



Schlaglicht Israel Nr. 09/11

Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen

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1. Tag der Nakba

Der Tag der Nakba ("Katastrophe") wird von vielen Palästinensern jedes Jahr am Jahrestag der Staatsgründung Israels begangen, mit der 1948 hunderttausende Palästinenser ihre Heimat verloren. In diesem Jahr war den damit verbundenen Gedenkveranstaltungen und Protestaktionen mit besonderer Sorge entgegen geschaut worden: In Israel war erst wenige Wochen zuvor ein Gesetz verabschiedet worden, welches Institutionen, die Nakba-Veranstaltungen zulassen, staatliche Zuschüsse entzieht.

Allerdings fielen Proteste in Israel und im Westjordanland nicht größer aus als in Vorjahren. Stattdessen kam es zu Ausschreitungen an den israelischen Nordgrenzen. Dort marschierten hunderte libanesische und syrische Palästinenser zur israelischen Grenze. In den Golanhöhen gelang es mehr als 100 Syrern auf von Israel kontrolliertes Gebiet durchzudringen. Sowohl an der Grenze zum Libanon als auch zu Syrien eröffnete die israelische Armee das Feuer. Dabei wurden mindestens 14 Menschen getötet.

Am selben Tag überrollte ein arabischer Lastwagenfahrer in Tel Aviv mit seinem Fahrzeug Autos, Fußgänger und einen Bus. Der Vorfall, der von der Polizei als Terrorangriff eingestuft wird, kostete einen Mann das Leben.

What kind of independence is this?

"The Nakba Law, which bars public funding for groups that mark the Nakba [...] is yet another act by successive Israeli governments that constitutes a blow to Israel's Arab citizens, harms them and pushes them into the corner. [...]"

The Nakba Law means that instead of fostering a potentially empathetic discourse between the majority and the minority, the Nakba becomes just another time for hatred and quarrels."

Merav Michaeli, HAA 09.05.11

The Big Nakba Lie

"A prime example of Palestinian brazen malicious deceit against Israel is their so-called 'Day of Catastrophe', Nakba Day. [...] What is the 'disaster' Nakba Day commemorates? Nothing less than the day on which Israel Declared Independence in 1948. [...]"

The fact is, in 1948 Palestinian Arab leaders strongly encouraged their constituents to leave Israel and return to their homes after the war was quickly won by the invading Arab armies. This perverted 'national' Palestinian Nakba observance therefore, has nothing to do with historical facts, but springs solely and exclusively from their 'national' impulse to express hate and malice against the Jewish people and against Israel.

If there was a disaster for the Palestinians stemming from Israel's War Of Independence they brought it down on their own heads.."

Yonatan Silverman, AS 14.05.11

A history lesson on Nakba Day

"Were Israel a little more confident of the righteousness of its case, and were its government a little more open, then all schools in Israel, Jewish and Arab alike, would today mark Nakba Day. [...] It would be a different heritage lesson, the kind that includes the story of the other side, the one that is denied and repressed. [...] Sixty three years later, with the country established and flourishing, we can now begin telling the entire truth, not only the heroic, convenient part of the story."

Gideon Levy, HAA 15.05.11

Wanted: Palestinian self-criticism

"Efforts by members of Israel's far right to forbid the country's Arab citizens from commemorating the Nakba are mean, foolish and destined to fail. But initiatives by the extreme left to turn Nakba Day into a joint memorial day for all of Israel's citizens are also doomed. Israel is not a binational state, and with all due liberalism and humanism, it is hard to treat vic-

tory and defeat in the same way. What can be demanded of the Jewish majority is that it show respect for the mourning of the Palestinians. But this has been made difficult by the way the Palestinian narrative has until now presented the Nakba. [...]

To this day there is no willingness to deal with a simple fact: The decision to go to war against the UN resolution to partition Mandatory Palestine was a terrible political and moral mistake on the part of the Arab world."

Shlomo Avineri, HAA 11.05.11

Endless catastrophe

"This year's "Nakba" provides additional bitter evidence that, far from preparing its people for peace with Israel, the Palestinian leadership continues to encourage the most extremist, intransigent positions. Palestinians have been encouraged to focus solely on their own suffering and victimization rather than coming to grips with their own tragic historical mistakes. These include rejecting the 1947 UN partition plan and launching an unsuccessful war against the nascent Jewish state, continuing to reject peace proposals [...], and voting a Hamas majority into their parliament. [...]

