



## Schlaglicht Israel Nr. 05/10

### Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen

09. – 22. März 2010

#### 1. Krise in den US-israelischen Beziehungen

*Ausgerechnet während eines Besuches des amerikanischen Vize-Präsidenten Biden verkündete das israelische Innenministerium den geplanten Bau von 1600 Wohneinheiten in dem jüdischen Wohngebiet Ramat Shlomo in Ost-Jerusalem. Damit kam es zu einer schweren Krise zwischen Israel und den USA. Obwohl Premierminister Netanyahu sich entschuldigte und von einem „schlechten Zeitpunkt“ sprach, wurde er von der amerikanischen Außenministerin Clinton scharf gerügt. Die USA forderten von Israel zudem eine Geste guten Willens gegenüber den Palästinensern, sowie die Bereitschaft, bei Friedensverhandlungen über Kernthemen zu diskutieren, und die Aufhebung des Bauvorhabens in Ramat Schlomo.*

*Während Netanyahu auf letztere Forderung nicht einging, versprach er inzwischen, hunderte palästinensische Gefangene freizulassen und die Blockade des Gazastreifens zu lockern. Ab dem 22. März befindet sich Netanyahu in Washington und wird dort vermutlich auch mit Präsident Obama zusammentreffen.*

#### Broken glass

“There has been tension between Washington and Jerusalem for a whole year. [...] In recent months a major effort has been made to ease the tension and restore the intimacy between the governments. Biden's visit was to have been the peak of renewed rapprochement and the turning over of a new leaf in the relationship between Netanyahu and U.S. President Barack Obama. [...]

But on Tuesday evening, the Jerusalem District Planning and Building Committee approved the construction of 1,600 new apartments in Ramat Shlomo, beyond the Green Line. [...] The committee spit in the face of both the friendly vice president and the friendly superpower. [...] Our need for the

United States is unprecedented. At this critical juncture, any national interest should be subservient to the supreme interest of strengthening this alliance. But now of all times, at the most sensitive moment, Israel chooses to act insanely, sabotaging national security with its own hands. [...] Netanyahu can't run from responsibility. [...] Jerusalem is an issue of strategic sensitivity. Ahead of a visit of strategic importance, the prime minister must ensure that a matter of strategic interest is properly managed.”

Ari Shavit, HAA 11.03.10

#### Jetzt haben wir auch ihn verloren

„Biden kam hierher, um zu versuchen, die Chemie zwischen dem Weißen Haus und Jerusalem wieder herzustellen, die Zweifel zu beseitigen [...], vielleicht einen Neubeginn zu wagen. Und was ist passiert? Wir haben auch ihn verloren. Der Mann, der Netanyahu in Washington am nächsten steht, wurde hier einer Behandlung unterzogen, die ihn erboste, erniedrigte und entnervt und auf Rache sinnend in seine Hauptstadt zurückreisen ließ. Es ist immer ‚technisch‘, ‚rein zufällig‘ und der Premierminister wurde ‚überrascht‘. Aber irgendwie passiert so etwas ständig.“

Ben Caspit, MAA 10.03.10

#### Time for independence

“The Ramat Shlomo affair constitutes a grave crisis in Israel's ties with America, and an even graver crisis in Israel's ties with itself. We no longer believe in our ability to quarrel with the gentiles when necessary. [...] Broad sections of the public around here doubt Israel's ability to exist as an independent state with its own wishes. [...]

The responses issued by Obama, Biden, and Clinton were an operation that progressed in direct proportion to the extent of Hebrew apologies. At first they were ready to make do with a diplomatic delay of 90 minutes in arriving for dinner with Netanyahu,

yet the applause in Tel Aviv University convinced them that they need to continue.

[...] Never before had a vice president traveled abroad, openly declared that the host state's capital needs to be divided, and received loud applause. This was the submissive behavior of slaves, not of a sovereign nation. [...] The time has come to free ourselves of the inferiority complexes. [...] We are big and strong enough to sometimes say 'no.'"  
Hagai Segal, JED 19.03.10

### **Crime and punishment**

"The original Ramat Shlomo sin was Binyamin Netanyahu's. [...] So much, however, for the original sin. For all its gravity, it is the reaction, the staggering overreaction, of the Obama administration, and most certainly and centrally of the president himself, that is the more shocking, counterproductive and potentially dangerous aspect of this crisis. [...]

