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Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen

28. Juni – 12. Juli 2010

1. Kampagne für Gilad Shalit

Vier Jahre nachdem der israelische Soldat Gilad Shalit von militanten Palästinensern in den Gazastreifen entführt wurde, begannen seine Eltern und andere israelische Aktivisten einen zwölf-tägigen Marsch vom Haus der Familie im Norden Israels nach Jerusalem. Der Marsch, dem sich unterwegs Tausende anschlossen, sollte Medienaufmerksamkeit erregen und den Druck auf die Regierung erhöhen, Verhandlungen um die Freilassung des Soldaten mit der Hamas fortzuführen.

Premierminister Benjamin Netanyahu sagte indes, er unterstütze einen Gefangenenaustausch, nicht jedoch „um jeden Preis“. Hochrangige Vertreter der israelischen Armee befürworteten eine Freilassung von palästinensischen Gefangenen hingegen und gaben an, das damit verbundene Sicherheitsrisiko könne von der Armee bewältigt werden.

In einer Ansprache in Syrien drohte unterdessen Khaled Meshal, Vorsitzender des Politbüros der Hamas, mit weiteren Entführungen.

Change the Shalit equation

“After four years of futile negotiations - change is called for. [...]

1) Israel should make Hamas pay for each day it holds Gilad hostage. [...] Henceforth one terrorist would be removed from the proposed list for every day Gilad continues to endure in captivity. [...]

2) There are [...] two things that are far more important to the Hamas leadership than Gilad: The survival of their regime and their personal safety. Israel is fully justified to target the Hamas leadership. [...]

3) On a strategic level, once Gilad is released and with an eye to the future, Israel should ban negotiations with terrorists.”

Ophir Falk, JED 08.07.10

The agonizing Shalit debate

“Israel has offered far more than would logically be expected to try to secure the release of Shalit – because logic is not the only factor here. But Israel dare not allow itself to suspend debate in this most agonizing of dilemmas, and to give the heart definitive rule over the head.

What is needed now, rather, is concerted US and European pressure on Hamas. Sadly, instead of seeking every means to pressure the terrorists holding Shalit, the international community has been pressing Israel to end the blockade against Hamas-controlled Gaza, one of whose goals was to weaken Hamas and create the circumstances for Shalit’s release.”

JPO 27.06.10 Editorial

Say no to Shalit campaign

“It’s clear to all that the release of hundreds of Hamas murderers constitutes a declaration that the State of Israel is giving up on its war against Islamic terror. [...]

The prime minister and our national leaders must not capitulate in the face of the Shalit campaign. You are responsible for seven million citizens and not only for the Shalit family. Should you cave in and free the murderers, you will be accountable for the blood of the hundreds and thousands of future terror victims.

I urge you to stand up and demonstrate against the Shalit family. Should you not come out to protest so that a different voice is heard – a saner, more responsible voice – the government may capitulate in the face of the family’s campaign.”

Hagi Ben-Artzi, JED 29.06.10

And if a thousand prisoners go free?

“While we are arguing over the release of the 1,000, or more precisely, the handful who are in contention, while we are being frightened day after day over their release, the question must be asked: What will happen if Israel releases not 1,000 prisoners, but

thousands? The automatic response is of course: disaster. But is it? [...] The danger in releasing the prisoners is less than what is being described. The opportunity, in contrast, is great.

As opposed to the conventional thinking, the tens of thousands of Palestinians in Israeli prisons are human beings; as opposed to the conventional thinking, they also have families whose worlds have been destroyed. Most of them are not murderers. [...] In any case, most of them will be freed one day; their sentences were disproportionate to begin with, imposed more because of their nationality than their offense. [...]

A large-scale prisoner release, as an Israeli initiative and not another capitulation [...] is the surest way to get a new wind blowing. It's also, of course, the surest way to get Gilad Shalit released."

Gideon Levy, HAA 05.07.10

Lost and confused

"The Shalit family's solidarity campaign aims to promote Gilad's release from captivity. Yet instead of marching to the Turkish, French, and British embassies in Israel, or to the Foreign Ministries in those countries, the campaign is heading to the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem. [...]

I educated tens of thousands of combat soldiers and commanders during my IDF career. We always promised them that should they be captured, we will do what we can to bring about their release. Yet we never promised them to do everything."

