



Schlaglicht Israel Nr. 23/11

Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen

12. – 25. Dezember 2011

1. Siedlergewalt gegen die Armee

In der Nacht vom 12. zum 13. Dezember drangen radikale jüdische Siedler in einen israelischen Militärstützpunkt in der Westbank ein, wo sie randalierten, Ausrüstungsgegenstände zerstörten und sogar hochrangige Militärs mit Steinen angriffen.

Die Vorfälle ereigneten sich im Anschluss an Gerüchte, dass die Zerstörung von Siedlungsaußenposten bevorstehe. Sie reißen sich in eine Kette von so genannten "Price Tag" – Angriffen ein, bei denen junge Siedler in den letzten Monaten und Jahren gewaltsam gegen palästinensische Zivilisten, israelische Friedensaktivisten, Moscheen und palästinensisches Eigentum vorgegangen sind.

Diesmal ernteten die Täter jedoch ein besonderes Maß an Kritik und Zorn, da die israelische Armee in der Öffentlichkeit einen ganz besonderen Status genießt. Sowohl die Regierung als auch die Führung der Siedlungsbewegung verurteilten die Taten scharf. Anders als viele Stimmen in der Öffentlichkeit und selbst Mitglieder seines Kabinetts, lehnte Premier Netanyahu es ab, die Extremisten als "Terroristen" einzustufen und bezeichnete sie stattdessen als „Randaliere“. Er ordnete eine Reihe von Maßnahmen an, die der Eindämmung des Phänomens dienen sollen. So können Israelis in der Westbank von nun an in "Administrationshaft" genommen und von Militärgerichten verurteilt werden.

Trapped in a nightmare

"We are scared of what is happening a few kilometers away from our homes, when hundreds of youngsters without parental, teaching or rabbinical authority do as they wish in this country, and there is no one to stop them; neither the government nor the army or police. [...]"

We are scared because we know that if instead of Jews it was Arabs who rioted like that inside a

military base and hurled a rock at the deputy division commander, they would be thrown in jail (at best.) [...]"

We are scared because we know that it is not about inability, but rather, about the lack of desire to act against these people, maybe because they reflect the DNA of this government."

Sima Kadmon, JED 23.12.11

A Jew who sins is still a Jew

"These youngsters are unruly criminals and vandals, [...] but the comparison to Arab terrorists who blow up buses and restaurants is out of line. [...]"

When it comes to ideologically motivated crime, the long-term solution is education: emphasizing the boundaries of protest within a democracy. The first rule is, of course, that dissent is legitimate as long as it doesn't cross the line and become violent."

Nadav Shragai, IHY 19.12.11

We're all to blame for hilltop youth

"They were made rotten by those who allowed the residents of Hebron to turn the lives of neighboring Palestinians into a living hell; [...] by those who [...] wrote books on what the Arabs deserve just for being Arab. Those people shouldn't really be surprised when young people view mosques as inferior traitorous places that deserve to be destroyed. [...]"

Our elected officials are in fact lending support to those 'rotten apples' that everyone is lining up to condemn."

Uzi Baram, IHY 19.12.11

Who are 'price-tag' attacks aimed at?

"The rioters' main fury is directed against their home - both their nuclear families and their public/ideological home. [...]"

Materialism and bourgeois values have spread to the settlements as well, and this is why their residents have made do with faint protests against

the construction freeze. [...] Then, of course, there is 'the betrayal of [the Gaza settlements] Gush Katif.' [...] The settlers' public and rabbinical leadership called on the youth to fight, but in fact, it collaborated with the uprooters, and this wound is still bleeding. [...]

The founding generation [...] did not always practice what they preached. And this the young radicals can neither adjust to nor accept."

Israel Harel, HAA 15.12.11

Unsettling violence

"Some have placed the blame on disengagement from Gaza. [...]

Undoubtedly, demolishing the Jewish communities [...] was a wrenching experience [...]. It probably rocked some people's faith in the state [...]. But we are judged by how we handle such challenges. And that means not taking the law into our own hands."

Liat Collins, JPO 17.12.11

There is no law

"In the West Bank, there is neither law nor judge as far as the settlers are concerned. They can run riot to their heart's content. [...] The scale of the latest incidents proves that we are no longer talking about a handful of 'wild weeds' on the margins of the settler community. [...]