For one thing, the public bitterness of the American response shoves Abbas all the way back up his maximalist tree again. [...] For another, it emboldens Palestinian and wider Arab extremism."  
David Horovitz, JPO 19.03.10

### **Thank you, Eli Yishai**

"Here's someone new to blame for everything: [Interior Minister] Eli Yishai. [...] What do we want from Yishai? To know when the Jerusalem planning committee convenes? To postpone its meeting by two weeks? What for? Hadn't the prime minister announced to Israel, the world and the United States, in a move seen at the time as a great Israeli victory, that the construction freeze in the settlements does not include Jerusalem? [...] The Americans have agreed to all this, so they have no reason to pretend to be insulted.

The interior minister should not apologize for the 'distress' he caused, but be proud of it. He is the government's true face."

Gideon Levy, HAA 11.03.10

### **The price of the settlements**

"Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has led Israel into a serious crisis in relations with the United States. [...] A year after he took office, it is apparent that his government's policies, which made it top priority to populate East Jerusalem with Jews, is leading to Israel's increasing international isolation and threatening its key security interests in the name of an extreme right-wing ideology. [...]

There is one reason for the crisis: Netanyahu's persistence in continuing construction in East Jerusalem, in placing Jews in Arab neighborhoods and evicting Palestinians from their homes in the city. This is not a matter of timing but substance."

HAA 14.03.10

### **Obama, it's about time**

"If you could build Palestinian housing in Jewish Jerusalem, then Israel's capital would be a city with liberty, justice and equality for all, and Ramat Shlomo would just be another neighborhood. [...] Forget the embarrassment of Joe Biden – this, finally, is why the Obama administration is in the right and the Netanyahu government is in the wrong: because the US position upholds the principle of democracy, while the Israeli position upholds the principle of separate and unequal.

I know, of course, that this is not why the Obama administration is raising such hell with our government. The larger reason is that the Ramat Shlomo announcement during Biden's visit reminded the world of the disastrous weakness Barack Obama had shown by caving in to Binyamin Netanyahu on the settlement freeze. [...]

But his outrage over the Ramat Shlomo affair was definitely an encouraging sign. He served notice to Netanyahu that continuing this 'screw you' policy to the Palestinians is now dangerous. It is about time."  
Larry Derfner, JPO 18.03.10

### **Beklagen Sie sich, seien Sie ein bisschen beleidigt**

"Es besteht überhaupt kein Zweifel, dass Präsident Obama persönlich hinter der gemeinen [...] amerikanischen Kampagne gegen Netanyahu und die israelische Regierung steht. Sie war koordiniert und abgesprochen. [...] Sie haben einen Vorwand gesucht, um Israel zu kreuzigen. [...]

Bis jetzt hat Netanyahu sich gegenüber der feindseligen US-Regierung vorsichtig verhalten [...]. Aber manchmal ist ein Punkt erreicht, an dem man Schlag für Schlag kontern muss. [...] Israel kann sich keinen offenen Bruch mit dem US-Präsidenten leisten, aber es ist wichtig, sich daran zu erinnern, dass auch der amerikanische Präsident sich keinen offenen Bruch mit Israel erlauben kann. [...]

Die amerikanische Offensive von dieser Woche ist nicht wirklich eine historische Krise, aber sie ist der Augenblick, in dem Israel nicht einfach die andere Wange hinhalten darf."

Uri Elitzur, HZO 16.03.10

### **US doesn't believe us**

"When looking at America's angry outburst towards Prime Minister Netanyahu, one can only chuckle at the pretenses of some people around here to dictate to Washington a response to and sanctions on Tehran. In addition to the possibility that the Biden incident ruined the chances of reviving the peace process, it also put Israel in its natural, small, and limited place in terms of the ability to determine if, when, and how the world will be acting against the Iranian threat. [...]

The problem is that officials at the White House and State Department don't believe us and don't really wish to view Israel as the intimate preferred partner it has been for years. [...] The question is, of course, whether Netanyahu wants to and can bring our ties with America back to a place where even when the partnership faces a crisis, it is nonetheless stable and dignified. [...] Netanyahu needs to restore his credibility and return to a path where the disagreements are clear and where it's also clear that Israel is a responsible and normal state."

Emanuel Rosen, JED 17.03.10

### **Obama has crossed the line**

"The campaign was personally orchestrated by President Barack Obama. [...] These hostile outbursts must be viewed in the context of the fact that despite strong ongoing support for Israel by the American people, the US-Israel relationship has been on a downward spiral since the election of the new administration. Former Mossad head Ephraim Halevy attributes this to Obama's determination to rehabilitate Islam's global tarnished image. [...]

