



## Schlaglicht Israel Nr. 04/12

### Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen

21. Februar – 7. März 2012

#### 1. Iran – Netanyahu trifft Obama in Washington

*Israel und die USA ringen weiter um die angemessene Strategie im Umgang mit dem Iran und dessen Atomprogramm. US-Präsident Barack Obama will weiter vorrangig auf Diplomatie und bereits verhängte Sanktionen setzen, die israelische Regierung diskutiert Militärschläge gegen iranische Atomanlagen. Sie fürchtet, dass für das eigene Militär die Zeit abläuft, in der es dem iranischen Atomprogramm noch nachhaltig schaden könnte. Die Reise des israelischen Ministerpräsidenten Benjamin Netanyahu und Präsident Schimon Peres nach Washington sollte ausloten, wie auf das iranische Atomprogramm zu reagieren sei, inwieweit Israel mit politischer und ggf. militärischer Unterstützung der USA rechnen kann. Neben den vertraulichen Gesprächen im Weißen Haus waren jeweils Reden von Obama, Netanyahu und Peres vor der pro-israelischen Lobbyorganisation AIPAC Teil des Programms.*

##### Now comes the real test

„In his fantasy, Obama sees Tehran abandoning its nuclear ambitions in the wake of diplomatic pressure and stiffer sanctions. He really believes this will work, despite the nuclear North Korea precedent. [...] Obama referred to the threats against Iran as a factor that is driving up oil prices – in other words, Iran may want to destroy the world, but Israel, no less importantly, is responsible for the increase in gasoline prices. [...] Obama's speech left little doubt as to the identities of the forces of good and evil in this story. No surprises there. But Obama's speech failed to explain how he was going to stop the Iranian nuclear program. He didn't detail the sanctions his administration is considering, nor did he draw a clear red line. It is still unclear, in Jerusalem as well as in Tehran. There is no doubt, however, that Obama wanted to communicate one very clear message: U.S. Jews, vote for me!

IHY, Boaz Bismuth, 5.3.2012

##### Obama sets out the case for an Israeli strike

„Once Iran's nuclear project is immune from an Israeli strike Obama will effectively hold the key to Israel's survival. Israel will be completely at his mercy. [...] Obama's behavior has served to help rather than hinder Iran's pursuit of nuclear capabilities. The fact is that Obama's actions and his words have made clear that Israel cannot trust him, not on Iran and not on anything. The only thing that has been consistent about his Israel policy has been its hostility. As a consequence, the only messages emanating from his administration we can trust are those telling us that if Obama is reelected, he will no longer feel constrained to hide his hatred for Israel. What these messages make clear is that if our leaders are too weak to stand up to Obama today, we will pay a steep price for their cowardice if he wins the elections in November.“

JPO, Caroline B. Glick, 6.3.2012

##### Yes, prime minister

„However, what became evident was that Netanyahu was not directing his threats at the regime in Tehran. [...] Though he paid the necessary lip service to the big lie that he and Obama are on the same page when it comes to preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons, he was in effect going around the American president's back to beg for approval among the rest of the conference attendees. Without that, he knows, he will have a much harder time undertaking the risky, gargantuan task of making the Free World safe from a nuclear global jihad that would make even the Holocaust pale in comparison. Ironically, tackling the West's gravest threat since Hitler seems to be less daunting to the Israeli war hero and terrorism expert than having to kowtow to the man in the White House who has the power to clip his wings in the name of "diplomacy."

IHY, Ruthie Blum, 6.3.2012

### **Iran and Israel's fate**

„Nevertheless, US and Israeli interests are not identical. [...] So if Netanyahu and our other leaders are under the impression that Israel cannot afford to wait much longer to see if diplomacy and sanctions will work, they cannot simply place the fate of Israel in the hands of the US as Jews have been forced to do for so long. Not only do they have the right as heads of a sovereign state to take action, they have a moral obligation – to the nearly eight million citizens of Israel and to the generations of Jews over the centuries who tragically lost their lives because they lacked the means to defend themselves.“  
JPO, Editorial, 6.3.2012