The government must immediately authorize a forceful and determined operation to stop Jewish terror in the West Bank. It must break the armed militias and impose law and order. For it is not the settlers alone who bear responsibility for the lawlessness: The prime minister and the heads of the military establishment are also responsible."

HAA 14.12.11 Editorial

Creating tension to expel Jews

"Am I the only one who is upset by the bigoted term 'hilltop youth,' which is being used to defame an entire population of mostly idealistic, self-sacrificing young people [...]. Finally, why is the IDF [...] still being trained [...] to destroy Jewish communities?"

[...] Last week's clashes were unfortunate, but they did not occur in a vacuum. Defense Minister Ehud Barak continues his cynical use of our military to threaten the expulsion of law-abiding citizens from young, idealistic communities."

David Rubin, JPO 17.12.11

Don't shoot the settlers

"While the impression created recently is that most stones being hurled in the territories come from the

Jewish side, the statistical findings still tell the opposite story. [...]

The over-reaction to the events of this past week came from a place of hostility rather than fraternity. [...] Under these circumstances, it's very difficult for the silent Jewish majority in Judea and Samaria to curb the mad raids at army bases and mosques by violent youth gangs. This Jewish majority is stuck between the 'Price Tag' rock and the hard place of the wild assault it faces from the outside. [...]

The effort to ban the non-parliamentary rightist camp is also akin to playing with fire. Those who preach for such move do not seek quiet, they want a war. A civil war. Have we gone mad?"

Hagai Segal, JED 17.12.11

Fighting extremism

"Rabbis, settlement leaders and right-wing politicians were nearly unanimous in their opposition to the sorts of tactics the extremists used. [...]

Unfortunately it seems that many of the extremists involved in these incidents are rebellious youths who refuse to listen to authority of any kind. [...]

Under the circumstances, the only solution is a more stringent enforcement of the law. [...] While it is legitimate to oppose the dismantling of settlements on the West Bank, resorting to violence against IDF officers and soldiers endangers Israeli lives and does more harm than good to the settlement cause."

JPO 13.12.11 Editorial

One racist people

"The recent attacks on Israel Defense Force soldiers have created a national consensus. [...] All of us are against the fundamentalist rabbis [...] whose students throw stones at army officers. [...]

But there is no wall separating the religious from the secular. Jewish ethnocentrism - and the desire to erase the collective identity of the Palestinians and take control of their land - have been a thread linking religious and secular over the past 44 years. [...]

It was not religious people who coined the phrase 'demographic problem, [...] not they who declared the policy to make the Negev and Galilee more Jewish. [...]

It is not a marginalized 'group of people' that constitutes the major danger to the existence of Israel as a democratic and Jewish state, rather than a racist and Jewish one. The seeds of lawlessness were sowed by good secular people."

Akiva Eldar, HAA 19.12.11

2. Newt Gingrich und Israel

Newt Gingrich, ehemaliger Sprecher des US-Repräsentantenhauses, sagte in einem Interview, die Palästinenser seien ein "erfundenes Volk" und sowohl die Hamas als auch die Palästinensische Autonomiebehörde würden den Wunsch hegen, Israel zu zerstören. Gingrich befindet sich zurzeit im Wahlkampf um die Kandidatur für das US-Präsidentenamt. Er wird nach Mitt Romney als aussichtsreichster Kandidat der Republikaner gehandelt.

In diesem Wahlkampf haben auch andere republikanische Bewerber ihre Freundschaft zu Israel betont, wohl um jüdische Wähler, die traditionell eher demokratisch wählen, sowie evangelistische Christen anzuziehen.

Während einige israelische Politiker, darunter Infrastrukturminister Uzi Landau, Gingrichs Aussagen begrüßten, gab die Regierung keinen Kommentar ab, da es sich um "interne amerikanische Angelegenheiten" handele.

Ein Sprecher Gingrichs sagte später, der Politiker befürworte dennoch die Gründung eines palästinensischen Staates im Einvernehmen mit Israel.

I want more than a hug

"Gingrich [...] attempted to prove his friendship by denying the existence of a Palestinian people. This and other similarly 'friendly' [...] is evidence of a perception [...] of what these candidates believe the Jewish people want to hear. [...]"

My commitment to a Palestinian state living side by side with Israel grows precisely out of my desire both to enable Palestinians to express their national aspirations and my commitment to ensure my ability to maintain Israel as the homeland of the Jewish people.

