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Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen

28. Juli – 12. August 2012

1. Die Debatte über einen Angriff auf den Iran

In Israel ist die Debatte um einen möglichen Angriff auf den Iran mit neuer Intensität entbrannt. Das zentrale Argument lautet, dass das iranische Atomprogramm bereits so weit vorangeschritten sei, dass Israel nicht mehr viel Zeit bleibe, um es mit einem Militärschlag zerstören zu können. Medienberichten zufolge erwägen Premierminister Netanyahu und Verteidigungsminister Barak einen Angriff noch vor den US-Wahlen im November. Israels Generalstabschef Benny Gantz und weitere führende Militärs und Sicherheitsexperten sprechen sich jedoch gegen einen israelischen Alleingang aus.

In einem Treffen mit Militärführern antwortete Netanyahu auf die Opposition zu seinen Plänen scharf und sagte, dass eine Entscheidung über einen Angriff allein in seiner Verantwortung liege. Unklar jedoch bleibt, was Netanyahu tatsächlich vorhat, den Iran allein anzugreifen oder die US-Regierung und die internationale Gemeinschaft zu einem härteren Vorgehen gegen den Iran zu bewegen.

Heeding Gantz isn't weakness

"IDF Chief of Staff Benny Gantz opposes attacking Iran before the U.S. elections and without coordinating it with the Americans. [...]

Netanyahu and Defense Minister Ehud Barak should heed the chief of staff's warnings [...].

Accepting Gantz's recommendation will not detract from the government's authority and responsibility. The chief of staff will continue 'to be under the authority of the government and subordinate to the defense minister', [...] even if his recommendation is accepted and Israel is spared a dangerous military operation."

HAA 03.08.12 Editorial

Lessons of 1981

"The madness of public debate over the Iranian nuclear issue [...] could be the factor that takes the decision of whether to attack Iran away from Israel's leaders. [...] It could prevent it from happening at all, or it could force Israel to launch it earlier than planned [...]. Both scenarios are bad, if they are dictated by irresponsible chatter rather than the appropriate factors. [...]

[...] No IDF chief, as wise as he may be, should take action that undermines a defense minister (not even an unpopular one). From this point forward, senior military officials will be allowed to express their opinion, but it cannot be presented in a way that harms Israel."

Dan Margalit, IHY 01.08.12

Bibi cannot silence Gantz

"The chief of staff is not just another official; he is supposed to be a full partner in making decisions as to whether or not to attack. His powers and responsibility are equal to that of a prime minister. [...] He must express the opinion of the IDF on our ability to deal with the Iranian threat. And not necessarily always in private. The public must know not only whether an Israeli military operation is essential, but also what damage we can expect to the home front in the event that Israel takes action. [...]

Statements from the prime minister to the effect that he will decide and the army will implement sound like the statement of the feudal lord who gives orders to his subjects."

Yoel Marcus, HAA 03.08.12

The debate on Iran

"Are you for or against an Israeli strike on Iran's nuclear facilities? [...] It is a decision that should be discussed behind closed doors, and one that needs to be made by the prime minister and his government – not the public. [...]

Israelis should upgrade their gas masks, if they haven't already, and make sure there are safe rooms and shelters in their homes and neighborhoods. [...] Above all, let's not disrupt our normal lives, not give in to fear-mongers, and not allow threats by Iranian leaders to scare us. [...] Let's trust our leaders to make the right decisions when it comes to issues as crucial and complex as Iran, and let's come together as a nation to support them. We are divided enough on so many things; when it come to existential threats, let's stick together and present a united front."

JPO 06.08.12 Editorial

We'll pay heavy price for mistake in Iran

"The West is acting with growing intensity to halt Iran – mainly to protect its own strategic interests – and most experts believe the measures it is taking should be given more time before other options are considered. [...]

Israel's cautious and restrained use of force has always been advantageous to the State's security, while using force in a reckless manner eventually destabilized the country's security. [...]