White House strategists are cynically distancing themselves from us in order to curry popularity by capitalizing on the anti-Israeli hatred which has engulfed the world. [...] The White House is not behaving in an even-handed manner. Obama does not disguise his animosity and repeatedly humiliates our prime minister. [...] The US effectively endorsed most of the Palestinian positions and is poised to pressure Israel into making further unilateral concessions. [...] Obama is surely aware that recent statements by his administration will only embolden the Palestinians and Jihadists to be more extreme in their demands, making it inevitable that the talks will almost certainly fail. Some may infer that this is precisely his intention. We will then be blamed for the breakdown and the US, with the backing of the Quartet and others, will then seek to impose a solution upon us."

Isi Leibler, JPO 16.03.10

### **Fateful choice**

"True, it is politically untenable for Netanyahu to declare a building freeze in Jerusalem. [...] Netanyahu could send out a subtle message to the Americans [...] that Israel would refrain right now from making new pledges to build in east Jerusalem. The prime minister could also agree to negotiate a limited prisoner release [...] and confirm his willingness to discuss all final-status issues without preconditions.

In short, concrete efforts can be made to foster goodwill with the US while respecting both key Israeli needs and an Israeli public that brought this Likud-led government to power."

JPO 16.03.10

## **2. Unruhen in Jerusalem**

*In den letzten Wochen ist es in Jerusalem immer wieder zu Demonstrationen und Ausschreitungen zwischen Palästinensern und israelischen Sicherheitskräften gekommen, die bereits Spekulationen über eine dritte Intifada genährt haben. War Anfang März die Deklaration von jüdischen Kulturdenkmälern auf besetztem Gebiet der Auslöser gewesen, so gehörten nun der Bau von neuen jüdischen Siedlungen in Ostjerusalem sowie der Wiederaufbau einer Synagoge im jüdischen Viertel der Altstadt zu den Gründen für gewalttätige Auseinandersetzungen. Seit Monaten wird außerdem gegen die Räumung von Häusern im Stadtteil Sheikh Jarrah protestiert, bei der die arabischen Bewohner nach einer Gerichtsentscheidung dem Einzug jüdischer Israelis weichen mussten.*

*Auch am Tempelberg kam es wiederholt zu Ausschreitungen. Obwohl die Hamas Mitte März zu einem „Tag des Zorns“ aufrief, hielt sich das Ausmaß der Gewalt jedoch bisher in Grenzen.*

### **Intifada lite**

„Headlines predicting the outbreak of a third intifada have proved wrong one more time, at least for now. [...] Nonetheless, it seems that another substantial Israeli-Palestinian conflict, with Jerusalem in the middle, is getting increasingly closer. [...]

Once more it was shown that arrests by undercover policemen in broad daylight may be a greater deterrent (and of course a lot less damaging) than live fire against demonstrators. [...] Thus the police avoided adding fuel to the fire that Hamas and the Islamic Movement were trying to light. [...] This

happened despite the wild incitement in the Arab media of recent days, particularly in the Palestinian media, which aimed to encourage an outburst over the Temple Mount and launch what is already being called the Al-Quds intifada. [...]

Even though the events yesterday were more serious than anything similar over the past two years, it still resembled an intifada lite. It was hard to find any passion in the demonstrators' eyes. [...] In East Jerusalem, as in the West Bank cities, fatigue is discernible. The threat to the Temple Mount is not perceived as clear and present, despite efforts to incite."

Avi Issacharoff, HAA 17.03.10

### **Zurück in die Steinzeit**

„Die Palästinenser verlieren die Geduld. [...] Keiner der palästinensischen Einwohner könnte genau mit dem Finger auf den Brennpunkt zeigen, der das Feuer der letzten Unruhen entfacht hat. Vielleicht, weil es nicht einen Brandherd gibt, sondern eine immer größer werdende Ansammlung von Reibungspunkten in den Vierteln um die Altstadt und der Altstadt selbst, die Spannungen und Druck erzeugen, die überlaufen zu drohen. [...]

Die arabischen Einwohner leben in dem Gefühl, dass sie jederzeit aus ihren Häusern vertrieben werden könnten, um jüdischen Siedlern Platz zu machen. Das ist ein Pulverfass, dass vor unser aller Augen explodieren könnte.“

Oded Shalom, JED 12.03.10

### **Planned violence**

„Even though it was Israel who sparked the most recent crisis over Jerusalem, it is not the only player adding fuel to the fire. [...] The Palestinian Authority is playing a very dangerous game - perhaps the most dangerous of it all - over Jerusalem and specifically the Temple Mount.

Mohammed Dahlan [...] and others called Sunday on Israeli Arabs and residents of East Jerusalem to go to the Temple Mount today to 'protect it from the Jews.' [...]