As a Jew, I know that there is a Palestinian people. [...]"

What I want from my friends is more than a hug. What I hope for from my political allies in the United States, be they Republican or Democrat, is to show whether their policies share the above values and how they may help me fulfill them."

Donniel Hartman, JED 14.12.11

Three cheers for Newt Gingrich

"Official Israel knows not to intervene in U.S. elections or to try to influence the Jewish vote there. But residents of Israel who [...] understand that the 'Arab Spring' is not a spring, and understand that a

Palestinian state and 'peace' are a conflict in terms, and that the Palestinian bomb is no less dangerous than the Iranian bomb, can take comfort in the fact that realistic and responsible voices are being heard on the other side of the ocean."

Ron Bryman, IHY 14.12.11

Gingrich and the big picture

"I am doubtful if this statement will actually attract the Jewish voice in support of his candidacy. It is clear, unfortunately, that Israel is less and less a central part of the American Jewish voter's experience. [...]"

Gingrich would have done better had he [explained] why, in his opinion, the strategic alliance between Israel and the U.S. is so important. Or why the U.S. needs to support a country with a stable democratic government in light of what is happening in the region around it."

Yaakov Ahimeir, IHY 14.12.11

Gingrich sets himself apart

"Gingrich's opponents were critical of his comments on Palestinian history. This may be exactly what Gingrich expected would happen, and seemed to play into his attempt to show he was different from the rest of the field -- a fearless truth teller who can joust verbally with any of the other Republicans and, most importantly, with Barack Obama. [...]"

The Republican race is still very much a two-man contest at the moment. Gingrich's remarks on the Palestinians may be remembered more for his effort to lay down markers separating himself from the remainder of the field than for the specifics of his Israel policy."

Richard Baehr, IHY 13.12.11

Love comes with a price

"The statement made by [...] Newt Gingrich [...] is only the most recent in a string of policy statements that, in Israeli terms, would position the Republican candidates [...] somewhere in the Knesset's radical right [...]. Ordinary Americans are bound to wonder about the sway this distant country holds over American politics and about the motives of the Jews that support it. [...]"

Finally, one cannot ignore the possibility that derogatory anti-Palestinian statements, of which Gingrich provided a good example, could inflame an already stormy Arab world and, by extension, strengthen Iran's regional standing. But of course, this won't upset those who are waiting with bated

breath for the war between Gog and Magog and the Apocalypse."

Chemi Shalev, HAA 15.12.11

The Gingrich expose

"The intellectual courage of this American statesman makes the failure of Israeli leaders to tell the truth about the Palestinians appear shameful, to put it mildly. [...] Israeli leaders have simply lacked the wit and courage to tell the truth about the invented Palestinian people. Which means they have lacked the intestines to inform their own people about the implacable nature of their country's enemy. [...]

The policy of 'land for peace'—which falsely implies the existence of a Palestinian people—has not only divided and very much weakened the people of Israel, but has also induced them to vote for politicians who support that futile and fatal policy. Israeli politicians have been playing the 'peace' card to win votes. They have been playing the 'politics of peace' for two decades to gain or remain in power."

Paul Eidelberg, AS 13.12.11

The Republicans

"Gingrich's statement referring to Palestinians as an 'invented' people [...] should not be dismissed as 'irresponsible and dangerous'. [...] After all, scholars of nationalism such as Benedict Anderson have referred to modern nation states – particularly those created at the beginning of the 20th century, such as Arab states in the region [...] as 'imagined communities.'

People socially construct the idea of a nation in order to bring together a diverse people and foster a feeling of common purpose. The Jewish people, in contrast, can hardly be called an 'invented people.' Even before they settled in the Land of Israel nearly four millennia ago, they saw themselves as a nation. [...] Indeed, if there ever was a nation that was not invented, it was Israel."

JPO 12.12.11 Editorial

Look who's talking about 'invented' people

"What Gingrich said is offensive and racist. [...]

The people who should be most offended are Americans. If we are going to talk about an "invented" people and nation, what fits the bill more than America, which was 'invented' by pilgrims who fled Europe and then, after being welcomed by the Native American 'Indians' proceeded to steal the Native Americans' lands for themselves. [...]

Is that what Israelis want in an American president? An idiot willing to say anything for money and votes?

