



## Schlaglicht Israel Nr. 19/11

### Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen

11. – 29. Oktober 2011

#### 1. Der Gefangenaustausch

*Nach mehr als fünf Jahren Gefangenschaft in Gaza wurde der israelische Soldat Gilad Shalit am 18. Oktober im Rahmen eines Gefangenaustauschs freigelassen. Shalit war 2006 von palästinensischen Extremisten, welche der Hamas zugehörten, entführt worden. Seitdem hat es immer wieder Verhandlungen zwischen Israel und den Entführern gegeben, zum Teil unter deutscher Vermittlung. Schließlich einigten sich die Seiten auf ein Abkommen, dem zufolge 1027 palästinensische Häftlinge in mehreren Phasen aus israelischen Gefängnissen freigelassen werden. Die ersten 477 Gefangenen kamen am selben Tag wie Shalit frei.*

*In Israel wurde das Abkommen kritisiert, weil unter den Freigelassenen auch Palästinenser sind, die direkt für Terrorakte verantwortlich sind. Eine Gruppe von Opferangehörigen versuchte deshalb, den Austausch noch kurz vor seiner Ausführung durch den Obersten Gerichtshof unterbinden zu lassen.*

*In der Öffentlichkeit genoss der Gefangenaustausch dennoch große Zustimmung, die sicherlich auch im Zusammenhang mit der unermüdlichen Kampagne der Eltern Gilad Schalits steht, die dafür sorgten, dass ihr Sohn während der Jahre seiner Gefangenschaft in den Medien stets präsent blieb.*

#### Anatomy of a deal

" Hamas in Gaza had an interest for a while now in securing a deal given the pressure and frustration of prisoner families. [...] In the meanwhile conditions changed: Iran recently curbed its financial support to Hamas and the group needs Arab and international donations [...]. Moreover, Hamas monitored with concern the boost in Abbas' status and needed a propaganda achievement that would overshadow the Palestinian president's accomplishments. [...]

Another factor was the situation on the Syrian front. Bashar Assad's regime endorsed the deal in order to improve its global status. [...] Hamas also had an interest in showing flexibility. The ground in Syria is

shifting beneath the group's political leadership's feet in Damascus and it seeks a new base. This leadership now needs an entry ticket into moderate Arab states, headed by Egypt, Jordan and Qatar." Ron Ben-Yishai, JED 12.10.11

#### Egyptian revolution led to Shalit deal

"It turns out that it was Mubarak's regime that had been the obstacle to a breakthrough. A short time after the government was replaced, Hamas leaders initiated a return to negotiations. [...] The Egyptians [under Mubarak] acted according to their own security interests, because they viewed the Gaza Strip as a ticking bomb in their backyard. Apparently, this was in line with Israeli interests, but this is not what is expected of an honest broker. [...] Mubarak's exit turned over a new leaf in Egypt-Hamas relations, and created an atmosphere more conducive to a deal. [...]

Murderers whose hands are stained with the blood of innocent Israelis are being released in this deal, but most of them were 'foot soldiers'. The people who engineered the intifada are staying where they belong - behind bars."

Jacky Hougy, GLO 17.10.11

#### There is no other choice

"We – the government and the people of Israel – had no choice. [...] People will be murdered in terror attacks – but what other choice do we have? Allowing Gilad Shalit to die in prison?

Neither Marwan Barghouti nor all the other scumbags currently preparing to depart Israeli jail [...] are worth the terrible mourning that would have befallen us had Gilad Shalit not returned from captivity. [...]

We shall settle the score with the murderers who will be released one way or another. We shall pursue them after they are freed. Every move they make shall be recorded, and I'm certain that at least some of them won't depart this world in the usual way."

Haim Misgav, JED 10.12.11

### **Our hope rests with the High Court**

"Over the past five years we have witnessed the construction of a misguided and misleading social, political and media reality, one that offers only a single option for the release of captive IDF soldier Gilad Shalit, which is the release of 1,000 murderers who killed our children. [...]

We, the bereaved families of terror victims, whose children were murdered in attacks carried out by Hamas, longed for the release of Gilad. Yet we argued that there existed other ways to release him other than only the wholesale release of terrorists. [...]

Our hope is that sanity will prevail. That the judges of the High Court, who are unlike cynical politicians in need of immediate gains, will read the names of the terrorists on the list of those to be released, will comprehend the horrid deeds done, and will decide to end to the lawlessness of a deal that would see the release of thousands of murderers."

