



Schlaglicht Israel Nr. 07/12

Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen

16. April – 30. April 2012

1. Israels Vorgehen gegen pro-palästinensische Protestler

Mitglieder pro-palästinensischer Gruppen, die in der Westbank gegen die Besatzung durch Israel protestieren wollten, hat die israelische Regierung bereits im Voraus die Einreise verweigert. Viele Fluggesellschaften stornierten auf diese Ankündigung hin die Flugtickets der TeilnehmerInnen der sogenannten „Flightilla“, einer breit organisierten Protest-Aktion. Die Protestierenden, die es dennoch bis Israel schafften, wurden am Flughafen abgefangen. Das strikte Vorgehen der israelischen Behörden gegen die friedliche Protestaktion brachte der Regierung Kritik ein. Bei einer pro-palästinensischen Demonstration nahe Jericho ereignete sich ein ebenfalls heftig diskutierter Zwischenfall: Shaul Eisner, Oberstleutnant der israelischen Armee (IDF), schlug einem dänischen Aktivisten bewusst mit dem Gewehrkolben ins Gesicht. Die Attacke wurde gefilmt, das Video veröffentlicht. Eisner wurde daraufhin vom Dienst suspendiert.

Losing the media game

„After all, this is mostly a media game, and the real question is who would be directing the scene that ultimately makes it to the evening news shows and YouTube? The handful of militant activists who would stir a provocation at Ben-Gurion Airport, or Israel, which would aim to prevent them from even making it to the airport? (...) Allow the arrival of activists, accompany them within Ben-Gurion Airport, ensure that they enter Israel by law, and then bring them to Bethlehem. Indeed, that would have been a headache. Yet we should keep in mind that most activists are generally good people. We should also keep in mind that even among the Israeli public there's consensus that the occupation should have ended by now – the same occupation the activists wanted to protest against. Prime Minister Netanyahu

himself said that he endorses “two states for two peoples.”

JED, Yakir Elkariv, 15.4.2012

Flight of fancy

„The coordinated arrival at Ben-Gurion Airport of hundreds of pro-Palestinian activists (...) was designed to create a provocation. (...) But there also appears to be increasing understanding in the international community that many self-proclaimed pro-Palestinian activists are not so much motivated by the desire to improve the lot of the Palestinian people as they are to do everything in their power to delegitimize the State of Israel. (...) it would have been downright irresponsible not to take extensive precautionary measures to prevent the likes of (...) hundreds (...) “activists” from staging an unauthorized demonstration in Ben Gurion Airport that could have easily deteriorated into violent clashes.“

JPO, Editorial, 15.4.2012

Fight or Flightilla

„It is time to wake up. Israel is in the midst of a new kind of war, in which delegitimization has replaced bullets, and provocations have replaced tanks and jets. (...) One day a government appointed investigative committee will conclude that Israel's isolation in the international arena is the work of Israeli leftists. And what now? What should Israel do with these lawbreakers? Here, too, the answer is obvious: prevent, arrest, forbid, deport. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was wise to prepare for the flightilla to the extent that he did. We must prevent these people from setting foot in Israel, we must arrest them if they do arrive, detain every criminal anarchist who tries to act against Israel and permanently expel them. Enough naivete. Enough excuses. Israel must protect itself from every threat, in every arena, by any means. Israel does not have to justify its existence. The "Israeli case," as one of those naive souls tried to present it, is well documented in the annals

of history, starting with the Exodus from Egypt, through the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai and the liberation of the land of Israel, all the way to the Holocaust and Israel's rebirth. The Jewish people do not need to justify themselves to anyone – certainly not to outlaws.“

IHY, Danny Danon, 16.4.2012

Violent IDF officer provides snapshot of Israeli society

„Above all, the Eisner case provides a telling snapshot of Israeli society. (...) The basic human instinct of any person, on the right or the left, should have led him to respond in shock at seeing the scenes of an officer brutally striking a demonstrator armed with only a bicycle. The basic instinct of someone who supports democracy should also be the same. What is right or left in this case? Why is the right not shocked by the behavior of a thug? Why has Eisner become its hero? If blows against Arabs mean nothing because they are not perceived as human, and striking a blow to the face of a fair-haired young Dane stirs none of the required human response, then something very sick is going on. True, the political brainwashing machine has imposed on us in recent years (also through the media) the assumption that a peace activist is a terrorist, that every volunteer in the territories is an anarchist, and that everyone who is critical is anti-Semitic. Nonetheless, I suspect that the people want violence – and the more the better against everyone who does not fall into line. The end of this affair is clear and depressing: Col. Eisner will be compensated for the "wrong" he has suffered, either in the IDF or elsewhere; the hostility (and violence) of officers and soldiers in the IDF – which is directed against demonstrators and, especially, cameramen – will be increased even more; and the public will stick to its belief that the IDF is the most ethical army in the world.“