Elazar Stern, JED 28.06.10

The price of mutual guarantees

"In our small country, a soldier-son is everyone's soldier-son and a captive is everyone's captive. An IDF soldier knows that his country and its leaders will do everything in their power to win his release. I am proud to be part of a people that views a soldier as part of its family and refuses to accept his continued captivity at the hands of Hamas. [...]

Our high morality has brought us to such a low negotiating position.

Hamas could have seen its terrorists freed four years ago, but it's in no rush. We, however, want to see Gilad home now."

Dalia Itzig, JPO 06.07.10

Another neutralized struggle

"It has become common in Israel to complain that the public is apathetic and doesn't do anything, that nothing draws it out into the streets. The case of

Gilad Shalit exemplifies the extent to which this is in fact inaccurate. [...]

The Israeli public demonstrates for all sorts of causes. [...] However, barely one of these initiatives has succeeded in influencing or changing government policy. This is because another popular complaint - that the politicians and the government are populist [...] is far from being correct.

They act as if they are doing something. [...] But in reality nothing changes. [...]

For years, governments and prime ministers have been pretending to share in every social struggle or to give in to it, adopting its language as their own; in so doing, they basically emasculate these struggles, and simply carry on doing what they always do."

Meirav Michaeli, HAA 29.06.10

The Palestinian's chance to win a moral victory

"When I speak about Gilad Shalit [...] I call him 'the captive Israeli soldier.' That's right. Captive and not abducted, which is the term they try to feed the public here. [...] He was taken captive as a soldier in a military operation carried out against an army, in the context of the Palestinian national struggle against the decades-long Israeli occupation. [...]

Nonetheless, the silence by Palestinian intellectuals over the case is troubling. [...] Hamas is demanding a large number of Palestinian prisoners in exchange for Shalit's release.

No one has asked himself what this means from a moral standpoint, in terms of the way the Arabs view the value of each individual Arab. How much is an Israeli prisoner worth compared to Arab or Palestinian prisoners? [...]

The Palestinian side, which has suffered for decades from the Israeli occupation, can demonstrate moral superiority over the occupier by allowing Shalit's family to visit him, or at least by allowing Red Cross representatives to visit him, just as they visit Palestinian prisoners in Israel."

Salman Mashala, HAA 12.07.10

2. Netanyahu in Washington

Nachdem Premierminister Benjamin Netanyahu im März in unterkühlter Atmosphäre von US-Präsident Barack Obama empfangen worden war, demonstrierten die beiden Staatsmänner bei einem erneuten Treffen am 6. Juli nun Einigkeit und Freundschaft. In dem Gespräch versprach Netanyahu dem Präsidenten, den Friedensprozess mit vertrauensbildenden Maßnahmen vorantreiben zu wollen. Obama versicherte im Gegenzug, die USA werde

niemals Schritte unternehmen, die Israels Sicherheitsinteressen beeinträchtigen könnten, und bezog sich damit auf die Überprüfungskonferenz des Atomwaffensperrvertrags, bei der Israel im Mai dazu aufgerufen worden war, dem Vertragswerk beizutreten.

Das Treffen in Washington, das fünfte Zusammenkommen von Obama und Netanyahu, diente in erster Linie dazu, Spannungen, die sich in der Vergangenheit hauptsächlich an Siedlungsbau im Westjordanland entzündet hatten, abzubauen.

Netanyahu's second chance

"Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu received a second chance from U.S. President Barack Obama on Tuesday. [...]

But don't get confused: [...] Obama has made it clear that his goal was, and still is, the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel. [...]

Netanyahu must take advantage of the chance he has been given, say yes to Obama, and act seriously and swiftly to end the occupation and establish an independent Palestine. But his appearance at the White House on Tuesday raises doubt if he will do so. Netanyahu was careful not to make any statement deviating from the political line of the watchful right wing. [...] Once again, it seems that Netanyahu prefers his political partnership with Avigdor Lieberman, Moshe Ya'alon and Eli Yishai to a partnership with the president of the United States."

HAA 08.07.10 Editorial

Palestinian state now

"This time around, the US Administration will make an effort to go above and beyond to impress Netanyahu. [...] For 24 hours, Netanyahu will feel as though he is on top of the world, but he must not get blinded by it. Obama's demands will be enveloped by soft words, yet the message will be decisive and uncompromising, and can be summed up in three words: Palestinian state now. [...]