Yitzhak Maoz, IHY 16.10.11

### **Things they've told us**

"All 1,027 of the prisoners are to be seen as human monsters and the release of every one of them, including 82-year-old Sami Younis, constitutes a walking danger. Any effort to understand the joy of the families of the released Palestinian prisoners, some after decades in jail, is encountered with derision. [...]

Just imagine what would have happened if even one announcer tried to state the opposite: that maybe it was good that, for the first time, there was joy in both Gaza and in Shalit's community of Mitzpeh Hila. [...] Amid the outpouring of joy in Israel, which is understandable and justified, it would have been possible to take a humane look at the other side, too, even if for a moment. There are human beings there, too, including some of the prisoners and their families, who have feelings and rights."

Gideon Levy, HAA 23.10.11

### **An autumn of hope**

"It turns out our leaders know how to make the right – even if painful – decisions. Why not implement these same skills in peace talks, new social agenda? [...]

The risks involved in this deal are reasonable, as the addition of hundreds of released terrorists to the thousands who are already free and capable of using terrorism against us does not significantly increase the existing security threat."

Giora Inbar, JED 17.11.10

### **Make new abduction rules**

"For dozens of years now, we've accepted the rules of the game dictated to us by terror organizations in respect to abductions. The prime minister – and usually he alone – is forced to agree to an outrageous release 'deal,' under massive pressure by Israel's media and public opinion, which tend to embrace momentary emotionalism.

[...] Before another abduction takes place and complicates matters, we must change the rules of play [...]. We need to do it by passing new legislation, which would assert that any 'deal' [...] would require a majority of 80-85 Knesset members. [...] Moreover, the law would assert that a prisoner who was freed once and went back to terrorism would never be released again. [...]

The moment a majority of more than 80 Knesset members is required, the enemy would realize that a deal cannot be approved. This would convey a clear message of deterrence: Abducting Israelis does not pay off."

Guy Bechor, JED 28.10.11

### **Shamgar's limits**

"Israel's enemies [...] won't minimize their demands because we now have guidelines and new laws. The whole idea of kidnapping is to force the extorted party to deviate from its laws. [...] If laws stipulating penalties for homicide can be breached, one would assume that so can laws precluding asymmetrical deals. [...]

The only antidote is a mindset switch and a return to the kind of resolve that characterized Golda Meir's administration and which was steadfastly adhered to despite the heavy cost. Some of the most heinous hostage plots were unleashed on Israel in the 1970s – from plane hijackings to the Munich Olympics attack. Israel unwaveringly refused to pay ransom, not even under the most harrowing of circumstances. [...] This is a matter of dogged determination – not merely more words on our law books."

JPO 26.10.11 Editorial

### **Stupidity or Jew-hatred?**

"Before Shalit was freed, Egyptian state TV interviewed him exclusively [...]. Did one think he agreed to, or actually wanted to do this interview?

[...] The Reporter asked him what 'lessons' he learned in captivity, and other offensive, absurd and inappropriate questions. The English translator left out his qualifiers to her question about whether he would like to see the rest of the [terrorist] prisoners free, so that the non-Hebrew speaking world did not

know that he said that they might be freed only if they would give up fighting Israel.  
[...] It was low, unethical and awful."  
Ronn Torossian, AS 21.10.11

## 2. Hamas neue Position

*Nachdem die erste Phase des Gefangenaustauschs zwischen Israel und der Hamas erfolgreich durchgeführt wurde, wird in den israelischen Medien diskutiert, inwiefern das Abkommen die in Gaza regierende Organisation gestärkt hat. Während einige Kommentatoren eine Chance für Dialog mit der Hamas sehen, halten andere das Abkommen für einen gezielten Versuch der Netanyahu-Regierung, Palästinenserpräsident Mahmoud Abbas zu schwächen und somit ernsthafte Friedensverhandlungen zu verhindern.*

*Die Hoffnung, dass die Hamas und Israel sich in Zukunft in Verhandlungspartner verwandeln könnten, erscheint angesichts der jüngsten Entwicklungen unrealistisch: Weniger als zwei Wochen nach Freilassung Shalits kam es zu einer erneuten gewaltsamen Eskalation am Gazastreifen.*

### Israeli roulette

"Those around Netanyahu, including his forum of eight senior ministers, [...] were pressing him to punish the Palestinian president. [...] Because the Fatah leader dared to turn to the UN with a request to recognize a Palestinian state that would live in peace alongside the State of Israel. How do you punish politicians who sin? Correct; you nurture their political rivals. [...] This punishment will hasten Abbas' political demise and dismantle the Palestinian Authority. [...]"