HAA, Gideon Levy, 22.4.2012

Israel's right to say 'no'

„What's the big deal? Aren't we allowed to close our doors to people who compare us to the Nazi regime? Must we receive our greatest haters politely and lovingly? (...) We have the right to wave a No Entry sign in the face of those who hold a deep desire to see the life of a Gaza child but have no interest in hearing or reading about the children of Sderot. We are not really asking you to love us or even to justify us; we only want you to look at both sides of the coin. Is that too much? Does it make no sense? It's a pity that several airlines cancelled the flights of activists for financial reasons, so that they don't have to fly them back at their own expense. It would have been better to bring these activists to

the Middle East after all, a little north of Israel, to Syria. They can fight for love and peace there.“

JED, Smadar Shir, 16.4.2012

Israel's leaders incite the public against peace activists

„A political and military leadership that incites the public against peace and human rights activists bears responsibility for the conduct of hot-tempered officers like Eisner. When the prime minister and foreign minister label left-wingers "anarchists," "provocateurs" and even "terror supporters," they are sanctioning attacks on civilians implementing the right to protest. Instead of using, even by implication, the Damascus regime's conduct toward its opposition as a yardstick for the expected behavior of the Israel Defense Forces, the prime minister should memorize the verdict Jerusalem Magistrate Judge Haim Li-Ran handed down in a recent hearing over the request to arrest Sheikh Jarrah Solidarity activists in Jerusalem. "The right to demonstrate or express an opinion is deeply rooted in the foundations of democratic government. ... Thousands of human beings have paid and are paying with their lives on its altar," the judge said. His words are doubly true when it comes to the right to demonstrate against the wrongs of occupation and to get home in one piece.“

HAA, Editorial, 17.4.2012

The ugly face of Israel

„There is no doubt that the images from the Jericho area will cause Israel PR damage, and rightfully so. Yet the fact this is the main issue that concerns Israel's decent citizens is odd, not to mention twisted – not the fact that an IDF lieutenant colonel behaves like a Syrian thug in Homs, but rather, the fear that the world will see it on television and think bad things about us. (...) How did we reach a state where a protestor on a bicycle, even if he's naïve, eccentric and annoying, is received by the Israel Defense Force with a bone-shattering gesture, and only a few of us view it as a crime? This may be a natural development in a country that is so scared that it undertakes a mass deportation of foreign protestors instead of allowing them to demonstrate as much as they wish in the West Bank. After all, said the man at the top, we are the only democracy in the Middle East. Aren't we? The blow delivered by Lieutenant Colonel Eisner is particularly painful because it was delivered by a senior officer, rather than a young, inexperienced soldier who lost his head. It's even more difficult and painful because of the target of the blow, and it wasn't only the Danish protestor's face. It was the face of all of us. Look in the mirror

for a second and see what our face looks like this morning.“

JED, Ziv Lenchner, 17.4.2012

2. Erinnerung an den Holocaust

Der jährliche Holocaust-Gedenktag ist für die israelischen Medien Anlass über diverse Aspekte des heutigen Umgangs mit der Shoa in Israel und weltweit zu reflektieren, u.a.: Inwieweit prägt der Holocaust noch heute das Staats- und Gesellschaftsverständnis Israels als der Staat, in dem Juden selbstbestimmt und ohne Angst vor Verfolgung leben können? Wie geht die israelische Gesellschaft mit den Überlebenden des Holocaust um? Wie wird die Geschichte der Shoa, in arabischen Ländern und Gesellschaften rezipiert?

Holocaust Images

„Campaigns that focus on the poverty of survivors also create an image of them as charity cases, when, in reality, many of those who lived through the hell of the Shoah somehow found the strength to put all that behind them and embark on the daunting challenges that faced the fledgling Jewish state – fighting our many enemies, absorbing immigration and creating a society made up primarily of refugees and immigrants. (...) Holocaust survivors have left their mark in every field from building and construction to the IDF, industry, law and culture. They became prominent painters, graphic artists, poets, writers, dancers, actors, academics and cultural icons.

