so große Bedeutung. [...] Wie soll mit denen verfahren werden, die nicht geplant, jedoch geholfen, geschwiegen und zum Schweigen gebracht haben? Demjanjuk ist das Gleichnis für alle, die nicht oder viel zu leicht bestraft wurden: Die Fabrikanten, die das Gas für Auschwitz herstellten, die Bürger, die sahen, wie die Juden verschwanden und die Wahrheit sehr wohl kannten, und mit Sicherheit die herzlosen Wachleute, die unsere Verwandten in die Gaskammern schoben. Wo John Demjanjuk heute steht, auf der Anklagebank in München, steht er nicht allein.“

Nadav Eyal, MAA 02.12.09

4. Schwedische EU-Initiative

Schweden, das zurzeit die Ratspräsidentschaft der EU innehat, hat in Israel mit einem Beschlussentwurf, in dem zur Anerkennung Ostjerusalems als Hauptstadt Palästinas aufgerufen wird, für Unmut gesorgt. Nachdem der Entwurf aber auch von anderen EU-Mitgliedern kritisiert worden war, hat die EU nun eine abgeschwächte Version verabschiedet. Darin wird betont, dass die EU sich weiterhin nach den Grenzen von 1967 richte, und zur Gründung eines palästinensischen Staates in Gaza, dem Westjordanland und Ostjerusalem aufgerufen. Zuvor hatte das israelische Außenministerium verlauten lassen, dass eine unveränderte Verabschiedung des schwedischen Entwurfs zu einer Krise zwischen Israel und EU führen könnte. Palästinenserpräsident Abbas zeigte sich nach der Veröffentlichung des Kompromissdokuments hingegen enttäuscht.

Empörung über die schwedische Initiative

“Die sowieso gespannten Beziehungen zwischen Israel und Schweden stehen aufgrund der Initiative, mit einem EU-Beschluss Ostjerusalem als Hauptstadt Palästinas anzuerkennen, vor einer erneuten Krise. [...] Hohe politische Stellen in Jerusalem sind empört über die Initiative, die aus der schwedischen Frustration resultiere, dass Außenminister Carl Bildt die Reise von Israel nach Gaza und ein Treffen mit der Hamas-Führung verwehrt wurde. [...] Der Vorschlag verstoße gegen alle internationalen Übereinkünfte, nach denen die Kernfragen, auch Jerusalem, ausschließlich von den beiden Seiten behandelt werden sollen, und Israel keine diesbezüglichen Entscheidungen aufgezwungen werden können.“

Maya Bengal, MAA 02.12.09

The Swedish initiative as metaphor

„Basically, the proposal reiterated known European and international positions. And Israel's recent behavior in Jerusalem - the disastrous house expulsions in Sheikh Jarrah, excavations at Silwan/City of David and expansion into disputed territory at Gilo - essentially invites a reprimand.

Still, there is little likelihood of real European pressure on Israel. The EU has limited clout as a diplomatic player in the Arab-Israel conflict. [...]

The PLO places exaggerated faith in European support and, accordingly, may now stiffen its refusal to negotiate. In this regard, the Swedish initiative represents the near total absence in recent months

of close US-EU coordination regarding efforts to resolve the conflict.

Surely Netanyahu by now understands that a genuine solution will require the ceding of Jerusalem's Arab neighborhoods to a Palestinian state. In this context, he seemingly says and does the right thing - the Bar-Ilan speech, removing checkpoints, the settlement freeze, confrontations with the settlers.

Yet in parallel he leads us, through innuendo and body language, to understand that all this is being undertaken for very different reasons - to make the Americans happy so they'll keep their eye on the Iranian threat, 'prove' the Palestinians don't want peace and keep Labor in the coalition - rather than to extricate Israel from a demographic disaster that threatens its future integrity as a Jewish state. So the settlers get reassurances and concessions and the creeping and utterly counterproductive Judaization of east Jerusalem continues.

Thus the Swedish initiative can be seen as metaphor for many things. Yet, however understandable the frustrations it reflects, I doubt the initiative will be seen in the long term as a positive step toward peace."

Yossi Alpher, JPO 08.12.09

Teilung? Fragt die Menschen in Ostjerusalem!

„In wessen Namen sprechen die EU-Minister, die drohen, zum ersten Mal offiziell zur Teilung Jerusalems aufzurufen? Haben sie das Wohl der Menschen in Ostjerusalem vor Augen? [...]

Wer sich mit ihnen unterhält, wird schnell zu der Überzeugung gelangen, das seine Teilung und die Übertragung der Verantwortung an die PA das letzte ist, was sie wollen. [...]

Die Araber von Ostjerusalem sind zwar nicht gerade Zionisten, aber trotz der vielen Fehler, die bei ihrer Behandlung unterlaufen sind, wissen sie die Freiheit zu schätzen, die sie hier genießen, den Zugang zu Arbeitsplätzen [...] und auch die vielen materiellen Vergünstigungen wie Sozialversicherung und Rentenanspruch. Der einzige Grund, der sie daran hindert, dies öffentlich zum Ausdruck zu bringen, ist die Angst vor dem langen Arm der PA. In einer Gesellschaft, die Leute hinrichtet, die Grundstücke an Juden verkaufen, gelten Äußerungen gegen eine Teilung fast als Verrat.“

Nadav Shragai, IHY 02.12.09

Vereitelung des schwedischen Vorschlags

„Es ist ein törichter Vorschlag. Die Idee, die ewige Hauptstadt des Volkes Israel in Zwei zu schneiden

[...] bringt nicht nur keine Lösung, sondern könnte den israelisch-palästinensischen Konflikt noch verschärfen. [...] Israel wird die Teilung Jerusalems nicht hinnehmen können, genau wie die Schweden eine Teilung Stockholms nicht hinnehmen könnten. [...] Wir müssen Premierminister Netanjahu in seinem Kampf bestärken und unterstützen, um die schwedische Initiative zu vereiteln.“

Moshe Ishon, HZO 07.12.09

HAA = Haaretz
HZO= Ha Tzofe
IHY = Israeli HaYom
JED = Jedioth Ahronoth
JPO = Jerusalem Post
MAA = Maariv

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