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Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen

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1. Iran

Die jüngsten Attentate auf Mitarbeiter israelischer Botschaften in Indien und Georgien haben die Debatte um die israelische Strategie gegenüber Iran neu entfacht. Die Anschläge werden als Vergeltungsaktionen für tödliche Anschläge auf Physiker des iranischen Atomprogramms vor einigen Monaten gesehen, für welche der Iran Israel verantwortlich macht.

In der innerisraelischen Debatte stehen sich zwei Meinungen gegenüber: Die eine Seite argumentiert, ein Militärschlag gegen iranische Atomanlagen sei notwendig, um Iran daran zu hindern, waffenfähiges nukleares Material zu entwickeln und so die Sicherheit Israels vor einem Atomschlag zu gewährleisten. Auf der anderen Seite herrscht die Befürchtung vor, dass der mögliche Gegenschlag Irans den Nutzen eines Präventivangriffs bei Weitem übersteigt. Auch wird erwogen, ob Israel militärisch stark genug für eine solche Operation und ihre Folgen ist.

The Inevitable War with Iran

“Although macho talk in the Islamic Middle East is a standard adopted by all militant Islamic leaders, the Iranian government is flexing its muscles, flaunting its sharp teeth. It believes that economic sanctions will hurt, but not as much as caving in to American demands. [...] The American Administration is working hard at softening its seeming aim by masking its military buildup with wishful talking points. US Defense Secretary Panetta’s recent implications concerning Israel’s imminent attack plans are part of a grand-scale deception strategy. They have been designed to refocus the Iranians on the most suspicious front, rather than the one that would deliver the ultimate blow – the US military. [...] Retaliation will not be limited to hitting Israel. [...] A large scale “defensive” war against Iran [...] would be supported by the American public due to its defensive nature, a war that would boost Obama’s

standing in the eyes of the American people, shortly ahead of the elections. [...] There is little doubt that a war with Iran can be avoided. There is high likelihood that the US will lead the effort even if Israel initiates the campaign. [...] There is no doubt. 2012 will see a new Gulf war. This time, the Ayatollah will be the one to pay the price.”

Avi Perry, AS, 5.2.2012

Why It Pays For Iran to Expedite Its Nuclear Program

“History has shown, empirically, that states that attempt to acquire nuclear weapons and subsequently fail to do so, become increasingly more susceptible to military intervention and domestic civil uprisings. What motivation or rational logic would be employed in trying to convince Iran to halt its current nuclear program? [...] Just as it did for the states that successfully crossed the nuclear threshold, economic trade and normalized relations will resume after the development of an Iranian bomb; actions that Tehran is perhaps counting on [...]. Therefore, in the perception of Iranian leadership, it is only their intent to attain the one security deterrent that will safeguard them from foreign intervention and potentially preserve the Persian Empire. The presumption that the Islamic Republic would do anything but expedite its nuclear program is what I find most naive and irrational. Iran is neither of these.”

Nicholas Kendryna, AS, 7.2.2012

Will America sacrifice Israel?

“Israel must remember that she is America’s ally and client, but not friend [...]. Israel can stand tall in the face of its powerful ally because it never asked American soldiers to spill their blood for its defense. It’s Washington that must beg for Israel’s alliance, as it cannot afford disengagement from the only democracy in that dark region. But will the US eventually be compelled to sacrifice Israel on the

altar of realism, when Iran's knife will descend on Isaac? And will the Jewish state's leadership dutifully bind Israel on the altar?"

Giulio Meotti, JED 9.2.2012

Are nuke fears exaggerated?

"After long years of brawls involving terrorists equipped with explosive belts and attempts to shoot down tin pipes fired from a donkey in the Gaza Strip, the notion that our enemies are nuclear scientists from a mysterious superpower provides us with a pleasant high-tech feeling after all. [...] Today, in the area of biological warfare and computerized terror, possessing an atomic bomb sounds just like the notion of keeping CDs at home: It's outdated, it's awkward, it takes up plenty of space and it gathers dust. [...] In an era where uranium is being sold at farmers' markets in Azerbaijan, is it even logical and realistic to try to prevent other states from acquiring nuke capabilities? And maybe it's not the technology that is a little old, but also our fears?"