Indeed, it is impossible to imagine the State of Israel today without their many contributions. It is essential that we do everything in our power to ensure that needy survivors' live their last years on earth without want and in dignity. But we must not allow the image of the survivor as a charity case to dominate public discourse. As the number of the survivors dwindles, there is another story to tell, a heroic one of overcoming the horrors of their past and the adversity of their current situation, providing an inspiration to us all.“

JPO, Editorial, 17.4.2012

Netanyahu must stop hiding behind Holocaust warnings

„As time passes, and despite the dwindling number of survivors, the Holocaust appears to be occupying a more and more prominent place in the life of the State of Israel. (...) The Grass affair is just one small example of the use of the Holocaust in connection with the Iranian nuclear issue. Behind the weighty arguments for preventing Iran from obtaining nuclear

weapons lies the fear of a second Holocaust. Netanyahu is constantly feeding this fear. (...) It appears that the use of Holocaust rhetoric in connection with external threats also reflects a sense of internal threat. Fundamental problems are gnawing at the self-assurance of the State of Israel: the absence of agreed-upon borders, the conflict with the Palestinians, social tensions and the inability to come to agreement on a constitution. When such basic issues that remain unresolved for years meet up with external threats, the shadow of the Holocaust comes to the fore as a traumatic reminder of what the future could hold. Netanyahu must understand that the use of the Holocaust as a warning sign is not a substitute for concrete efforts to resolve the problems. The end of the conflict with the Palestinians, finalizing borders and buttressing civil rights are the true guarantee of Israel's continued existence as a Jewish and democratic state.“

HAA, Editorial, 18.4.2012

Holocaust denial at home

„A surprising new trend has come to Israel's shores. In recent years, the voices of those who wish to sever the lessons of the Holocaust – or at least diminish the link between the two – have grown louder. These people find the topic of the Holocaust distasteful. (...) Of course the Holocaust happened, they say, just don't learn any important lessons from it. Don't travel to Auschwitz or wave a blue-and-white flag there. Don't fly over the gas chambers and crematoria wearing an IDF uniform, letting out quiet tears when you get home. Besides, say these modern-day preachers, history's worst killing field is more of a universal human than a purely Jewish tragedy. They're not Holocaust deniers exactly, just aiders and abettors to the fading of the Holocaust from public consciousness. These belittlers of the Holocaust would have us distance ourselves from the event and suppress its memory for our own good. So that we don't become too neurotic. So that we overcome our psychological trauma. So that we don't become too nationalistic, something they believe could undermine peace negotiations with the Palestinians. In their view, playing down the Holocaust will bring comfort to our tortured souls. (...) Surprisingly, many Israelis deny that the Holocaust informs our daily existence here. They are wrong. In fact, everything we do applies the lessons of the Holocaust. (...) That defending our country is a humanist value, not worship of militarism, as the Holocaust belittlers would have us believe. (...) At the same time, we have learned from the Holocaust that any use of force must be measured. It must be the least of our bad options, when there is no other choice. Those who wish to remove the Holocaust

from public discourse, to relegate it to private conversations in bedrooms and kitchens, who claim it no longer speaks to the reality of 2012, are ignoring the permanent condition of the Jews. (...) The only thing that has changed about the Jewish condition is that here, in Israel, our fate depends on us alone, and we can internalize the lessons of what happened in Europe. “

IHY, Dan Margalit, 18.4.2012

Caring for survivors

„ Future generations will only be able to learn about the Holocaust from watching movies, reading books or hearing stories second- or third-hand. They will not benefit from unmediated contact with those who physically endured the horror. So why does it sometimes seem that we prefer the stone monuments and commemorative films to the real monuments – the living and breathing people who are still with us? The continuing neglect of Holocaust survivors is no longer a secret, but a well-researched and documented fact. (...) There is something particularly tragic in the fact that many survivors can only pour their hearts out to the foreign caretakers accompanying them for a stroll. The government bears responsibility for providing these survivors with basic services. However, the moral obligation to care for Holocaust survivors rests on the shoulders of all Israelis. There is no time to waste in confronting this challenge. (...) Spending time with Holocaust survivors in their final years is a historic responsibility we all share – as a society and a nation. In the coming years, let us not live the Holocaust as a virtual tragedy that is distant and abstract. Instead, let us accept this final obligation toward those who survived the horror. The experience of meeting Holocaust survivors can be difficult and unsettling; it is also a great honor – and one that will soon disappear. We must not forgo that, and we must not continue to neglect the survivors. “