How dependable would Gingrich really be in defending Israel if he so easily panders to popular whims? Every candidate for major national office panders to Jewish voters. If I were Jewish, I'd be insulted."

Ray Hanania, JPO 13.12.11

3. Geschlechtertrennung in Israel

Das Thema Geschlechtertrennung wird derzeit intensiv in der Öffentlichkeit diskutiert. Immer wieder kommt es zu Vorfällen, bei denen die von ultra-orthodoxen Juden ("Haredim") praktizierte Trennung von Männern und Frauen in einer Reihe von Sphären des Lebens in die säkulare Welt vordringt. So hatten sich religiöse Soldaten geweigert, an Armeezeremonien mit weiblichen Sängerinnen teilzunehmen. Werbeagenturen in Jerusalem veröffentlichen aus Angst vor religiös motiviertem Vandalismus keine Anzeigen mit Frauenbildern mehr.

Jüngster Anlass für diese Diskussion war der Fall einer Frau, die in einem hauptsächlich von Haredim benutztem Bus angefeindet und aufgefordert wurde, im "Frauenteil", also im hinteren Teil des Busses Platz zunehmen. Selbst die hinzugeholte Polizei riet ihr zunächst, den Sitzplatz zu wechseln. Der Vorfall wurde von Politikern, darunter Ministerpräsident Netanyahu, verurteilt. Allerdings hatte der Oberste Gerichtshof die Geschlechtertrennung in Bussen, die in mehr als 50 zwischen ultraorthodoxen Gemeinden verkehrenden Linien praktiziert wird, im Januar 2011 für rechtens erklärt, solange sie "freiwillig" sei.

In praise of haredi busses

"[Seculars] will never understand the embarrassment that a haredi woman feels when she is forced to rub up against men in a crowded bus. [...] We should keep in mind that these are internal bus routes that connect haredi neighborhoods and towns. [...]

A hothead who resorts to violence, even if only verbal, against a woman who sits at the wrong place should be tried and punished [...]. However, a lady who creates a provocation and invites photojournalists to document her impressive ability to anger haredim deserves the same condemnation."

Aryeh Ehrlich, JED 20.12.11

I won't sit at the back of the bus

"How could religion be used so cynically and how come nobody realized until now that this is a social problem, and that its connection to religion is slim to non-existent? How could it be that an entire community chooses to humiliate its daughters, wives and sisters and nobody raises a hue and cry? [...]

I'm also not speaking out against religion. What bothers me is the State's attitude to these phenomena throughout its existence. The renunciation of the basic rights of so many citizens for the sake of the minority's dignity and welfare, and the indifference shown by the State towards these phenomena, which is even encouraged at times."

Tanya Rosenblit, JED 18.12.11

The virtue of stubbornness

"From this point, the struggle should be waged hour by hour, day after day, on all bus lines where the Egged company has yielded to pressure and allowed separation between men and women. [...]

Discrimination against women, and efforts to push them into traditional roles, constitutes just the tip of the iceberg in a process by which Israel is being transformed into a backward, fanatic and unenlightened country."

HAA 19.12.11 Editorial

A proud and liberated ultra-Orthodox woman

"I live in the heart of Tel Aviv. Every morning I take my young son to kindergarten along a route paved in the pornographic business cards of dubious enterprises. [...] A lively traffic in women is conducted in broad daylight. In Israel today, women are being murdered, battered and humiliated in the name of 'family honor.' When was the last time the masses took to the streets to raise an outcry? [...]

The elimination of women's pictures from advertising campaigns has not led to the murder of a single woman. Nevertheless, committees are meeting and discussing how to punish the 'excluders.' They will settle accounts with those who murder and degrade some other time. Maybe."

Roni Shub, HAA 16.12.11

A woman of valor can't be found

"Who was it that approved the possibility of 'kosher' buses, where women sit in the back separated from the men? Israel's own (secular) Supreme Court. [...] So, accepting coerced discrimination against women is a problem, but if it is voluntary then it is legal? [...]

The State tip-toes around extremist elements within haredi society, reviling it while accepting claims with regards to religion as unchangeable truths, and pandering to their demands because it is so much easier than rocking the boat."

Noa Rubinstein, JED 12.12.11

First, let's calm down

"To judge from the media [...] the status of women in Israel is under an assault of crisis proportions. [...] Much of the recent discussion, however, has been overwrought, even hysterical. [...]