The price of a possible mistake in Iran will be heavy, almost unbearable. [...]

Furthermore, most experts have posited that a unilateral Israeli strike would allow Iran to advance even faster and with fewer obstacles towards a bomb. The final result of such a war would be a nuclear Iran that wants to take its revenge on Israel."

Uri Bar-Joseph, JED 08.08.12

The secret behind an Iran war order

"According to Netanyahu and Barak, Israel has the military power to delay Iran's nuclear project by only one year. [...] There is, however, a force that can stop the Iranian project militarily: the United States. The problem [...] is that the U.S. administration is not willing to do so.

The solution is simple. A moment before the U.S. presidential elections, [...] and in the wake of the large number of casualties and the extensive damage that the Iranian response is likely to cause in the region [...], the American president will have no choice but to order his armed forces to join in the war. And if the gamble fails? For that there is no backup plan. [...]

These things have to be stated clearly. No leadership in Israel has the right to send the Israel Defense Forces to war and to endanger tens of thousands of citizens and soldiers when it does not have the power to win the war with its own forces."

Sefi Rachlevsky, HAA 07.08.12

The Zionist case against attacking Iran

"The first effect of a conflict would be rocketing oil prices. [...] This situation will generate the kind of mass unemployment which is fertile ground for political extremism.

During the 1930s millions of Europeans and Americans believed that Jewish financiers had a hand in causing the Great Depression. It would be wise for Israel's leaders to consider how a global economic slump triggered by an Israeli attack would benefit anti-Semites. [...]

The survival of Israel is owed in no small degree to past leaders distinguishing calculated risk-taking from gambling. Netanyahu and Barak must realize that an ill-planned war might very well pave the roads to Jerusalem for Zion's enemies."

Rafael Castro, JED 09.08.12

Nuclear Iran has its advantages

"A nuclear Iran would have some advantages we should be aware of. [...] Nuclear weapons in Iran's hands would result in a balance of terror in the Middle East, which may benefit the region in some way.

[It] creates an effect that decreases the probability of war. As the expected extent of damage to the countries participating in any war increases, the sides become more cautious. [...] It appears that this balance of terror was one of the reasons the Cold War did not escalate into a full-scale armed conflict. [...]

In addition, a nuclear Iran may help defuse tensions surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, [...] and perhaps lead Israel to end the occupation or agree to regional demilitarization. [...]

When considering the risks involved in an Israeli attack on Iran, the significant advantages of a nuclear Iran become even more apparent."

Uri Weiss, JED 06.08.12

2. Mitt Romneys Besuch in Israel

Wenige Monate vor den amerikanischen Wahlen hat der republikanische Präsidentschaftskandidat Mitt Romney Israel besucht. Insbesondere ging bei seinem Besuch auch um die Wählergunst von amerikanischen Juden und evangelikalen Christen. Romney traf sich während seines Aufenthalts mit Premier Netanyahu, Oppositionsführer Shaul Mofaz sowie anderen Politikern. Außerdem traf er den palästinensischen Premierminister Salam Fayyad. In

einer Ansprache in Jerusalem betonte Romney, dass es seine oberste außenpolitische Priorität sei, den Iran von einem Ausbau seines Atomprogramms abzuhalten. Außerdem bezeichnete er Jerusalem als Hauptstadt Israels, obwohl die USA die Annektierung Ost-Jerusalems nicht anerkennen.