IHY, Ronny Douek, 19.4.2012

Arabs and the Holocaust

„The tragic yet undeniable fact is that millions of Jews live with the threat of extermination everyday. That is not hyperbole. How can one think otherwise when Mohammad Hassan Rahimian, a representative of Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, threatens to “replace Israel in its entirety with a big holocaust”? Or when deputy speaker of the Hamas parliament, Ahmad Bahr, calls to “kill the Jews ... down to the very last one.” Or when months ago the Palestinian Authority Mufti of Jerusalem, Sheik Mohammed Hussein, approvingly quoted a hadith saying, “Judgment Day will not come before you fight the Jews, and the Jews will hide behind a

stone or a tree, and the stone or the tree will say: Oh Muslim, oh servant of Allah, there is a Jew behind me, come and kill him. However, there are glimmers of hope. Jordanian Prince Hassan Bin Talal, uncle to the current king, inaugurated the Arabic website of Yad Vashem in 2008 and gave a moving speech about the history of the Holocaust in Arabic. (...) Arab leaders should be challenged to emulate Prince Hassan and make their own video in Arabic about the importance of remembering the Holocaust. This quixotic idea may seem tangential and particular, but it is actually central and universal. It will benefit Arabs no less than Jews.“

IHY, David Keyes, 20.4.2012

Shoah in the Arab world

„The Arab world has been addressing the Holocaust issue with reservations. The Arabs who recognize the Shoah as well as those who deny it argue that Israel utilizes the Holocaust in order to promote its policies and deny what they refer to as the "Palestinian holocaust." For example, Sheikh Ra'ad Salah claimed many times that he recognizes the Shoah of European Jews, but also what he referred to as the "holocaust of the six million Palestinian refugees." (...) As a rule, the Shoah does not appear in Arabic language textbooks in general or in Palestinian textbooks in particular, as this is considered part of "Zionist propaganda." On the other hand, the Arab world sells the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, Hitler's Mein Kampf, and other anti-Semitic works translated into Arabic without any censorship. (...) In recent years, the Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum started to invest in teaching the Shoah in Arabic. This is a highly important initiative that constitutes part of the PR struggle against the Iranian regime, which denies the Holocaust and openly threatens Israel's existence. However, this initiative does not have the power to curb anti-Jewish propaganda and Shoah denial in the Arab world. These phenomena may prepare the ground for an all-out hatred for the Jews that is similar in scope to anti-Semitism in Europe.“

JED, Yaron Friedman, 20.4.2012

3. Ägypten kündigt Abkommen über Gaslieferung an Israel

Ägypten hat das Abkommen über die Lieferung von Gas an Israel aufgekündigt. 2005 wurden diese Lieferungen vertraglich mit einer Laufzeit von 20 Jahren vereinbart, 2008 wurden sie faktisch aufgenommen. Das Abkommen galt und gilt als Gradmesser für die Beziehungen zwischen den beiden Ländern. Vor dem Sturz des ägyptischen Präsidenten Hosni Mubaraks im Februar 2011 bezog Israel 40 Prozent

seines Verbrauchs an Erdgas aus Ägypten, vorwiegend für Stromerzeugung. Israel fürchtet nun, dass nach der Aufkündigung des Abkommens durch die derzeitige Regierung in Kairo auch weitere Verträge gefährdet sind, insbesondere das Camp-David-Friedensabkommen. Von ägyptischer Seite wurde hingegen verlautbart, das Gasabkommen sei lediglich aufgrund säumiger Zahlungen ausgesetzt worden. Israel hingegen monierte die Unzuverlässigkeit der Lieferungen im vergangenen Jahr.

We can only rely on ourselves

„Once again we are reminded, this time in the economic sphere, that we have only ourselves to rely on. The stoppage of Egyptian gas to Israel marks a sad day. It erodes what remains of the cold, frigid and unrealized peace treaty with Egypt. (...) The weakening of our peace treaty with Egypt is already costing us a treasure on security spending. This is money the government could readily use elsewhere, instead of being "wasted" on the rampant lawlessness south of our border. We could have spent this money on more important things, like closing socio-economic gaps within Israel. But this is the price we have to pay for our unfortunate location in a tough neighborhood with derelict houses and unstable residents. Unlike our reaction to the many explosions of the gas pipeline, this time we have to send a clear message to the heads of the Egyptian regime. If we do not do something about this, the rot will continue.“