How much longer will Palestinians allow themselves to be captives to extremism [...]? The only path to their independence lies through reconciliation with the State of Israel."

JPO 16.05.11 Editorial

Israel must show restraint

"Had Israel been wise enough to embrace [Israeli Arabs] and give them the feeling that they are a genuine part of Israeli society, they would not see fit to mourn during our Independence Day.

And if that's not enough, long years have passed, yet since the Oslo Accords Israel's leadership has been unable to secure an agreement with the Palestinians and the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel. As this is a failure on the State of Israel's part, our leadership must not be tempted to respond aggressively now to incidents like the ones that took place on Nakba Day."

Nechama Duek, JED 16.05.11

The revolution is at our doorstep

"The Arab revolution knocked on Israel's door yesterday, in Nakba Day demonstrations carried out by Palestinians from Syria and Lebanon [...]. The demonstrators [...] shattered the illusion that Israel can live comfortably [...], cut off entirely from the dramatic events surrounding it. [...] The nightmare scenario Israel has feared since its inception became real - that Palestinian refugees would simply start walking from their camps toward the border and would try to

exercise their 'right of return.' Israel prepared for demonstrations of Nakba Day in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, in the Galilee and the Triangle, but instead it was the Palestinian diaspora that tried to climb its fences. More than an intelligence lapse, the situation highlighted the limits of power. It is impossible to control the whole arena and spread forces everywhere."

Aluf Benn, HAA 16.05.11

2. Zum Tod von Osama Bin Laden

Auch in Israel dominierte die Tötung des Al Qaida-Chefs Osama bin Laden durch amerikanische Spezialeinheiten mehrere Tage lang die Schlagzeilen. Der israelische Premierminister Benjamin Netanyahu sagte, er "teile die Freude des amerikanischen Volkes" über die geglückte Aktion. Außenminister Avigdor Lieberman gab an, der Tod bin Ladens habe auch für Israel Bedeutung, da Al Qaida-Kämpfer sich bemüht hätten, auch in den Gazastreifen und die Westbank vorzudringen.

Auch ein Sprecher der palästinensischen Autonomiebehörde bezeichnete bin Ladens Ende als "gut für den weltweiten Frieden". Die radikalislamische Hamas, die im Gazastreifen regiert, erklärte den saudischen Terrorfürsten hingegen zum Märtyrer.

In Israel wurde insbesondere die Frage diskutiert, warum für die USA legitim sei, was sonst verurteilt werde. Israel hat in der Vergangenheit mit seiner Politik der "gezielten Tötungen" seiner Feinde viel Kritik aus der ganzen Welt auf sich gezogen.

A victory for Obama

"During Obama's tenure at the White House, the US lost much of its global stature, mostly in the Middle East. [...] Now, bin Laden's assassination may grant him an opportunity to restore America's global and regional status. [...]

Following the expected improvement in his status both domestically and abroad, Obama can again think about exerting more pressure on Mideastern elements that thus far evaded or thwarted moves which the US wanted to advance. For example, he can boost the pressure on Israel to propose an initiative that would facilitate talks with the Palestinians [...]. In his upcoming visit to Washington, Netanyahu may find a somewhat tougher president."

Eytan Gilboa, JED 02.05.11

After Bin Laden

"For Israel, which is in Al-Qaida's sights, news of bin Laden's death offers some encouragement. If Obama becomes stronger domestically, that could - and should - drive his administration to make a more

aggressive effort to bring peace to the Middle East."HAA 03.05.11

Symbol dies, Jihad lives on

"Osama Bin Laden's assassination carries mostly symbolic value. It will not bring an end to terror activity[...]. The assassination will also not prevent the terror attacks that will aim to avenge the arch-terrorist's killing. However, the United States managed to rehabilitate its global image [...]. American citizens are feeling better today, and that's what it's all about. [...]

The operation to settle the score with Bin Laden didn't go as planned. The US was hoping for a quiet arrest, as was the case with Saddam Hussein, yet the Special Forces were spotted and attacked. The fact that the Americans were unable to nab Bin Laden alive and create a demoralizing deterrent effect constitutes a certain disappointment."

Ron Ben-Yishai, JED 02.05.11

Loathing Bin Laden, indulging Hamas

"While it is clear to most people that the downfall of a mastermind of terrorism is a cause for celebration, similar common sense is not being universally applied to the rise of another terrorist force, Hamas. Some of the same leaders and opinion-shapers who have rushed to hail the killing of bin Laden, indeed, are indulging Abbas as he prepares [...] to enter a reconciliation deal with a terrorist organization that shares many of the same goals and ideological roots as bin Laden and has competed with him in the indiscriminate killing of civilians. [...]