Netanyahu will emerge out of the White House with a smile on his face. [...] However, as Netanyahu knows well, in Washington there are no free lunches. Today it will be made clear to him, politely, that the time for payment has come."

Orly Azoulaz, JED 06.07.10

All eyes on Bibi

"If Netanyahu were a true leader, he would use this opportunity to outline his vision for the future. [...]

The prime minister could certainly use his meeting with Obama as the setting for declaring that his government will continue the settlement construction freeze past its September deadline so as to enable the beginning of direct talks with the Palestinians. [...]

It's clear that Obama, for all his fine words, doesn't really have much an idea as to how to push the peace process forward. Netanyahu should step into this vacuum and present a plan that can be implemented immediately. [...] If he passes up the chance to set out a new direction for his government, we are all going to pay the price for his failure in leadership."

Jeff Barak, JPO 05.07.10

King for a day

"This is not just atmosphere, not just manners and politeness. Netanyahu is extracting from Obama a series of diplomatic achievements: an unambiguous commitment to Israel's unique needs, acknowledgment that Israel has to defend itself from the violent neighborhood in which it lives, a promise not to detract from Israel's defense capability. [...] What happened? [...] Netanyahu waged a struggle. [...] The Israeli leader applied hidden pressure to the American leader, which made it perfectly clear to him: No more. [...]

Israel demonstrated its seriousness. [...] In order to receive diplomatic and strategic credit, they deposited guarantees in the hands of their discussion partners - guarantees that will need to be put into effect in the coming months. That which sweetened the prime minister's visit to the White House is liable to embitter his life at home. [...]

Netanyahu must not let himself become confused. [...] If he does not immediately take advantage of the hard-won credit he has been granted in order to come out with an Israeli diplomatic initiative, his situation will become desperate again."

Ari Shavit, HAA 08.07.10

Obamas new approach

"The meeting was meant to hold off the pressure and improve both Obama's and Netanyahu's status at home and abroad; it appears these objectives were met. [...]

On the unilateral front, Obama reached the conclusion that it's better to influence Netanyahu via embraces and encouragement rather than through slaps to the face and pressure. On the regional front, the message that emerged from the meeting is meant to change the interpretation given to the

tensions in US-Israel relations, which undermined important regional and global US interests.

The message stopped the deterioration in US-Israeli ties and stressed the close military and diplomatic ties between the sides. [...]

The message to the Palestinians is that they must stop looking for excuses and enter direct negotiations with Israel. Obama hinted that they should not count on an American peace plan that will be forced upon Israel [...]. The message to the region is that the US supports Israel, and anyone who thought he can provoke and harm Israel without paying any price or facing any response better think again."

Eytan Gilboa, JED 07.07.10

Leftovers of humble pie

"The US president fell short in the discretion department in March, when he was far too demonstrative of his personal grievance against the prime minister of Israel. [...] The humiliation of Netanyahu was an unbecoming act, especially for a politician like Obama, known for his coolness under fire.

The extent of his error became obvious this week. He had to go out of his way to put right March's mistake. [...] Obama's presidency has been in severe crisis since last summer, and the crisis is getting worse. A stream of dismal economic news magnifies the probability that the Democratic Party will lose at least one of the houses of Congress in November. [...]

Is the president really now mortgaging his ambitions political plans to his electoral needs? Highly likely. He is a politician, he knows what is at stake, and no-one should be surprised if he has reached the conclusion that he doesn't need a brawl with Israel's supporters."

Yoav Karny, GLO 08.07.10

3. Die deutsche Nationalmannschaft bei der Fußball-WM

Obwohl die israelische Nationalmannschaft sich erst einmal – 1970 - für die Fußball-Weltmeisterschaft qualifiziert hat, stießen das Turnier in Südafrika auch in Israel auf großes Interesse. In einer Umfrage der Tageszeitung Yedioth Ahronoth wurde nach Beginn der Weltmeisterschaft ermittelt, dass 25% der israelischen Bevölkerung das deutsche Team favorisierten – damit war die deutsche Mannschaft nach Holland bis zu ihrem Ausscheiden

das beliebteste Team in Israel. Vor Beginn der WM hatten sich nur 13% für einen deutschen Sieg ausgesprochen. Traditionell werden in Israel eher südamerikanische Mannschaften wie Brasilien oder Argentinien favorisiert.