IHY, Hezi Sternlicht, 23.4.2012

Israel must keep gas dispute with Egypt apolitical

„We cannot assume that the gas deal was canceled without the advice and consent of the ruling Supreme Military Council, or think the council might not have realized the significance of this step and the extent to which it symbolizes the state of Egyptian-Israeli ties. But Egyptian and Israeli efforts to contain the crisis by describing it as a commercial decision devoid of political context indicates that both sides fear for the welfare of bilateral ties, and are trying to prevent opponents of the peace accord, as well as terror groups that have sabotaged the gas pipeline, from gaining the power to determine the two countries' foreign policies. Both nations should continue to downplay the issue while refraining from populist criticism and pointing fingers before the commercial context of the decision has been fully clarified. At a time when Egypt is struggling to shape its political and diplomatic future, it would be best not to give the natural gas deal the power to torch the peace agreement with Israel.“

HAA, Editorial, 24.4.2012

Missing Mubarak

„There is no doubt that the change in Egypt, and consequent shift in its attitude toward Israel, has facilitated the decision to terminate the deal – a decision that could have extensive ramifications. Such a decision would not have been possible during the Mubarak era. The gas deal with Israel has become one of the main issues with which to bash the old regime: Cairo is carrying out a broad investigation into the deal; Mubarak's two sons as well as his high-ranking officials are being investigated in a huge corruption probe surrounding the deal; the people, many of whom are hungry and poor, read in the papers every day how Israel is responsible for the loss of millions of dollars in revenue, which have been 'stolen' from the Egyptians. There you have it: a simple formula to unify the people and increase their animosity toward the former regime while fostering hostility toward Israel. And almost simultaneously, the Egyptian parliament is urging the country's mufti to resign after having visited Al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem – as though by visiting it, he legitimized the "Zionist occupation." How quickly this is all happening. How quickly do we find ourselves missing Mubarak. Egypt will no longer supply our natural gas, but it will continue, sadly, to supply other volatile material.“

IHY, Boaz Bismuth, 23.4.2012

Egyptian gas cutoff whiffs of populism

„The gas agreement is not just a commercial contract; it is a contract with long-term diplomatic and security significance. (...) Egypt needs the agreement as much as Israel needs Egyptian gas. Egypt's economy is teetering on the brink of insolvency. (...) Gas exports were supposed to be a fixed and sure source of revenues, as well as a primary strategic means for increasing Israel's dependence on Egypt, in addition to Israel's dependence on Egyptian cooperation in Sinai. (...) Since the revolution more than a year ago, there has been a stormy public campaign in Cairo to terminate the gas agreement with Israel led by various politicians and commentators. (...) Within a few months, the generals promise to hand over power to a president elected by the people. It is impossible to know the man who will be elected, or what his relations with Parliament, controlled by religious parties, will be. Egypt's near future will be decided by internal dynamics and the consolidation of forces that are still being formed, which few can predict. It won't be calm, and in one scenario, Egypt could end up in a Jacobean whirlwind. No one can then promise that reason and logic will overcome the roar of the masses.“

GLO, Jacky Hougy, 23.4.2012

The gas torch

„ (...) in Egypt, as in Israel, the pipeline has become a symbol. A symbol of disgusting normalization with an occupying country; a symbol of the corrupt government of former Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, (...); and a symbol of the abandonment of the interests of the Egyptian public, which pays a higher price than Israel for the gas it consumes. And so, a popular revolution to bring about regime change in Egypt has adopted the gas pipeline as a symbol of national disgrace. (...) The "gas index" is strongly reminiscent of the index used by Israel to assess the warmth of Israel's relations with Turkey. (...) The public fury at Israel as a result of the flotilla affair, like its anger at Israel's policy in Gaza, were not internalized by Israel, in light of the very substantial orders from the Turkish army. Israel has reversed the situation vis-a-vis Egypt and Turkey. It believed, and still does, that these two countries are so dependent on Israeli inventions or on gas revenues – and primarily on Israel's power to shape U.S. policy toward them – that they will agree to ignore its policy in the territories, surrender their prestige and hold their noses. (...) But both Egypt and Turkey have never given up (...) their desire to convince Israel to conduct its policy in a manner that would enable them to maintain relations with it, (...). Israel, which considered these relations a seal of approval for continuing its policy in the territories, lived with the illusion that the money index would solve everything.
HAA, Zvi Bar'el, 25.4.2012

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

Veröffentlicht: 30. April 2012

Verantwortlich:

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

Redaktion:

*Helene Kortländer,
Andrea König*

Homepage: www.fes.org.il

Email: fes@fes.org.il