Asaf Gefen, JED, 12.2.2012

Ahmadinejad's Iran is the new best friend of Israeli settlers

"Ahmadinejad's Iran [...] does for the settlements what the settlements were never able to do for themselves: Convince Israelis that the settlements are an integral part of Israel [...] by convincing Israelis that a Holocaust could be imminent, and that no Jews, anywhere, will be spared. By convincing Israelis that occupation – which, they realize, exists for the sole purpose of fostering settlement in the West Bank and East Jerusalem – is not only a side issue, it is, relative to the specter of an Iranian-sponsored genocide, no issue at all. [...] The settlers know [...] that under the shadow of the Iran cloud, Israelis are apprehensive, depressed, fearful and uncertain. What better time to move full speed ahead and, while they're at it, declare victory."

Bradley Burston, HAA, 14.2.2012

Iran's tentacles

"The violent rhetoric of the Islamic Republic's official leaders and their active support for terrorist attacks both in the region and around the world cannot be dismissed merely with empty condemnations. Covert attacks and the assassination of Iranian nuclear scientists have so far been restricted to delaying Iran's progress toward developing nuclear weapons. But after the recent spate of attacks, a new, more aggressive response should be coordinated among Western nations [...] A fierce Western response [...] would send a counter-message to the mullahs in Tehran: Just as tentacles can spread out, they can also be amputated."

JPO, 14.2.2012

Israel's Mossad, Shin Bet failed to identify Iran terror plots

"The most worrying aspect of the recent string of Iranian terror attacks in Asia was the evident drive to commit them even though they hadn't been properly prepared [...] Such haste is not typical of Tehran's previous decision-making, and it shows that the decision makers are under pressure and liable to be driven more by emotions than by cool calculation. This may foretell escalation as well as a weakening of the restraints that have slowed progress on Iran's military nuclear program. [...] It seems the recent attacks in Asia may have been a premature error. [...] This week's attacks risked antagonizing India, which has been Iran's lifeline from the tightening noose of economic sanctions; they will deepen Iran's diplomatic isolation; and they will spark efforts to uncover other Iranian agents stationed for use in emergencies. [...] But this week's failures don't mean the next Iranian attacks won't succeed – because Israeli intelligence also failed. Israeli agencies missed both the preparations for the attacks and the decision to carry them out simultaneously in several countries."

Amir Oren, HAA, 15.2.2012

Don't waste money on Iran

"Ahmadinejad's threats are indeed repulsive, yet we must not panic. [...] We can and should realize that even if Iran produces a nuclear bomb it will not rush to use it – neither against us nor against its closer and greater foes. The blind hatred towards us is the product of a temporary government. Yet Iran's animosity towards its Arab neighbors involves immense economic interests as well as historical and cultural rivalry. [...] For us, the hysteria stems from our history. Yet woe is a policy motivated by hysteria [...] Ease up on the preparations for Iran and direct the resources, concern and creativity to the people, which demands social justice. [...] Bank of Israel Governor Stanley Fischer warned us that investors may leave Israel. But so can the hundreds of thousands of wonderful youngsters who hit the streets and squares this past summer. Don't make them run away from this fine land. We have a strong country; now make it good too, for the common people and for the middle class."

Amnon Shamosh, JED, 15.2.2012

Keep pressing Iran

"The two amateurish terror plots against Israeli diplomatic missions in Asia testify to Iran's nervousness over hits on its nuclear scientists [...] but Israel respects its enemies and knows that [...]"

their terror capabilities are bound to vastly improve. [...] Security for diplomats abroad [...] if taken too far, could turn our diplomats into pariahs. In this way, Iran might achieve its objective without using a single bomb. There is no knowing who has been attacking Iranian scientists and their nuclear facilities, and it is reasonable to assume that Ahmadinejad plans to exact a bloody revenge. But this revenge, as painful as it may be in the near future, worse even than Thailand and India, should not stand in the way of anyone with the means of striking at Iran's nuclear project."