### **The clock is ticking**

„The “Iranian summit” changed almost nothing, except that Tehran now understands the U.S. won't allow the use of force against its nuclear project in the coming year [...]. [...] Obama undoubtedly has grown less naive in his time at the White House, but he still believes in the Iranians. It's unfortunate that instead of choosing to believe in the Iranian people, as he should have when they courageously took to the streets in protest in 2009, that he chooses to believe the regime. [...] Netanyahu and Obama's body language during their meeting revealed exactly what we had expected. As far as Jerusalem is concerned, Obama passed his test with Peres, but failed with Netanyahu. [...] the two leaders parted ways without synchronizing their watches. Up until the meeting Monday, it was clear the U.S. does not want to launch an attack. Now it appears that Israel has also not made a final decision. Is it possible that the meeting's big winner was none other than Khomeini? Washington got itself more time. Now let's just hope Iran doesn't get the bomb.  
IHY, Boaz Bismuth, 6.3.2012

### **Netanyahu returns empty-handed from Washington**

„The visit can only be defined as a failure. Netanyahu sought to lay the groundwork for a military operation against Iran; [...]. From that perspective, he returns from Washington empty-handed, and his government's policy (which does not necessarily conform to Israeli interests) is in worse shape than when he left. The tactical differences between Obama and Netanyahu are obvious, irreconcilable, and in this case, when the goals are shared but the conditions and means are in dispute, tactics lead to strategy. [...] and Obama is the one who decides. Israel's right to defend itself is a matter of consensus. But whether Israel is sovereign in its decision on when and how to use its American weapons and

entangle its most important friend - that's another question.“

HAA, Editorial, 7.3.2012

### **I don't trust Obama**

„Is there a sane Israeli out there who thinks an American president would forego a second term in office, or at least threaten his prospects gravely, in order to safeguard the Jewish state? And even if someone believes this would be the case, can one count on it? [...] However, we do not live in the past, and we can either count on a president whose personal interests (temporary quiet) contradict Israel's interests (long-term quiet) or decide our children's future via a bold, complex operation. We can either choose the second option, or wait patiently until we sustain the gravest military blow ever known by Israel. What sounds better to you?“

JED, Hanoch Daum, 7.3.2012

### **Trust America's president**

„I'm counting on Obama. He is the responsible adult I am willing to trust with the car keys. [...] The president's speech resonated in my ears as much more than a calming message. When Obama declared that the only way to avert the threat of nuclear weapons is to convince Iran to give it up on its own initiative, and when he demanded that the political, diplomatic and economic effort be exhausted, it sounded to me as if he was saying “no worries.” [...] “No worries” is the customary approach used by PM Netanyahu, who may lead us to disaster just so he can divert our attention from economic issues or in order to ensure that he wins the next elections. However, president Obama's “no worries” sounds different, because it does not stem from a caprice, but rather, from the understanding that starting a war without knowing how it would end is not such a great move. Hence, I trust him, parallel to my faith in God. Should Obama manage to restrain Netanyahu, handling the Iran issue would be a piece of cake.“

JED, Smadar Shir, 7.3.2012

### **A diplomatic achievement**

„Israel can congratulate itself for the diplomatic achievement of situating the Iranian nuclear issue at the forefront of the international agenda, conveniently marginalizing the issue of the stalled negotiations with the Palestinians. This diplomatic achievement [...] was not a given. Obama could have resisted Israeli pressure and said that the nuclearization of the ayatollah regime would be resolved in the framework of a new global agreement, a grand bargain, that would replace the withering Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty. He didn't say that. [...] “I have yet to decide,” Netanyahu has said – not because

anyone knows where his allies in America and Europe are headed, but because a perplexed world is in the midst of the biggest poker game since the 1962 Cuban missile crisis – and the winner has not yet been declared.“

IHY, Dan Margalit, 7.3.2012

### **Empty prophecies**

„For most of Israel's reporters, Israel is facing two existential threats: Iran's regime and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, not necessarily in that order. [...] After all, our best reporters and commentators promised a diplomatic tsunami and catastrophes from here to Sunday. Too bad Obama is refusing to play along. [...] Netanyahu's AIPAC speech (...) picked at a wound that has not yet entirely healed: the conduct of U.S. Jewry during the Holocaust. When Iran threatens to annihilate Israel, the comparison is valid. It is not disrespectful to the Holocaust. We are allowed to take lessons from the days when Jewish leaders begged the White House to bomb Auschwitz and were denied.“