There's a different reason behind their call: Fatah watched Hamas steal the show from the Palestinian Authority in managing the struggle over the Temple Mount in recent weeks. Grassroots activists from the Islamist Movement in Israel led the demonstrations. Meanwhile, the police in Israel arrested many of them, and Fatah believes this is the time to take advantage of that success. [...] Fatah wants to ride the tiger and use future clashes for its needs."

Amos Harel, HAA 15.03.10

### **The right message at the wall**

„As is sadly all too familiar in the holy, contentious city of Jerusalem, this week was replete with ostensibly religiously motivated violence. Riots broke out, on and around the Temple Mount, sparked by baseless claims put forward by various Palestinian leaders that Israelis were scheming to undermine the Muslim hold on the Al Aksa Mosque. The unrest [...] was a blatant attempt to use violence as a way to intimidate Israel. [...]

The clear message that the Israeli law enforcement authorities must send is that violence is an illegitimate form of protest."

JPO 19.03.10

### **The cornerstone of peace**

„Jerusalem [...], this tough city is the cornerstone of peace between Israel and the Palestinians, and between the city and the three monotheistic religions who believe that it is holy. [...] As long as this powder keg remains open, some extremist and/or fool, Mayor Nir Barkat and/or the Islamic Movement's Sheikh Raed Salah will light a match.

Jerusalem will burn. If it doesn't happen tomorrow, then the day after. [...] This is the time for the leader of the greatest superpower to pull out the Obama plan for two states with Jerusalem as their capital."

Akiva Eldar, HAA 15.03.10

### **Our love is blind**

„ Anyone who talks about Jerusalem knows that just talking about it may prompt some kind of outburst. [...] We must not forget that we took over Jerusalem out of love. Yet love is blind – and since June 1967 we have been blind. Blind to the fact that half of Jerusalem is an Arab city. [...] When there are no riots, it's a city taken out of A Thousand and One Nights. Yet we must keep in mind that this city is not part of the Jewish people's eternal capital, but rather, an Arab city. [...] Our attempts to change this reality by words or declarations are pathetic, hollow, delusional and ridiculous, not to mention disastrous.

The forced park in Silwan, the aggressive settlement in Sheikh Jarrah, and the yeshivas set up in the Muslim quarter for spite will not Judaize the city, but rather, the other way around – they will boost the Arab determination to resist us and maintain the city's Arab character. [...]

Recognizing the Arab religious and political aspirations in Jerusalem will not weaken us, but rather, strengthen us."

Eyal Megged, JED 08.03.10

### **We all live in Shimon HaTzaddik**

The very foundation of Zionism has to be that we, as Jews, have been dispossessed of our land and have every legal, historical and moral right to reclaim it, by force if necessary. [...]

People may be upset, protest or even riot, but there is no justification to forego this right. Temperance in justifying one's existence is no virtue and, in fact, threatens the state's very existence. Shying away from controversy only encourages violent confrontation and further historical revisionism.

On Saturday, the prime minister of Turkey encouraged the Arabs to riot because of Israel's inclusion of ancient religious sites in Hebron and Bethlehem on a list of heritage sites slated for restoration. [...] The audacity of such a statement shows that even the slightest hesitation in asserting our fundamental right can cause an immediate threat to our existence. [...] Every neighborhood in the country could one day face the same challenges and protests that Shimon Hatzaddik faces today. We are all residents of some 'Shimon Hatzaddik' neighborhood

So, for the sake of our entire country, the most prudent move is to give our complete support to the residents of Shimon Hatzaddik today  
Danny Hershtal, JPO 09.03.10

### **3. „Ajami“ bei der Oscar-Verleihung**

*Im Vorfeld der Oscar-Verleihung sorgte der Regisseur des für einen Oscar als bester ausländischer Film nominierten Spielfilms „Ajami“ mit einer Bemerkung für eine Kontroverse. „Ajami“, der auch in Cannes geehrt wurde, spielt in Jaffa, wo arabische und jüdische Bürger nebeneinander leben – Regie führten Scandar Copti, ein arabischer Christ aus Jaffa, und Yaron Shani, ein Jude aus Haifa. In einem Interview sagte Copti, „Ajami“ sei zwar „technisch“ ein israelischer Film, er selbst könne aber kein Land repräsentieren, das ihn nicht repräsentiere. Schon vorher waren die Macher des Films in die Schlagzeilen geraten, als zwei Schauspieler - Brüder des Regisseurs - vor wenigen Wochen in Jaffa verhaftet worden waren und später über Polizeibrutalität geklagt hatten.*

#### **What can we make of the Ajami controversy?**

“What can we make of this year's controversy, which marred the image of a unified Israel many here hoped Ajami would promote [...]?”