Now more than ever, it's okay to root for Germany

"Who would have thought of Jews supporting Germany? [...]

This is a team unlike any other in Germany's history [...]. Many of the players, close to half of them, are not even German. [...] Today all are German citizens. The 1999 immigration law enabled them to obtain German citizenship, along with hundreds of thousands in similar situations. [...]

As the German national anthem was playing, we noticed the poker face and pursed lips of Ozil and a few of his teammates. One could have expected an immediate and loud protest, a pan-German denunciation. Yet nobody opened his mouth or jeered. What has happened lately to these lions, these pure-bred, blond-haired, blue-eyed Germans? Where is their national honor? [...]

Today there is no other nation in the world like the German nation, one which is more fearful of flags that fly too high and anthems that play too loud. There is no one like the Germans, who are more afraid of themselves than they are of others. [...] The ethnic and cultural diversity of the German national team is the secret of its charm. It is what gives the team strength."

Yossi Sarid, HAA 05.07.10

In praise of immigrants

"Germany's national soccer team became such an Israeli favorite because of the fact, among other reasons, that it's less 'German' than it used to be. With immigrants from Poland, Ghana, Turkey, and Tunisia on the pitch in the game against Ghana, one wonders which team Hitler would root for had he been alive. [...]

Yet a similar process will not turn Israel into the world's best team in 2030, certainly if it depends on Minister Eli Yishai, who last week renewed his efforts to expel 1,200 children of work migrants from Israel. [...] The contemporary world features more immigrants worldwide than in any other period in history. The third millennium will belong to immigrants, and any kind of isolated and homogenous approach will merely keep those who adopt it behind. [...] This isolationist and frightened approach, which is detached from the spirit of our

time, will continue to keep us out of the global celebration after the multi-ethnic party in South Africa draws to an end.”

Asaf Geffen, 10.07.10

Third of Israelis support Germany

“The German national soccer team is generally not considered one of the most popular in Israel, but it seems this year’s FIFA World Cup is leaving its mark. [...]

According to the findings, 31.1% of the male population in Israel (27.7% of the general sample) would like to see Holland take the cup home. Germany, surprisingly, comes in second place, with 30.5% of the male population (25.1% of the general sample) hoping to see striker Miroslav Klose and his teammates win the international championship. [...]

While Israeli fans are aware that their decision to support the team may be perceived as controversial, some insist that it is ‘just soccer.’ [...]

Germany’s fans in Israel also include a significant number of Israeli-Arabs. [...] But there are still those who cannot forgive and forget, no matter what. ‘It is simply a disgrace that there are fans of the German national team in Israel,’ Holocaust survivor Zeev Wolf told Yedioth Ahronoth.”

Yair Katan, JED 05.07.10

One World Cup for two peoples

“Germany-Argentina in Ramallah, [...] U Café. [...] Shortly before 5 P.M. the place starts to fill up. [...] One young couple wears blue-and-white Argentina shirts, but everyone else is rooting for Germany. Why? Various complicated explanations are offered, all nonpolitical, of course, but the two Argentina fans will be derided as ‘al-Yahud’ (Jews). ‘The Israelis are all Argentina fans,’ someone shouts at the 48th minute, ‘so we’re all for Germany.’ [...] Loud cheers at every missed chance for the Argentineans, tumultuous applause for every German move. Huge cheers for every yellow card for Argentina, loud boos for every yellow card for Germany. [...] Alf mabruk to Germany, a thousand congratulations from Ramallah.”

Gideon Levy, HAA 09.07.10

4. Medienquerschnitt

Die Vielfalt der in Israel relevanten Themen kann in einem Medienspiegel nicht umfassend wiedergegeben werden. Um den deutschen LeserInnen dennoch einen Einblick in das breite Themen-

spektrum, das in den Medien behandelt wird, zu gewähren, veröffentlichen wir in dieser Schlaglichtausgabe wieder eine kleine Auswahl an weiteren Themen, die in den vergangenen zwei Wochen die israelische Gesellschaft bewegten.

*Über die **Anklage gegen einen israelischen Soldaten**, der verdächtigt wird im Gazakrieg Kriegsverbrechen begangen zu haben:*

An impossible environment

“In its fourth interim response to the Goldstone Report’s claims of Israeli war crimes in the Gaza Strip, the Israel Defense Forces acknowledged serious suspicions that one soldier committed a war crime and said a second case is still under investigation. [...] Military Advocate General Maj. Gen. Avichai Mendelblit also cited several instances in which officers and soldiers violated the rules of engagement without malicious intent. [...]