IHY, Gonen Ginat, 7.3.2012

## **2. Annullierung des „Tal-Gesetzes“**

*Mit sechs zu drei Stimmen hat der Oberste Gerichtshof im Februar das umstrittene „Tal-Gesetz“ für nicht verfassungsgemäß erklärt, welches bisher Studenten der Talmud-Schulen, d.h. junge ultra-orthodoxe Männer, von der Pflicht zum Militärdienst befreite. Danach müssten ca. 62.000 junge ultra-Orthodoxe ab kommenden Sommer zum Militär eingezogen werden. Nur rund 15 Prozent der Haredim leisten derzeit Militärdienst, obwohl der Anteil der ultra-Orthodoxen an der Bevölkerung wächst: 2025 sollen es Berechnungen nach rund 12 Prozent sein. Ihre Befreiung vom Militärdienst ist schon seit Jahren Gegenstand von Protest und Klagen. Der Vorwurf: Sie verletze das Prinzip der Gleichheit. Das „Tal-Gesetz“, sollte ursprünglich Anreize für die Haredim schaffen, nach dem Thora-Studium oder der Familiengründung trotzdem Militärdienst oder „Civil Service“ zu leisten. Der Oberste Gerichtshof untersagte jetzt eine geplante weitere Verlängerung des Gesetzes um fünf Jahre, da es die beabsichtigte Wirkung nicht erreicht habe und fordert gleichzeitig ein neues Gesetz, das das Gleichheitsprinzip berücksichtigt.*

### **The Jewish people's insurance policy**

„I find it hard to envision thousands of police officers carrying handcuffs around Jerusalem and Bnei Brak in the hope of catching draft dodgers. Allow me to also cast doubt on the notion that military, treasury and National Insurance officials are even interested

in an influx of thousands of Haredim into the IDF. Israel's Haredi community has undergone a real transformation in recent years. The Haredi leadership has come to grips with the fact that tens of thousands of families cannot be sustained through charity funds, which are gradually being depleted due to global economic hardship. The hidden hand of the economy is stronger than the Tal Law or any other law that might replace it. What is needed is patience and perseverance. If the government employs force, it will only serve to halt the processes that are already underway in Haredi society, the forces leading toward greater workforce participation and service in the IDF or national service.“

IHY, Haim Shine, 22.2.2012

### **A Tal tale**

„The haredi evasion of serving in the IDF and protecting our homeland is neither moral nor Jewish. Evasion from protecting the Jewish country, in the name of Judaism, is the embodiment of the concept “hilul hashem” (blasphemy). [...] The Tal Law was designed to create a gradual process for haredi Jews to enlist in the IDF. But the Tal Law failed miserably. Evasion remains widespread. Therefore, this law is negative, harmful, and no longer belongs on the Israeli law books. It is appropriate that it be removed; the High Court justices are right in their opposition to it. [...] The court is allowed to revoke a law that significantly affects human and civil rights, such as a just decision against the privatization of prisons. The court may revoke a law in which the majority uses its power to oppress the minority and trample its rights. But the court is not allowed to revoke a law just because the judges oppose it. The role of the High Court of Justice is not to nullify laws enacted by the Knesset, unless there are extenuating circumstances. My opinion is that the law has to change and clearly define the conditions under which a court can annul laws legislated by the Knesset. For example, only with a panel of 11 judges and with at least a two-thirds majority vote.“

IHY, Uri Heitner, 23.2.2012

### **Change without coercion**

„However, though we empathize with the desire to force haredim to accept a more equitable share of national responsibility, it would be unwise and counterproductive to use coercion. In nearly every realm of their lives, haredim are undergoing rapid changes, despite the opposition of official haredi leadership. From colleges that cater exclusively to the haredi population that are producing haredi lawyers, accountants, social workers, computer programmers and psychologists, to widespread Internet use. An entire genre of fiction, including science

fiction, written by haredim for haredim has developed and popular haredi parental guidance literature, influenced by Western psychology, now advises parents to replace strict hierarchical relationships between parents and children with a more democratic, liberal-minded approach as a means of stemming defections among haredi youths. The best way of retarding this process of integration – which includes a growing number of haredi men who are enlisting in the IDF – would be to launch an offensive against the haredi community. Integration is an evolutionary process that can be nurtured, even encouraged, but that cannot be forced.“  
JPO, Editorial, 23.2.2012