Hamas's predictably despicable reaction to bin Laden's death is yet another reminder to those countries that value freedom and denounce terrorism that the global terror chieftain and the Palestinian terrorist movement fall into the same category."

JPO 02.05.11 Editorial

There is no double standard

"I think the assassination of bin Laden was completely justified, while Israel's targeted killings of Palestinian terrorists, [...] are wrong. The difference is that America wasn't tyrannizing the Pakistanis or Saudis or any other nation that bin Laden and al-Qaida think they're fighting for. [...]

The situation is completely different with Israel and the Palestinians. Israel is tyrannizing those people, ruling over them by force. [...]

Israel cannot claim that it is innocent of all provocation to Palestinian violence. What's more, we do have a peaceful, fair way to remove that provocation – by giving them their freedom as soon as possible. [...]

The problem here is not that the world, or the US, applies a double standard to Israel, it's that Israel refuses to see that it commits extreme aggression against the Palestinians by imprisoning them where they live, something the US doesn't do to Pakistan, Saudi Arabia or any other country."

Larry Derfner, JPO 11.05.11

Peace has not been destroyed

"The foolish statements by the Hamas prime minister in the Gaza Strip, Ismail Haniyeh, condemning the killing of bin Laden, stress the importance of nurturing relations with the Palestinian camp headed by President Mahmoud Abbas, who reiterates his opposition to the use of violence and terrorism."

HAA 04.05.11

Bin Laden: Israel's silent joy

"Jubilant crowds of college students, army veterans, and working class Americans amassed in the streets to celebrate the death of Bin Laden; It made to ponder the international reaction to Israel had we celebrated the death of Imad Mugnyiah or Ahmed Yassin. [...]

So why don't Israelis pour into the streets when their own Bin Ladens are killed? The answer to this question is a true testament to our age-old value of life over death. For us, the death of even our worst enemy has never been a cause for mass jubilation. [...]

The deaths of Arafat, Yassin, and even Imad Mughnyieh, never were cause for the burst of elation that the American public displayed in the recent days, although there was a feeling of pride and silent joy. [...] But one thing is for sure, if there is ever a real peace agreement; Rabin Square will once again be filled with jubilant, singing Israelis."

Daniel Nisman, AS 08.05.11

Israel, learn from America

"The American joy in the wake of Osama bin Laden's assassination is a blessed national trait that we must import to Israel as soon as possible. [...] Ethics experts managed to convince us that public celebrations of battlefield victories are improper. [...] It's a great [virtue] to rejoice if you manage to eliminate a cruel enemy that has been pursued for years. [...] Should our leaders provide us with military reasons to rejoice in the future, let's not hesitate to grab a flag and dance [...] on the streets until early morning hours. Just give us a reason to celebrate already."

Hagai Segal, JED 06.05.11

Rambo V

"Killing bin Laden was an act of primeval revenge, nothing more and nothing less.

The empire that struck back remains at least as hated as it was before, and persists in its decline. Only its president's popularity is soaring, but that's just temporary. [...]

Israel, of course, joined the orgy with great enthusiasm. [...]

Oh, such intelligence information; oh, such commandos. The subtext is how great it must be to take action without a High Court of Justice, without a Richard Goldstone or a B'Tselem. As if we don't jump into operations like that anyway. [...]

The result is more support for assassinations and torture, and even less of a chance than before of reaching a deal to free Shalit. That is the local damage of the operation in Abbottabad. After the euphoria ebbs, the world will awaken to more acts of vengeance and an even greater hatred of America."

Gideon Levy, HAA 05.05.11

3. Israels 63. Unabhängigkeitstag

Am 5. Iyar des hebräischen Kalenders – dieses Jahr der 10. Mai – wird in Israel der Unabhängigkeitstag (Yom Ha'atzmaut) begangen. Die Feierlichkeiten finden eine Woche nach dem Holocaust-Gedenktag statt und folgen direkt auf den Gedenktag für gefallene Soldaten. In den Medien dienen diese Tage traditionell dazu, Israels Status in der Welt, seine Vergangenheit und seine politische Zukunft zu reflektieren.