Netanyahu doesn't need more than this; after all, Hamas is defined as a terror organization, and the Quartet rules saying that negotiations cannot be held with it are still in force."  
Akiva Eldar, HAA 25.10.11

### It's not just about Shalit

"The deal to release Gilad Shalit is not just about Shalit. There is also something deeper and far more strategically significant about the accord. This may be an opening toward a long-term 'understanding' with Hamas. Abbas is a dead horse anyway. He has no peace to offer Israel, nor can he guarantee an extended period of quiet. [...] Thus the most Israel can realistically hope for in the meantime is a period of truce. [...]"

Hamas may be better placed to guarantee such a lengthy truce than Abbas. Hamas has shown that it can control its firepower and enforce discipline on other Palestinian factions. [...]"

They will continue to stockpile sophisticated weaponry and nurture the dream of destroying Israel. But [...] in the meantime, Israelis may gain an extended respite from conflict, during which we will continue to make this country militarily stronger, ideologically firmer, and economically more prosperous.

Perhaps the Shalit deal, albeit risky and humiliating, will move us into a new period of tactical and mutually beneficial understanding with Hamas."

David Weinberg, IHY 12.10.11

### There must be another way

"On the Palestinian side, Abbas definitely comprehends that Hamas has been strengthened by the deal, despite his own newly gained popularity after the move at the United Nations. He, like Netanyahu, must understand that unilateral shortcuts are futile and that only direct negotiations can lead to the creation of an independent state. [...]"

Abbas should also build on the new atmosphere in Palestinian society and reach a pragmatic and tenable reconciliation deal with Hamas that includes the Quartet conditions – recognition of Israel, an end to terror and direct negotiations, possibly through Egyptian mediation."

Uri Savir, JPO 27.10.11

### Netanyahu listen to the army

"Israel Defense Forces' top officers are crafting a proposal to mitigate the damage to the Palestinian Authority's status caused by Hamas' success in freeing over 1,000 prisoners. In addition to the release of Fatah prisoners [...], the IDF recommends significant gestures that will allow PA President Mahmoud Abbas to present accomplishments to the Palestinian people. [...]"

In view of [...] the absence of diplomatic progress, it might be prudent for our political leaders to be generous to the PA. [...] In view of the diplomatic impasse, Hamas' strengthened position [...] and the expected failure in the UN Security Council vote, Abbas' resignation threat ought to be taken seriously."

HAA 25.10.11 Editorial

### Gilad's hope

"It has been proven that a genuine and constructive dialogue between the Israeli and the Hamas leaderships, in which both sides give up some of their

demands to meet in the middle, is possible. This dialogue must not be permitted to remain confined to the issue of prisoner release. It must be expanded to include such matters as the blockade of the Gaza Strip and the economic situation there, as well as terror and the rockets fired into Israel.

Perhaps this new atmosphere of dialogue affords an opportunity to reach a long-term nonbelligerence agreement with Hamas. Care must be taken not to depict the negotiations with Hamas as punishment of Mahmoud Abbas and the Palestinian Authority. Just the opposite: Efforts should be made to promote constructive dialogue with them as well."

Aner Shalev, HAA 25.10.11

### **Preceptions and misperceptions in the Shalit deal**

"Many people believe Hamas has demonstrated that violence against Israel reaps more fruits than [...] Abbas's non-violent policy. [...] However, the formula [...] is a distortion of reality. [...]

Rather, the correct question to be posed ought to be, are Hamas' violent tactics and rejectionist stance more successful in bringing about tangible, long-term results for the Palestinian Arabs than a serious process of negotiations with Israel? [...]

In the long run, Hamas's violent tactics and rejectionist ideology will be no match to Abu Mazen. For that reason, Abu Mazen must negotiate with Israel – the sooner the better. [...] He must offer the Palestinian people something his Hamas rivals cannot: serious negotiations with Israel, which could lead to tangible results."