### **Evolution, not revolution**

„The fact that a majority (just) of Israelis have to serve while others are exempt rankles with many, rightly, but you have to ask: Would solving that issue, if it was at all possible, also solve Israel's biggest long-term problem? That problem is the lack of integration of two growing segments of the population: the ultra-Orthodox and Israeli-Arabs into the workplace and society at large. [...] a clear set of priorities has to be maintained in which education, employment and inclusion must all come before military service. None of these changes can be effected through coercion, but since most of the rabbis and many Haredi and Arab politicians have been doing their communities a disservice for decades by intentionally excluding them for narrow and selfish gains, cooperation with the current leaderships, while desirable, may not be possible. However, that is not an insurmountable obstacle. No one today can prevent a government from going over the community leaders' heads and proposing a new deal to young Arab and Haredi men and women. (...) Only a freshly elected government with a renewed mandate will have the opportunity to gradually make the necessary changes.“

HAA, Anshel Pfeffer, 24.2.2012

### **The art of evasion**

„The key word in this historic ruling is proportionality. [...] Studying the Torah is indeed a central value in Judaism and we must ensure that at all times and at any hour we have scholars who are studying the Torah in the batei midrash. [...] The Haredi position that anyone who wants to study the Torah, without restrictions, should be released from the army and the working world smacks of hypocrisy and deception. The Haredim hope the entire nation becomes repentant and ultra-Orthodox, and what will happen then? Shall we return to the days of cash handouts from Jews abroad and ask the Americans to defend us? The Jewish people needs excellent scholars,

but they have always been special and few and far between, not 72,000 people. [...] Some people say the Haredim will not enlist in any case. Maybe that's true. [...] anyone who does not serve will bear the mark of Cain on his forehead. And the state will treat him accordingly, with all that implies.“

HAA, Yehuda Ben Meir, 26.2.2012

### **Make the ultra-Orthodox serve**

„The ruling is justified not only because it helps reduce discrimination but also because of changes that have taken place in Haredi society since the draft exemption went into effect. [...] Those who wish to be part of Israeli society are required to accept their share of the duties imposed on its sons. [...] At the same time, it must be acknowledged that a really enormous gap exists between the norms of army life and the Haredi way of life. Therefore it is not only for practical reasons that it would be wrong to induct all Haredim into the IDF by force. [...] It is best to admit now that total equality will not exist in the foreseeable future. But still, the process of integrating Haredim and Arabs into national service, and treating them as equal to those who serve in the army, at least during the time of their contribution to the state and society (as well as granting material incentives and expressions of national appreciation to those who serve in the army), are sufficiently important goals that we should work toward.“

HAA, Yair Sheleg, 26.2.2012

### **Haredi assimilation? Not yet**

„In the current reality, an obligatory draft, while seemingly equitable, is in fact punitive, as it attempts to force a so-called shared collective life on a community that sees itself, and is seen by the rest of society, as distinct. A time may come – if and when Israel ceases to commit collective suicide by continuing to fund an uneducated and unemployable haredi community – that haredi Jews fully integrated into a modern workforce may develop a more moderate brand of ultra-Orthodoxy that incorporates some modernity within its Torah, and which can assimilate into the larger modern democratic State of Israel. If and when such a transformation occurs, the majority of Israelis can cease to see them as a demographic threat and we can begin to work together on building a shared value agenda for our common national homeland. Then and only then will it make sense to speak of a shared participation in carrying together the burden of securing our common future.“