But Mendelblit’s findings do nothing to solve the real problem, which is that it is almost impossible to fight terrorist organizations embedded in a civilian population without civilian casualties - yet the international community has evinced zero understanding for the impossible environment in which the IDF operates.”

Amos Harel, HAA 07.07.10

Are we really war criminals?

“When an army wishes to prove its innocence in the face of thousands of complaints (most of them fabricated) it must contend with the cruel burden of statistics. [...] How could it be that we don’t have even one war criminal? [...] And so, an indictment takes shape, as well as criminal investigations and disciplinary action that give off a stench. [...]

Deep inside, we know that even if we make the utmost efforts and somehow find half-guilty parties and semi-war criminals, it won’t satisfy those who write the reports about us.”

Yoaz Hendel, JED 07.07.10

*Über ein Treffen von Palästinenserpräsident **Mahmoud Abbas mit israelischen Journalisten:***

Decision time for the PM

“Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas’s three-hour-long meeting with reporters from the Hebrew press this week in Ramallah can be seen as an attempt – quite possibly with heavy US encouragement – to reach out to the Israeli public. There was nothing particularly new in what Abbas

had to say. But the general impression that the PA head will most likely have succeeded in conveying to the Americans is that he is showing a readiness to push ahead with negotiations on the final-status issues of security and borders, while Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu has proffered nothing but a wall of silence.”

JPO 01.07.10 Editorial

Netanyahu must play for time

“Abbas went on a charm offensive towards the Israeli media. On Tuesday, Abbas invited representatives of the Hebrew-language press to his office in Ramallah and assured them of his good intentions towards Israel. [...]

[But] as Israel’s newspapers published ecstatic headlines about Abbas’s moderation and desire for peace, the Abbas-controlled Palestinian media made no mention of the meeting. Moreover, in recent weeks, [...] Palestinian media have been intensifying their incitement against Israel and Jews.”

Caroline Glick, JPO 02.07.10

Über ein umstrittenes Bauvorhaben und den Abriss von palästinensischen Häusern in Silwan (Ostjerusalem):

Silwan – ‘It’s the economy, stupid!’

“A lot has been said about Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat’s plan to destroy houses in Silwan in order to build a new tourism center in the east Jerusalem neighborhood. [...] However, one thing needs to be clarified: this is [...] not an attempt by Barkat to derail a potential peace process. [...]

It’s not about Barack Obama, Binyamin Netanyahu or Mahmoud Abbas, but rather, along the lines of the famous Bill Clinton campaign slogan: ‘It’s the economy, stupid.’ [...]

The re-zoning of the area [...] complete with a commercial and tourism center, will draw large numbers of tourists, which will benefit both Jewish and non-Jewish residents. This is municipal planning aimed at serving east Jerusalem while enforcing the rule of law. [...]

Yes, the Silwan project includes the always-tough demolition of homes. However those homes were built illegally.”

Mati Gill, JPO 29.07.10

The Jerusalem Master Plan for destruction

“None of us yearned in our synagogues or Zionist youth movements for a Jerusalem in which poor

Arab families would be kicked out of their homes to make way for a bogus tourist center [...]. We did not establish the first Knesset of Jewish lawmakers in history so the law could be twisted to serve the vengeful fantasies of Jewish settlers and the Arab-hating security hawks who enable them. [...]

I want Jerusalem to be my capital, to be recognized as our capital the world over, and I want it to remain our capital forever. But any Jew or Arab who walks the streets of Jerusalem knows that Israel already has sovereignty over Jerusalem, and has used this control to make sure the city remains as divided as ever.”

Don Futterman, HAA 09.07.10

Playing with fire

“Barkat packaged his plan in cellophane and decorated it with pretty pastel-colored strings. [...] He marketed his plan to eradicate the Bustan neighborhood [in Silwan] as a plan to improve living conditions for local residents. [...] But just scratch at those pastel tones, and quite a different reality is exposed. [...] Demolishing 22 houses under the illusion of improving the local residents’ quality of life is just the first step in the ‘salami method’ whose ultimate aim, it seems, is to remove Palestinian presence from the Bustan, and Judaize east Jerusalem.”

Meir Margalit, JPO 02.07.10

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

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