Dan Margalit, IHY, 16.2.2012

Iran uses terror to target civilians, and so does Israel

"There is no great difference between an attempt to kill a representative of Israel's Defense Ministry and a strike on an Iranian nuclear physicist [...]. People who were impressed with the assassination of the Iranian scientists – and there are many such people in Israel [...] ignore the fact that another harsh, unnecessary bloody cycle has been launched. What possible use can there be in killing one scientist, who is then replaced by three others? What good was it at the time to kill a key *Palestinian* terrorist when his place was taken by 10 others? [...] But in Israel people [...] are impressed by and cheer Israeli assassinations and no one has questions or doubts, either about their morality or their efficacy. [...] Here people are shocked by attempted assassinations by Arabs or Iranians, but divorce them completely from the context of Israeli assassinations [...]. The representative of the Defense Ministry in New Delhi does not deserve to die [...] The Iranian scientists probably did not deserve to die either [...]. But people who are truly against terror must also say: against all terror, against any terror, be it Iranian, Palestinian or Israeli."

Gideon Levy, HAA, 16.2.2012

Israel is not alone

"We must cease the almost obsessive concentration on this issue [...]. When our lobbying inadvertently causes this issue to be perceived as an Israeli or Jewish one, we are laying the seeds for a divergence of American and Israeli interests which on this issue is patently false. [...] Given the realities of our history, we Jews often feel we can count only on ourselves [...] If we have learned anything from the Iranian crisis, it is that we are not alone [...] We do have allies [...] We are [...] showing evidence of our desire to work within the international community and our dependence on it [...] We must recognize that we [...] do not have a viable military option for every danger. [...] Our long-term security interests

will be most adequately fulfilled when together with our military might we forge strong relationships with our friends in the international community. We must recognize that these relationships are built not merely on convergent interests, but on the vitality of our democracy, the strength of our moral commitments, and our dedication not only to "giving peace a chance", but to playing a leading role in attempting to bring it about."

Donniel Hartman, JED, 17.2.2012

2. Die anhaltende Gewalt in Syrien

Die angemessene öffentliche Reaktion auf das massive militärische Vorgehen von Syriens Präsident Bashar Assad gegen Zivilisten und Oppositionelle im eigenen Land ist laut Medienberichten innerhalb der israelischen Regierung umstritten. So wird berichtet, Außenminister Lieberman sei für eine Verurteilung der Massaker und die offizielle Forderung, Assad müsse zurücktreten, damit vor allem in den arabischen Staaten nicht der Eindruck entstehe, Israel favorisiere trotz der bisher 6.000 Toten das Regime Assads. Ministerpräsident Benjamin Netanjahu und sein Verteidigungsminister Ehud Barak hegen angeblich Bedenken, Assad könne eine solche israelische Stellungnahme innenpolitisch missbrauchen, indem er behauptet, hinter der syrischen Revolution stecke eine israelische Kampagne. Israelische Kommentatoren fordern vor allem von der UN energisches Eingreifen und verurteilen die Vetos von Russland und China gegen eine Verurteilung Assads durch die UN als das zynische Bewahren ihrer ökonomischen Interessen.