Yoav J. Tenenbaum, JPO 23.10.11

### **3. Der Tod von Muammar Gaddafi**

*Auch in Israel gab es zahlreiche Medienkommentare zum gewaltsamen Ende des libyschen Diktators Muammar Gaddafi. Dabei lag der Fokus auf der Bedeutung einer neuen Regierung in Libyen für den weiteren Nahen Osten. Insbesondere ein befürchtetes islamistisches Regime wurde dabei als Gefahr für Israel betrachtet. Zuletzt hatte Gaddafi – Verfechter der „Isratine“- oder Einstaatenlösung für den Konflikt zwischen Israel und Palästinenser – in Israel mit Schlagzeilen auf sich aufmerksam gemacht, als er im April 2010 eine Delegation arabischer Kneset-Abgeordneter empfangen hatte.*

### **Lynch in Libya**

"Thursday's lynching brings down to Earth those who had hoped that Libya would soon become a flourishing democracy. It turns out the gangs in power in Libya are Gaddafi's flesh and blood, an essential part of that country's traditional, some would say backward, society. Libya's path, and the path of the Middle East toward stability and democracy, remain as distant as ever."

Eyal Zisser, IHY 21.10.11

### **The Arab world's quagmire**

"This is how Arab leaders have died throughout their history. [...] That's how this world has conducted itself from time immemorial. It sinks again and again into the dark tribal quagmire, and can't pull itself out. The biggest impediment posed by Arab culture is the absence of a mechanism for self-correction. [...] As long as the Arab world cannot manage to insert into its lexicon such concepts as 'former president' or even 'former king,' it will not be able to extricate itself from the chronic backwardness in which it has been stuck for hundreds of years."

Salman Masalha, HAA 24.10.11

### **Will world miss Gaddafi?**

"Everyone, including the bad guys, has a substitute. [...] It is doubtful whether a state whose citizens boast such executions would be able to contribute anything to the democratic Mideast vision [...]. Moreover, if these are the people who shall soon take power in Tripoli, the whole world [...] may end up longing for the entertaining man with the dresses and odd speeches.

And if that's not enough, Gaddafi left his people [...] incomprehensible amounts of weaponry. [...] The country may turn within a very short period of time [...] into a favored place of residence for fans of terrorism and explosions from across Africa."

Yehuda Shohat, JED 24.10.11

### **The tyrant is dead, long live the tyrant**

"Mustafa Abdul-Jalil, who liberated Libya [...], has [...] declared that it will be governed under Islamic law [...]. So expect to see fewer female bodyguards and more women in need of bodyguards. Out with the uniforms, in with the Burqas. [...]

Libya is indeed free. It's free of Jews and it will soon be free of Christians too. It is becoming free of Africans and will be free of rights for women. [...] And now that it's liberated, it is free to have fewer human rights than ever.

The Qaddafi regime was a money-grubbing totalitarian mafia, and it will be replaced by a totalitarian money-grubbing mafia. [...] The Islamists hope the Arab Spring will lead to an Islamic Winter, but it's more likely to lead to more chaos, more splinter tyrannies and more civil wars."  
Daniel Greenfield, AS 25.10.11

#### **Accelerating inevitable Israeli-Libyan relations**

"The death of Muammar Gaddafi is yet another sign that Libya and Israel could establish diplomatic relations. [...]

The Israeli- Palestinian conflict was tenuously morphed into an Israeli-Arab conflict by despotic leaders wishing to redirect aggression and attention that would otherwise be aimed at them. [...] But the Arab Spring has ended this charade, and the Arab people cannot believe that their struggle for democracy is a Jewish plot. [...]

The situation also gives Israel an opportunity to reach out to other friendly Arab states. [...] With the end of Israeli-Turkish relations, [...] Israel must reinvent Ben-Gurion's vision of an alliance on the Muslim periphery. Libya is a prime contender."  
Matthew Mainen, JPO 25.10.11

#### **Between tyrants and revolutionaries**

"A lynching cannot possibly be supported. [...] [But] the fall of another domino in the Middle East is an encouraging development for [...] democracy and the rule of law throughout the world. [...]

In the dilemma between the support for stable tyrannies and supporting the revolutionaries and their uncertain future, the choice is clear. Israel must do everything possible to prove to the Arab peoples that are being freed that democracies are meant for each other; and that Israel is part of the family of freedom, democracy and peace, that same family that is seeking to adopt them."  
HAA 23.10.11

#### **Libya, where to?**

"Unfortunately, Libya carries the legacy of century-old fractures – social, economic, geographic and cultural [...]. Bridging these fractures presents the biggest challenge to Libya's future stability; failing to do so could result in years of violence and anarchy. [...]