Copti is certainly correct in saying that the movie represents Israel. And while he may feel it does not represent him, in fact, it does. It represents the messy reality of his life in a complicated country, where many groups are thrown together in a geographically small area. [...] I can sympathize with his anger over the treatment of his family and friends, but he made a choice and it cannot be undone. It can't be clean to take money from a government and dirty to acknowledge what that money has bought. [...]

Copti may be missing an opportunity to criticize his own government from the perspective of a citizen who represents a minority here. Whether he likes the way it feels or not, he has made his movie and through it, his voice is heard. When he speaks up, people do listen, as he has just learned, if he didn't realize it earlier. And they listen because he is an Israeli and they care about what those who represent Israel have to say.”

Hannah Brown, JPO 09.03.10

#### **A troubling warning in Hollywood**

“The director's words deserve a more serious response: They ought to prompt deep soul-searching among all Israelis who care about the future of the state. [...] Copti [...] is 35 years old, born in Jaffa - not far from downtown Tel Aviv - and educated in Israel, where he has received opportunities that brought him to that red carpet in Los Angeles.

It would seem that no one is better suited to represent the state's declared desire to integrate its Arab citizens. If even he feels that Israel does not represent him, then the country has utterly failed to fulfill the promise of equality inscribed in its Declaration of Independence. [...] This is utterly unacceptable. Instead of dismissing Copti's warning in a rage, his words should cause every Jew in Israel to ask himself, ‘What can I do to draw my Arab neighbor closer?’”

HAA 09.03.10

#### **Shooting ourselves in the foot**

“Ajami” co-director, Scandar Copti, shot an arrow deep into the heart of Israel's Arabs. The film he made, along with a Jewish director-partner and actors from both peoples (mostly Arabs) actually did good things for us at first, yet now it's over. [...] The film created the conditions for greater closeness between Jews and Arabs in Israel, with a desire to boost equality between the two peoples living here. [...]

Yet then came Copti's harsh words; we now know that matters pertaining to Israel's Arab population do not really interest him. [...]

It's still unclear in what way the State is supposed to represent him. The State granted him NIS 2 million (roughly \$550,000) to make the film, a significant sum, and along with a Jewish director-partner and Israeli actors the movie is clearly Israeli. [...]

What could have served as a powerful means for creating a bridge and a sense of Jewish-Arab partnership has turned into a reason to boost the alienation and hostility."

Ali Zahalka, JED 10.03.10

### **That cheeky Arab from Jaffa**

"A moment before we send Scandar Copti to go to hell, perhaps we are the ones who should be asking ourselves: What motivates an Arab-Israeli who received great gifts from us to say what he did? Why do we deserve it? [...] We too, need to change our way of thinking, and first and foremost repress to the point of elimination our sense of arrogance over the Arabs, and most certainly over Israel's Arabs. [...] And so, I don't have anything good to say in favor of the co-director of 'Ajami', who bit the hand that granted him the opportunity to realize a dream. Yet before we tell him to go to hell, it would be important and worthwhile for us to ask ourselves whether we are the ones who pushed him there."

Eitan Haber, JED 11.03.10

### **From 'Ajami' to 'Beaufort'**

"As a movie, 'Ajami' is no better or worse than others of its ilk created around the world. [...] It's reasonable to assume that had the film not been set in Jaffa [...] it would likely not have been nominated for best foreign film. Similarly, 'Beaufort' and 'Waltz with Bashir' were nominated for Oscars because they were critical of Israel.

The political statement made by Copti turned 'Ajami' from a movie into another link in the fight waged by the Palestinians in Israel against the state of which they are citizens. [...]

It can be assumed that the Israeli Arabs would present their position more moderately [...] were it not for the encouragement they receive from Jewish entities in the areas of art, culture, academia, philanthropy and the media. A large proportion of Israeli films, both features and documentaries, focus on and promote the Palestinian narrative, whether directly or indirectly. This narrative blames the Jews for all the ills of the Arab community."

Israel Harel, HAA 12.03.10

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

Die Artikel aus HZO und MAA wurde dem Medienspiegel der Deutschen Botschaft Israel entnommen.

Veröffentlicht im: März 2010

Verantwortlich:

*Dr. Ralf Hexel,  
Leiter der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Israel*

Redaktion:

*Maike Harel*

*Niko Pewesin*

Homepage: [www.fes.org.il](http://www.fes.org.il)

Email: [fes@fes.org.il](mailto:fes@fes.org.il)