The UN must find a Goldstone for Syria

"When Assad carpet-shelled the city of Homs [...] he did so knowing how the UN so often views violence in this part of the world: in practice, Muslims can kill Muslims with impunity and prolonged freedom from sanction. [...] Assad has also shown skill in playing rifts within Islam to his advantage, and may also have gained indirect benefit from the Israel-Palestinian divide, and the somewhat muffled nature of condemnation from this corner of the region. There are, for example, Israelis who warn that if Assad is toppled, the outcome may only be worse for Israel. There are pro-Palestinian activists abroad who duck the issue, seeming to suggest that opposition to Syrian actions may be used by Israel as a kind of "Assad-washing", muddying the memory of the 2008-9 Gaza war, and complicating campaigns for BDS [anti-Israel boycotts, divestment and sanctions]. The UN needs to make a move capable of putting Bashar Assad on notice that he is

not free to act as he pleases – that his actions will be subject to investigation, and that they may be viewed as war crimes in a future court of international law. [...] In creating the Richard Goldstone-led-fact-finding mission on the Gaza conflict the UN created a mechanism which put both Israel and Hamas in the glare of international scrutiny. [...] For all that Israel stonewalled and scorned the inquiry, it may actually have done more for Israelis than any other UN decision in recent memory. In unacknowledged response to its findings, the report has effectively changed Israeli military and geopolitical strategic practice. [...]. The United Nations needs to create a Goldstone-type inquiry for the atrocities in Syria. The UN needs to send a direct message to Bashar Assad: A regime which resorts to war crimes will have to answer for them.”

Bradley Burston, HAA, 7.2.2012

West should strike Syria

“Russia and China, Cinderella’s two evil sisters [...] are protecting their tortured, suffering “sister” from being subjected to the global conscience, which went to sleep and has not woken up yet since World War II, when the allies debated whether to bomb Auschwitz [...]. Shamelessly, Russia and China are safeguarding a simple economic interest: As long as the foolish Assad needs arms in order to massacre his subjects, Russia and China will provide him with more and more bombs that would make the slaughter mission easier. This arrangement is convenient for all sides: For the silent, defeated Western world, for the mass murderer in Syria, and for the interested parties on the other side of the globe, far away from the commotion. [...] The world finds it convenient to cave in under the guise of diplomatic agreements finalized in air-conditioned rooms at the institution set up in the wake of World War II: The United Nations [...]. Assad is a dead man walking, and one can already imagine his body hanging in the main square in the city of the aching, bleeding Homs. I pray that the idiot will let his young children flee before the masses butcher them as well. A moment before it’s too late, Western countries must strike Syria.”

Merav Betito, JED, 8.2.2012

Don’t trust the world

“The bodies lying in the streets of Homs, in Syria, are not only horrifying; they also serve as a warning sign. This is not a warning about the cruelty of dictators, but rather, about the world’s indifference. We tend to think that should we face the threat of extinction, the world shall come to our aid. This is a naive belief, which stems from the thinking that most

people are good in essence. However, if all people were good in essence, there would be no bodies lying in Homs. Some five years ago, my father stood at the Yad Vashem Shoah museum and delivered a brief speech on the occasion of Holocaust Remembrance Day [...]. My father already knew that he was going to die soon when he uttered the following words: “The enlightened world advises us to be compromising and assume risks for the chances of peace. Yet we ask the enlightened world, we ask on Holocaust Remembrance Day all those who preach to us: What will you do if we assume risks and sacrifice victims and put our trust in you – and then something goes wrong? What if the other side does not act as it is expected to, and instead hurls at us fire and plagues and poisons and possibly even nuclear weapons?”

Yair Lapid, JED, 13.2.2012

The US and Assad

„Thus, despite his brutality, Assad was let off easy for nearly a year by the world’s sole superpower, which had no business trusting him, much less hyping his bogus moderation [...] Once Washington had no ambassadorial-level representation in Damascus – and for exceedingly good reasons that hadn’t changed – it shouldn’t have restored full relations without compelling rationale. To have done so was to send Assad all the wrong signals and embolden him to shed blood with impunity. Moreover, [...] it’s to this uninhibited tyrant that Israel was pressured to cede strategic assets vital to its survival. Damascus’s totalitarian ruler, whom America and the international community as a whole misrepresented as an honorable interlocutor and peace partner, was nothing of the sort. Yet this hadn’t prevented fellow democracies from demanding that Israel risk its most existential interests to indulge Assad. At the very least, the gross mishandling of this episode should inspire profound second thoughts in the White House.”