Booming at 63

"While many aspects of 'the Jewish question' have not been resolved, we have so much to be proud of and thankful for this Independence Day. [...]

The Jewish state's situation today is enviable compared to those long centuries of exile, wandering and powerlessness. [...]

And for all that we are threatened in our narrow strip of land, we are also unprecedentedly strong. [...]

We take it in stride, too, that Israel is overrepresented in the number of patents it produces per capita, in the number of PhDs, the quantity of published scientific papers, companies listed on NASDAQ, and startups per capita.

We have accomplished all this while fighting conventional and unconventional wars, absorbing a vast and diverse immigrant population and providing basic democratic rights to all citizens, regardless of race, creed or religion. Not too bad for a state the

age of your average baby boomer." JPO 08.05.11
Editorial

A country evading reality

"Led by a prime minister who instinctively deflects any initiative or change, who sows fear and foils any positive prospects, pouncing on any proof that there is no partner for diplomatic dialogue, the country in its 63rd year looks like someone on whom old age has suddenly crept up: withdrawn and shut-in, paralyzed with fear, [...] entrenched in its views. [...]

The changes in the region, however, including the demise of autocratic regimes and efforts at unity among the Palestinians, present not only risks but also new possibilities for creative leadership.

Does Israel have such a leadership? Beyond any specific diplomatic step one wonders, particularly on Independence Day, where that creative, optimistic, peace-seeking spirit that reverberated in Israel in the past has gone, and how it was supplanted by a passive and introverted mentality, evading reality - particularly the reality of positive prospects and opportunities."

HAA 09.05.11

Defending the declaration

"Israel has no written constitution; the Declaration of Independence is the closest thing we have to a mission statement. Many messages can be derived from it, but the two central motifs are: [...]

1) That Israel is the realization of the legitimate right of the Jewish people to a sovereign state of their own within the boundaries of their historical, cultural and religious homeland; 2) That that state should fulfill the moral imperatives inherent in Judaism, expressed by the ancient prophets and consistent with the modern principles of democracy and human rights. These should remain the key principles for Israeli policymakers. [...]

The war for the defense of the Declaration of Independence has two battlefields: here in Israel and abroad. [...] Outside of Israel, fighting this demonization, delegitimization and double standard is to defend the Declaration: specifically, to defend the right of the Jewish people to a state of their own within the borders of their historic homeland. [...]

But there is also an increasingly urgent need to defend the principle of 'equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants.' [...]

Within today's Knesset, it is clear that those Arab MKs who reject Israel's Jewish national character, and those on the far Right who believe that Israel's non-Jewish citizens should have second-class status, are equally in breach of the Declaration's principles."

Paul Gross, JPO 08.05.11

Because it's ours

"Israelis should ask themselves the following question: Is there any other place in the world you would like to live in? [...] Think whether there is any other country that can provide you with this sense of belonging; this sense of vitality; the spectrum of contradictory emotions that exist all at the same time and have become a part of our life here.

Ask this while being stuck at the traffic jams en route to military cemeteries. Ask this while you stop your car in the middle of the road and observe a moment of silence for our fallen soldiers. Ask this while you listen to Hebrew songs.

Ask yourselves where else in the world you would feel such sense of shared destiny for even one day; such sense of togetherness. Where else in the world would you allow yourselves to just be yourselves; to just be Israeli."

Sima Kadmon, JED 09.05.11

Challenge and responsibility on Yom Ha'atzmaut

"There were years when Yom Ha'atzmaut was cause for near-euphoria. [...] This year, however, that unbridled euphoria is going to be hard to come by. Israel is marginalized in ways that would have been difficult to predict just years ago. [...] Our celebration of Israel's independence – an extraordinary accomplishment by any measure – takes place this year under the cloud of an awareness that the Jewish state's future is tenuous and fragile. [...]

Increasing numbers of academics and diplomats, as well as rank-and-file Europeans, now assert that the creation of the Jewish state was a mistake. [...]

But act we must, and celebrate we must. For only by rejoicing in the accomplishments of the past 63 years can we gird ourselves for the complicated days ahead. [...]

Israel is still the Jewish people's new lease on life, and whatever our politics, our religious dispositions or our place of residence, none of us has any obligation more sacred than to cultivate it, and to bequeath it – whole and flourishing – to generations to come."