JED, Donniel Hartman, 28.2.2012

### **Muslims and Christians must also serve in IDF**

„As a matter of fact, it was not right that the attention has all been focused on the ultra-Orthodox commu-

nity's absence from the IDF, while the Muslim and Christian community has been effectively disregarded. Equality is indivisible, not even along religious lines. [...] The invalidation of the Tal Law provides an opportunity to tackle this abnormal situation. The obligations of citizenship must be shared equally by all of Israel's citizens. [...] It is obvious that the process of normalization can only be carried out gradually, year by year. [...] It has been suggested that "national service," or "civilian service," can be a substitute for military service for those not serving in the IDF. This is an illusion which only emphasizes that certain sectors of the population are being allowed to avoid the military service [...]. [...] Defense of the country is the ultimate obligation of citizenship by all its countrymen, without exception." HAA, Moshe Arens, 28.2.2012

### 3. Kompromiss bei der Räumung Außenpostens Migron

*Mit etwa 300 Personen in 60 mobilen Behausungen, Caravans, ist „Migron“ der größte nicht autorisierte Siedlungsaußenposten in der Westbank, 7,7 Kilometer östlich der Grünen Linie gelegen. Der Außenposten liegt auf palästinensischen Privatbesitz, und die Besitzer hatten mit Unterstützung der NGO Peace Now gegen Migron geklagt: Der Oberste Gerichtshof unter dem Vorsitz von Dorit Beinisch entschied im August 2011, dass Migron bis zum April 2012 zu räumen sei. Um der Forderung des Gerichts nachzukommen, bot die israelische Regierung den Bewohnern von Migron an, für sie nur wenige km entfernt von der jetzigen Siedlung neue, permanente Häuser zu bauen. Minister Benny Begin sollte mit den Siedlern von Migron die Konditionen für einen Kompromiss aushandeln, der durch das Oberste Gericht aber noch abzusegnen ist. Dieser beinhaltet jetzt, dass die Familien erst dann umziehen müssen, wenn die für sie geplanten Häuser errichtet sind. Solange die Eigentumsansprüche nicht vollends geklärt sind, soll die vorhandene Infrastruktur in Migron nicht komplett zerstört werden.*

#### A dubious kosher stamp

„The project (*the relocation of Migron by the government*) aimed at granting a kosher stamp to Israel's illegal outposts, as well as the clarification that this act is being undertaken by the State, [...]. If the practice of legitimizing such acts of wrongdoing has become a modern-day form of art in Israel, there is no reason not to use it in order to promote additional objectives that would surely improve our quality of life around here. [...] this whole notion of upholding the law and preventing crimes is a Sisyphean matter that is wholly incommensurate with the

freethinking Israeli spirit. [...] And so, we can now replace the outdated policy of upholding the law with a new school of thought, which espouses the retrospective legitimization of wrongful acts. For example: alongside the team tasked with granting a kosher stamp to the illegal outposts, we shall also establish a committee that will be tasked with legitimizing the illegal embezzlement of public funds. [...] Later on, the Knesset will be voting on a bill that would see the legitimization of sexual harassment and the law for vindicating Israelis who commit illegal acts of murder.“

JED, Asaf Gefen, 22.2.2012

#### Migron's slippery slope

„The settlers in Judea and Samaria need a reality check. Several years ago the source of all evil was the left-wing parties, whom they labeled "pinkos." Later they focused their venom on the state prosecutor and the Supreme Court. The High Court of Justice, which protects Israel's reputation all over the world as a country where the rule of law prevails, became their nemesis. They went so far as to suggest that its judges were a branch of the (left-wing) Meretz party. [...] Migron will lose some of its charm if it leaves the IDF no choice but to forcibly evacuate its residents, if they force tearful soldiers to remove children from their illegally built homes in the middle of the night. It will lose even more of its charm if honest citizens come to believe that Migron's leaders wish to disrupt law and order in Israel by taking the law into their own hands. It's not too late. Begin's compromise agreement still awaits them. In their desire for a small gain, they are liable to lose everything.“

IHY, Dan Margalit, 28.2.2012

#### It's not the state that surrendered

„After the prosecution concluded that "the plaintiffs have no right to the land," one would have expected that the High Court of Justice to have the courage, or the honesty, to cancel its deceptive, biased ruling. But since it did not, Begin decided to try to extricate it from the legal and public imbroglio in which it found itself. It was for the court's sake more than for Migron's that Begin has worked so assiduously over the past few months. Those who joined forces with him, even if under protest and out of frustration, were the responsible (but slandered) residents of Migron, who agreed to the "compromise proposal" - that is, to the relocation of their settlement. They deserve a citation, not a condemnation.“