JPO, 11.2 2012

My Word: Ban and the bomb

“You don’t have to go very far back in history to realize that not all democratic elections end in freedom. Neither does a change in regime guarantee a new, enlightened leader. Yet when it comes to both Syria and Iran we know enough to realize that in both cases changing their rulers is worth the risk – especially compared to the dangers that their current leaders present. The call for change in both cases is coming from within. Even the Arab League is pressing for change in Syria. This is not Israel’s fight. This is a global concern which requires true leadership, not wagging tongues

and fingers. The Western world and UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon must keep up the pressure and ensure that the UN lives up to its original purpose and the free world lives up to its name. Hundreds are dying every week in Syria. And while Assad is getting away with murder, Ahmadinejad is watching.”

Liat Collins, JPO, 11.2.2012

3. Generalstreik der Histadrut

Ein Generalstreik hat fünf Tage lang das öffentliche Leben in Israel zum Teil lahmgelegt. Die Maßgabe des Höchsten Arbeitsgerichts, den Streik auf vier Stunden zu beschränken, kam zu spät, der Streik hatte bereits begonnen. Erklärtes Ziel: Die Arbeitsbedingungen von etwa 250.000 LeiharbeiterInnen zu verbessern, deren Stellen vom öffentlichen Dienst in den vergangenen Jahren „outgesourct“ wurden, z.B. Reinigungskräfte und Sicherheitspersonal. In vielen Fällen erhalten diese nicht einmal den Mindestlohn. Die Streikenden forderten, die LeiharbeiterInnen in feste Verträge zu überführen und ihren im öffentlichen Dienst fest angestellten Kollegen gleichzustellen. Dieses Ziel wurde nicht erreicht. Dennoch sollen nach den Verhandlungen des Histadrut-Vorsitzenden Ofer Eini mit Finanzminister Yuval Steinitz Leiharbeiter in Zukunft u.a. mehr Lohn erhalten sowie Zuschüsse zur Altersvorsorge. Die Einhaltung der Arbeitsgesetze soll außerdem strenger überprüft und durchgesetzt werden. Kritiker warfen dem Histadrut-Vorsitzenden vor, er habe sich mit seiner anfangs kompromisslosen Haltung lediglich für seine Wiederwahl profilieren wollen.

Striking out

“More employees than ever in Israel’s history lack the protection of collective agreements, yet the Histadrut has never rallied behind them. Why? [...] The cause of contract workers makes for better public relations. [...] The Histadrut is in the throes of an election campaign and its chairman Ofer Eini is standing for reelection. To be sure, contract workers deserve equal pay for equal work and they most assuredly deserve full social benefits. [...] That said, it is patently absurd to force both the public and private sectors to hire under collective agreements every last sanitation staffer and to confer tenure upon each and every watchman. Sadly, there’s no avoiding the conclusion that the smaller the Histadrut has become, the more extreme and demagogic its positions. Its priority isn’t plight but might.”

JPO, 8.2.2012

They should remain contract workers

“Contract workers should not become permanent employees in the public service. On the contrary: large numbers of permanent employees in government and public services should become contract workers. [...] The right thing is to reach a situation in which, on the one hand, there is an end to the gay and wasteful days of tenure for a large proportion of the heavy public bureaucracy, which throttles the economy and imposes a heavy burden on the public, and, on the other hand, it will pay to be a non-tenured worker. The side effects will be greater efficiency, lower taxes, much less bureaucracy, no need for go-betweens, better service to the citizen, enhanced ability to do business, no more to-ing and fro-ing to obtain signatures from 50 clerks of one kind or another. [...] The trade unions protect, and the Histadrut preserves [...] in fact especially those, who don’t work, who get in the way, who do damage, and who do not serve the public. [...] Histadrut chairman Ofer Eini [...] is using the weakest workers in the economy to rescue himself from the low rank he has reached in public consciousness.”