With a little more foresight the bus issue could have been avoided entirely. The government should have allowed those who seek a strict separation to run their own private bus lines [...]. The refusal to countenance private bus services led to the current mess.

[...] What haredim do wish to avoid is being squished together with strangers of the opposite sex on crowded routes. (In both Mexico and South Korea, there are separate subway cars for men and women to avoid the problem, and not out of deference to haredim.)"

Jonathan Rosenblum, JPO 23.12.11

The witch hunt

"Women are more and more absent from public and private spaces, yet it still seems that no one is really taking action.[...] Only recently did former Mossad chief Efraim Halevy warn that the threat of religious extremists on our society is more dangerous than the Iranian threat. [...]

Until all those involved come to their senses and eradicate the discrimination of women, it might just be too late. [...] The way to deal with it cannot be just empty condemnations. We must recognize that we have to deal with this phenomenon aggressively and immediately; no time for idle chatter. In practice, the Knesset must legislate harsh punishments for anyone caught trying to exclude women or discriminate against them in any way."

Irit Rosenblum, IHY 25.12.11

Celebrating women's freedom on Hanukka

"Israel remains a reliable defender of women's rights. [...] Take the case of women's images disappearing or forcibly being removed from billboards and advertisements in Jerusalem so as not to offend the ultra-Orthodox. When the crusade became public, there was an outcry and a reversal of the trend. [...] Or take the hot issue of segregated buses [...]. These segregated bus lines generally

travel through neighborhoods where separation is an accepted norm. But it is illegal in Israel to force the segregation of men and women in the public sphere. [...]

Israel is hardly turning into Iran, as some both here and abroad contend."

Laura Kam, JPO 22.12.11

Bigger problems can take a back seat

"Oy, how good and how pleasant [...] to come out against the exclusion of women in the ultra-Orthodox community. [...] How good and how pleasant, too, to single out Israel's public enemy number one: the [Ultra-orthodox]. [...]

The exclusion of [Ultra-orthodox] women really is infuriating, but the exclusion of other injustices from the agenda - the kind that are not as good and pleasant to oppose - is far more infuriating. [...]

Women in the back seat? A Palestinian can't even board that bus, neither at the front nor back."

Gideon Levy, HAA 22.12.11

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 europäische Proteste gegen angekündigte Ausweitungen von jüdischen Siedlungen im Westjordanland und Israels Reaktion darauf:

Wanted: A relevant Europe

"Last week four European members of the UN Security Council condemned the settlement policy, violence against Palestinians and damage to mosques; Israel's Foreign Ministry responded by rebuking Germany, France, Britain and Portugal, declaring them 'irrelevant.' [...]

The condemnation of the three most important countries in Europe, which Israel is wooing in its struggle to stop the Iranian nuclear program, halt the Palestinian-state initiative in the United Nations and upgrade agreements with the EU, represents a suicidal foreign policy. [...] The United States is now the only barrier between Israel and international isolation - which borders on strategic danger.

Still, there is more than a sliver of truth in the claim that the EU is irrelevant in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. [...] They pledged to play a 'special role' and to 'work in a more concrete way' to end the Israeli occupation in the territories. Hopefully the Israeli government's bizarre behavior will spur Israel's friends in Europe to fulfill this important obligation and be truly relevant."

HAA 25.12.11 Editorial

Über eine mögliche Anerkennung des türkischen Völkermordes an den Armeniern:

France, Israel and the Armenian genocide

"Yes, Turkey [...] is threatening France [...] because the French Senate is debating [...] a law stating that denial of the Armenian genocide [...] will be considered a criminal act. [...] What eventually happens with relations between France and Turkey [...] could play into the hands of those in Israel who oppose, due to Turkish pressure, recognizing the Armenian genocide. Acquiescing to Turkish pressure has been a modus vivendi in Israel for years, well before Turkey decided to cool relations with Israel. [...]

When the Knesset Education Committee convenes next week to discuss a proposal that Israel recognize the Armenian genocide, it is doubtful that the Foreign Ministry will agree. [...] The reason: maybe, just maybe, a glimmer of hope exists for warming relations with Turkey. So the Jewish state will continue to persist in the longtime tradition of shamefully denying someone else's genocide."

Yaakov Ahimeir, IHY 21.12.11

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