HAA, Israel Harel, 1.3.2012

### The Yugoslavization of Israel

„Migron's residents are going to move their homes to a nearby hill. But will the "new Migron" stand there after the relocation? Will the communities east of the security barrier stand in the future? [...] The Islamic world, the European Union, the Vatican and now even the White House want to establish another Arab state on the ruins of the homes of 500.000 Jews. [...] Today Judea and Samaria are inhabited by Arabs, many of them refugees from within 1949 Israel, and the Jews in them, claim the irredentists, will bring no more peace to the Middle East than the Serbian settlers in Croatia and Bosnia did to the former Yugoslavia. If Israel would adopt this argument, many areas inside and outside the "Green Line" should be immediately cleansed of the Jews. [...] "Unauthorized settlement outposts" have existed in Israel for many years, ever since Jewish settlement resumed in the early twentieth century. Carmiel, Rosh Pina and the hilltop communities in the north were established to Judaize the Galilee. The false demographic argument is leading to the Yugoslavization of the land of Israel. And to the Jews who sail again the ships for Marseille and New York.“

AS, Giulio Meotti, 4.3.2012

### The Migron muddle

„Claims by Arabs and NGOs like Peace Now that Jews are "stealing private Palestinian land"(...) need to be examined carefully by proper courts. Unfortunately, Chief Justice Dorit Beinisch, relying on misinformation provided by the State Prosecutor's office and Civil Administration, decided that Migron should be destroyed. Her decision, however, could not have been the result of ignorance, since she was fully aware that the lower court which adjudicates such claims had never examined the case, or the disputed documents. Nor is this an isolated case of police and judicial bias. [...] Bias in the State Prosecutor's office is not new. (...) According to insiders, the office is filled with anti-settlement advocates. [...] Last week, according to a report (...) in Haaretz, the zoning committee, headed by Shlomo Moskowitz, "in an unprecedented move... rejected a government proposal to legalize the West Bank outpost of Sanzana," [...] That a left-wing civil servant can arbitrarily override government and Knesset decisions indicates the extent to which basic institutions have been compromised. The struggle over Migron is a symptom of the government's inability to make policy decisions. Moving Migron from one hilltop to another, destroying Jewish communities and homes and evacuating Jews won't solve fundamental question of whether Jews have the right to live in Judea and Samaria, and to whom this area rightfully be-

longs. Migron touches the spinal nerve of the sovereignty of the Jewish People in Eretz Yisrael.“

JPO, Moshe Dann, 7.3.2012

## 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 Salim Joubran, arabisch-israelischer Richter am Supreme Court, der bei der Einführung des neuen Vorsitzenden des Gerichts die **israelische Hymne** „Hatikva“ nicht mitsang.*

### Arab justice's 'Hatikva' silence was a song of protest

„It could be that Joubran's mistake was joining the court in the first place, since his appointment was solely to show everyone how great we are, we have an Arab justice on the Supreme Court – the same court that automatically approves most of the orders issued by the defense and occupation establishments; the court that now has a member violating international law by living in occupied territory, the top court in a judicial system that routinely discriminates against the Arab citizens who come before it. [...] When he remained silent, there are many Israelis who should have been singing in their hearts; here, finally, we have a courageous judge. He couldn't sing "Hatikva," the anthem of the state that is disloyal to his people. It's not his song; it can't be the song of any Arab citizen. Joubran's silence on Tuesday was, in fact, a song of protest.“

HAA, Gideon Levy, 1.3.2012

### Israel should consider altering its anthem to include non-Jews

„An Arab citizen cannot sing [...] words that ignore the existence of an Arab minority in the State of Israel – a minority for whom this land is also their land. In choosing not to join the choir singing "Hatikva," the justice made an important contribution to our public discourse. He adroitly reminded Israeli society of the complex situation faced by Arab citizens in the Jewish state. The right to remain silent (his own and that of every Arab citizen) is the flip side of the right to freedom of expression, and both must be held sacred. Israel's Arab citizens, who face discrimination in almost every area, are entitled to

exercise this right even when it comes to the national anthem: With its current lyrics, "Hatikva" is not their song. The time has come for Israel to consider changing the words of its anthem, so that all Israelis can identify with them. But until that happens, we need to allow anyone who chooses not to sing the anthem to do so, without becoming the target of an ugly witch hunt by the nationalist right."