Stella Korin-Lieber, GLO, 8.2.2012

The contractors won

“It is true that the situation of quite a few subcontracted workers will now improve, even if only a little bit, but this is far from constituting a “historical correction”, as the finance minister termed it. [...] the big strike strengthened the hand of those who benefit from it, and left each and every one of us subjected to increasing chances of being left to their mercies. [...] Already now there are teachers, nurses, lawyers, journalists and others who are subcontracted to one degree or another. It is true that equalizing their conditions with those of regular employees is supposed to be an incentive to hiring subcontracted workers directly, but there is no guarantee that this will happen. [...] True, the system of strong unions is sometimes exploited for the wrong purposes. True, Israel is not the only country in the world facing these problems. But as usual, Israel is best at exploiting workers and, with growing gaps between the rich and the rest, they are becoming ever more impoverished. In neo-liberal and hyper-centralized Israel where wealth and the means of production are concentrated in so few hands, a job is still seen today as a favor that those few offer employees, instead of as part of a joint effort in which everyone does her or his best to contribute both to the company and to society, and receives appropriate remuneration for it. To change

this system it is not enough to have specific, limited agreements: What is needed instead is political will. What is needed is a vision of a new system of employment that brings benefit and respect to all who are partners to it.”

Merav Michaeli, HAA, 13.2.2012

The Greek example

“The horrid treatment of these outsourced, temporary employees has been going on for years. But it was only after the summer’s demonstrations [...] that the requisite public consciousness was raised. Indeed, unlike past strikes, there was wide public support for the Histadrut’s battle for contracted workers [...] But while the demonstrations have raised public consciousness about “social justice” and brought about positive change, it is important that the government remain vigilant against attempts to undermine fiscal discipline or endanger in any other way our economy’s ability to weather the economic slowdown that is expected in coming months. [...] Our leaders must resist populist calls to foster “social justice” by increasing government expenditures or by implementing pseudo-socialist programs such as expanding the public sector. [...] It would be an exaggeration to claim that the faults in Israel’s economy are comparable to Greece’s. However, there are similarities worth mentioning. Perhaps the most glaring distortion of Greece’s economy is its public sector. [...] The government must be careful, however, not to get swept away in a populist flood of support for spendthrift fiscal policies or imprudent, pseudo-socialist “solutions” to our economic ailments. [...] The best policy for economic health is minimizing state intervention in the economy, reducing the size of the public sector and encouraging free, fair competition. Greece provides an excellent example of what happens when these principles are abandoned.”

JPO, 14.2.2012

A source of hypocrisy

“Without the summer protests [...] there's no way contract workers would have received anything [...]. Anyone who still claims that the summer protests didn't achieve anything is wrong, big-time. [...] No longer will cleaners and security guards be pushed to the margins; instead, they will be accepted and respected. [...] It's proper to purchase services such as cleaning, security, computerization or payroll preparation from outside companies. And not only is it proper, it's more efficient - as long as the outsourcer insists on these external workers being

given fair wages and respectable working conditions.”

Nehemia Shtrasler, HAA, 14.2.2012

The Histadrut must call the rail workers to order

“Thousands of workers currently now striving to unionize their workplaces face employers genuinely convinced that exercise of this democratic right will undermine the enterprise. The workers seeking to unionize talk about shared destiny of employee and employer, on the need to consult workers before changes or layoffs, and all the employers see is the railway workers committee throwing its weight around. Now they're talking nice, and it's all about cooperation; tomorrow they'll bring the roof down on our heads. [...] Strong unions in Israel face constant denigration. The government, the public, the mass media, and the labor courts, always prefer small and weak workers' organizations. Precisely because of this problematic image, the stronger unions need to behave with greater wisdom, caution, and responsibility. The railways workers committee has failed completely on all three counts. So has the Histadrut.”

Shay Niv, GLO 15.2.2012

Medien:

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

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

Redaktion:

Helene Kortländer

Homepage: www.fes.org.il

Email: fes@fes.org.il