That's why it was unsettling to hear [...] plans to speed headlong into parliamentary and presidential elections in just eight months. [...] Libya must proceed cautiously, putting in place the sorts of institu-

tions that are a prerequisite for even the most rudimentary forms of democracy."  
JPO 23.10.11 Editorial

#### **Assad is watching**

"When [Syria's Bashar Assad] saw Gadhafi's body, despite his army, despite a tribe that has supported him until the end, [...] Assad surely understood that Mubarak's and Gadhafi's courageous words about not leaving their countries and their willingness to die in their homelands, based on their trust in broad public support, did not impress anyone in the end. [...]

Assad watched the general rehearsal in Libya for the demise of his own regime. In light of events there, he may just feel like packing his bags and heading for Iran."  
Yossi Beilin, IHY 21.10.11

## **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 weiteren Themen, die in den vergangenen zwei Wochen die israelische Gesellschaft bewegten.*

#### **Über die ersten freien Wahlen in Tunesien:**

##### **Will Tunisia follow Turkey or Iran?**

"It was impossible not to get excited when seeing [...] masses of Tunisians flocking to the voting booths. [...]

But an important figure was absent during yesterday's festivities - Lina Ben Mhenni, one of the heroines of the Tunisian revolution [...], who was dubbed 'Tunisian girl' after her very popular blog [and] was even nominated this year for a Nobel Peace Prize. [...]he English teacher decided to give up on her right to vote. She claimed that the recent elections were one big sham. [...] In her opinion, members of the old regime [...] managed to infiltrate existing parties [...]. The blogger even claims that in today's Tunisia there is still censorship against journalists, arbitrary arrests by police and manipulation of the government system.

And all this before we have even talked about [...]

Nahda Party. The religious party, which labeled itself moderate during the recent elections, was actually [...] one of the biggest supporters of the Islamic Revolution under Khomeini during the late 1970s." Boaz Bismuth, IHY 24.10.11

### **Democracy in Tunisia**

"The country's impressive economic growth, educated middle class, high rate of female literacy, strong sense of a unified national identity, non-politicized military, and relatively active civil culture [...] seemed to position the [...] country particularly well for a democratic system of government. [...] Yet, [...] the victory of the Islamist Ennahda [...] is a worrying sign. [...] Rachid Ghannouchi, Ennahda's head [...] is also rabidly anti-Israel. [...] It would be a tragedy and a sober lesson about the dangers of democracy if the very democratic process [...] ended up bringing to power an Islamist political party that will use its democratic mandate to roll back the positive reforms implemented under Ben Ali's autocratic regime." JPO 25.10.11 Editorial

*Über junge Ärzte, die wegen schlechter Arbeitsbedingungen kollektiv ihre Arbeit niederlegen wollen, aber vom Arbeitsgericht daran gehindert wurden:*

### **A dangerous ruling**

"Shalit's expected release pushed off the public agenda the National Labor Court's October 12 decision to annul the medical residents' letters of resignation. [...] This is the latest ruling to make clear that the young doctors should not expect the [...] Court's support in their struggle [...]. The National Labor Court [...] forbade them from striking independently and invalidated their resignation. [...] The battle intensified after the signing of the collective agreement, which the residents reject. The government sounded an alarm: 'There is no precedent for opening an agreement after it has been signed.' True. But there is also no precedent for the refusal by such a large group of workers to accept an agreement that applies to it. [...] [...]The Court did not deal with weighty judicial questions that involve issues of workers' rights. [...] The explanation that the resignation is not 'proportionate' because this is a 'vital service whose main function is saving human lives' is irrelevant and even dangerous. There was no precedent in Israel for the resignation of hundreds of workers who rejected their work

agreement, and this is the first time employees' letters of resignation were annulled based on the demand of the employer. Rejecting the resignation is a serious blow to constitutional rights, whose immediate significance binds the employee to his workplace against his will." Nurit Alstein, HAA 17.10.11

### **On verge of medical anarchy**

"It is indeed true that it's easy to understand the decision of some of Israel's medical residents not to report to work. [...] The medical residents' demands are indeed very just. They are right to ask to be freed from the demand for a nine-year contract. [...] They are also right to demand fair wages for a difficult, exacting job. [...] And still, Israel's public discourse makes a distinction between the strike of truck drivers [...] and the strike of doctors. Because the public, just like every single doctor, knows that some lines must not be crossed and that crossing them means anarchy. [...] The medical residents' demands must be met, [...] yet the residents must not go all the way." Ariella Ringel-Hoffman, JED 10.10.11

HAA = Haaretz  
JED = Jedioth Ahronoth  
JPO = Jerusalem Post  
IHY = Israel HaYom  
GLO = Globes  
AS = Arutz Sheva

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