HAA, Editorial, 2.3.2012

### **Israeli-Arab Judge Won't Sing Anthem? MSM Silent**

„After all, the song is about the Jews yearning for their national homeland, that one little piece of land in a sea of Arab countries. The song doesn't negate the presence of other nationalities, it just expresses the belief that Jews will one day be free in their land of Jerusalem and Zion. And all the world media were quiet – quiet when a sitting Supreme Court Justice wouldn't sing his country's anthem. [...] Although in the Middle East, where there's no other democracy, the Jewish state, constantly maligned for supposedly oppressing the Arabs, allows them to serve on the Supreme Court. There are so many perversions in this story being ignored by the media. [...] In a region where religions other than Islam aren't permitted, an Arab minority member sitting on the Jewish state's Supreme Court – and that's not a story? Want to talk about media bias? Yet another reason that Israel needs a proper Public Relations campaign.“

AS, Ronn Torossian, 2.3.2012

### **Über den Antrag der Stadtverwaltung von Tel Aviv, öffentlichen Busverkehr an Shabbat zu erlauben:**

#### **Shabbat buses: Social, ethical, useful**

„When it comes to public transportation on Shabbat, the time has come to do away with the hypocrisy, the little lie, from "the status quo." [...] Because Israel has a diverse population, much of which does not observe Shabbat according to religious law, and therefore requires public transportation. A large part of the population freely drives private vehicles. So it is not as if people across the country don't drive on Shabbat. Furthermore, public transportation reduces air pollution, making it environmentally friendly. And let's not forget it also benefits poorer populations. Public transportation does not impose itself on anyone. How anyone can oppose such a proposal is beyond me.“

IHY, Mati Shemoelof, 22.2.2012

#### **Say no to Shabbat buses**

„So Huldai (*the Mayor of Tel Aviv*) unilaterally declared that buses will travel on Shabbat – not exactly

the great hope of most Tel Avivians, who are mostly preoccupied with paying huge rents, but whatever. It sounds good. Secular. Liberal. Tel Avivian. Progressive. Yet it's not. [...] After all, when the religious threaten to touch the status quo on religion – for example, when they demand to remove women from certain places in the IDF – we scream: "Get your claws off the holy status quo! The status of women (and we can't believe we have to say this in 2012) is not up for negotiation." Yet when we start to mess with the status quo ourselves, isn't it their right to say in response something like "Get your claws off! The status of the Shabbat (and we can't believe we have to say this in the year 5772) is not up for negotiations"? In their view, they're right. In our view, we're right. This is the reason why the status quo – cursed, forced, artificial – is required here. Both sides don't like it, and this is apparently the clear sign that it's the right thing. And if they are not allowed to touch it unilaterally, neither are we.“

JED, Raanan Shaked, 23.2.2012

#### **A city without God**

„After all, the basic assumption of our return to Zion was that we are not aiming to establish a state like all other states. The basic assumption of Tel Aviv said something similar. "Anyone who publicly desecrates the Shabbat is tearing apart the nation's soul and will be considered a traitor to his people," said first Mayor Meir Dizengoff. And he was not ultra-religious. [...] Even those who are completely secular in their own homes are supposed to understand that public behavior on Shabbat in the State of Israel cannot be the same as the public behavior overseas. A Jewish (and democratic, of course) state cannot go hand in hand with the mass movement of buses on Shabbat and Jewish holidays. Should Tel Aviv become like Geneva and Givataim turn into Paris, what was the point of all the effort?“

JED, Hagai Segal, 25.2.2012

HAA = Haaretz

JED = Jedioth Ahronoth

JPO = Jerusalem Post

GLO = Globes

IHY = Israel HaYom

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