Daniel Gordis, JPO 06.05.11

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 Themenspektrum, das in den Medien behandelt wird, zu gewähren, veröffentlichen wir in dieser Schlaglichtausgabe wieder eine kleine Auswahl an weite-

ren Themen, die in den vergangenen zwei Wochen die israelische Gesellschaft bewegten.

*Über die Verurteilung und Freilassung des Sobibor-Wächters **John Demjanjuk** in Deutschland:*

A powerful verdict, bitterly undermined

"There is no question that Thursday's verdict sends a very powerful message that it is still possible today to hold Nazi war criminals accountable. [...] The issue is not the admittedly advanced age of the defendants, but their physical and mental health. [...] Empathy for the perpetrators is really what I refer to as the 'Misplaced Sympathy Syndrome' – the individuals in question are the last people on earth who deserve any empathy, since they had no mercy whatsoever for their helpless victims.

In this context, the subsequent decision of the court to release Demjanjuk, pending his appeal and the ratification of his sentence was [...] particularly inappropriate. [...] The release cast a stain on the impact of the verdict and its symbolic significance. One can only hope that the appeal will be expedited so that Demjanjuk can serve his fully justified prison sentence."

Efraim Zuroff, JPO 13.05.11

Not worthy of praise

"A life sentence would have served to highlight the moral and educational value of his conviction.

Instead, Demjanjuk was sentenced to five years' imprisonment. [...] The sentence [...] is the latest in a long and disgraceful line of non-punishments meted out to war criminals in Germany. Since the end of World War II, no more than 6,500 Nazi war criminals have been convicted there, only a few of them for their roles in murdering Jews. Most of them were given relatively short sentences, and many of them didn't even serve out those.

Thus, the German judicial system doesn't deserve high praise for seeing justice done."

Tom Segev, HAA 12.05.11

*Über einen Haaretz-Artikel, in dem aufgedeckt wurde, dass Israel zwischen 1948 und 1994 **140.000 Palästinensern ihre Aufenthaltsgenehmigung in der Westbank entzogen hat:***

It's called ethnic cleansing

"14 percent of West Bank residents who dared to go abroad had their right to return to Israel and live here denied forever. In other words, they were expelled from their land and their homes. In other words: ethnic cleansing. [...]

After all, that's the most covert and desired solution: the Land of Israel for the Jews, for them alone. [...]

They don't load Arabs onto trucks as they once did [...] and they don't shoot at them to chase them away – all politically incorrect methods in the new world. But in effect that's the goal. [...]

140,000, only until the Oslo Accords. Students who went to study at foreign universities, businessmen[...], scientists [...], native Jerusalemites who dared to move to the West Bank temporarily – they all met the same fate. [...] They couldn't return.

Most amazing of all is the reaction of those responsible for the policy of ethnic cleansing. They didn't know. [...] It turns out that not only is the cleansing continuing, so is the denial."

Gideon Levy, HAA 12.05.11

Über das **Versöhnungsabkommen zwischen den rivalisierenden palästinensischen Parteien Hamas und Fatah:**

An opportunity, not a threat

"It's vital to examine whether the rapprochement offers a new opportunity not only for the Palestinians, but also for Israel. [...]

Israel, which views the Palestinians' national aspirations as a strategic threat, has begun an aggressive campaign to destroy the reconciliation, as if a situation in which Hamas quarrels with Fatah provided greater security, or as if Israel had been willing to sign a peace agreement with the Palestinian Authority before the two factions reconciled. [...]

Israel cannot and does not have to thwart it. It would also be correct for Israel to recognize the Palestinian unity government in order to conduct a dialogue and neighborly relations with the Palestinian state in the future."

HAA 05.05.11 Editorial

Abbas yes, Hamas no

"[Fatah's] agreement Wednesday to form a unity government with Hamas was a blunder. [...] Hamas is a dead end to the Palestinians' drive for independence because Hamas can't reach a peace deal with Israel, and reaching a peace deal with Israel is the only way a Palestinian state can be born. [...]

No Hamasnik has ever given an inch on the 'right of return,' Jerusalem or land swaps. So [...] how can even the most optimistic observer see them reaching a peace agreement with any Israeli government? [...]

I'm saying that this move, which indeed came by popular demand, was really stupid and damaging. It has set back the cause of Palestinian independence, it makes the occupation that much harder to dislodge, and the only people who'll benefit from it are the rejectionists on both sides."

Larry Derfner, JPO 04.05.11

HAA = Haaretz
JED = Jedioth Ahronoth
JPO = Jerusalem Post
AS = Arutz Sheva

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