Romney's passion for Israel

"Romney embraces Israel with [...] passion. [...]
If elected president, Romney's message would undoubtedly need to be put to the test. However, his emphasis on shared values, history and destiny [...] seemed to reach beyond the standard political message of a U.S. presidential candidate. [...]
[...] Romney's Israel visit brought a central part of his foreign policy worldview into sharper focus. He sees Israel playing a frontline position in the future of America's vital interests in the Middle East that are anchored in the Western alliance overcoming the Iranian regime's nuclear and terror threats."
Dan Diker, IHY 02.08.12

Israel elects a US president

"Israel is dreaming of electing the American president, and Mitt Romney is its preferred candidate. [...]
A trip to Israel? Check. Contempt for the Palestinians? Check. A pledge to move the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem? Check. [...] Nary a word about the occupation? Check. Support for an attack on Iran? Absolutely.
[...] Romney [...] won't demand any soul-searching of Israel, or any 'reconsideration' of its policies. Romney is well-suited to us, and we to him. In the best-case scenario, he knows that this is a crazy country, so one can't tell the truth to its face. In the more realistic scenario, he is afflicted with that same syndrome, which drove him to come to Israel to touch holiness."
Ziv Bar'el, HAA 01.08.12

Romney's visit

"During his short but significant visit to the country this week, [Romney] said all the right things. He backed [...] 'any and all measures' to stop Iran from building nuclear weapons, Israel's right to defend itself [...] and its claim to Jerusalem as its capital. [...]
His trip to Israel, like Obama's before the last presidential campaign, clearly won him friends here and might boost his chances among American Jews and perhaps Christian voters, too.

With Obama and Romney running neck and neck in the polls, recent surveys have signaled that the American Jewish vote could swing in the direction of the Republican party more than in the past."
JPO 30.07.12 Editorial

Romney's Zionist audience

"When a presidential candidate addresses the voters at such a critical stage in the election campaign with such an enthusiastically Zionist speech, it is clear he believes that this stance is accepted by the majority of the American electorate. Because if that were not the case, he would have spoken differently, in a more 'balanced' manner."
Israel Harel, HAA 02.08.12

Good intentions, bad timing

"Romney's repeating of the expected mantra about America standing with Israel if Israel attacks Iran is not very convincing, and is pretty close to meaningless. Iran is not the private problem of the State of Israel - it is a concern for the entire free world."
David Ha'ivri, JED 30.07.12

Mitt or 'mittout' Romney

"Mitt Romney comes to Israel for a few hours, speaks platitudes [...], mumbles something about Iran and collects a million bucks. [...]
Romney was brought here by rich right-wing American Jews, some of whom have endlessly deep pockets and apparently think he'll be better for the Jews and Israel than President Barack Obama. What gives them this notion is beyond me [...]. What major and serious charges could be made against him and his relationship with Israel? Where has Obama's America not supported us? [...] And why believe Mitt Romney, who has never had to deliver, or has delivered, a thing in terms of Israel? [...] On the security-strategic level, few presidents have been more supportive than Obama. [...] Israel would not have an Iron Dome system were it not for this administration, nor would Iran be under the heavy international sanctions it now faces. [...]
Why throw all this to the dogs and go with an unknown quantity who, in the best case, will take months to get up to speed enough to even consider bombing the Iranians, and whose election could only serve to give the Iranians the very commodity they so desperately want: time."
Hirsh Goodman, JPO 03.08.12

Israel, West need Romney in White House

"Now, with the 2012 elections looming, when the Jewish vote and Jewish funding are as crucial as ever and Republican hopeful Mitt Romney is visiting Israel, Obama is once again stressing his 'unshakeable commitment' to Israel. [...]"

But we mustn't forget that at the beginning of his term Obama declared that in terms of numbers the US was 'one of the largest Muslim countries in the world'. [...] The American president bowed before Saudi King Abdullah [...]. He also visited Egypt, where he praised the 'holy Koran' [...].

In general, Obama is becoming more Palestinian than the Palestinians by demanding that Israel halt all construction beyond the Green Line as a precondition for renewing peace talks. [...]

More than Israel, the US and the West need Romney in the White House, they need Obama out. Because as a second-term president, he may become an immortal hero of the Chinese, Russians, Islamists."

Shaul Rosenfeld, JED 29.07.12

3. Anschlag auf ägyptische Sicherheitskräfte und Grenze zu Israel

Am 5. August sind bei einem Anschlag auf einen ägyptischen Grenzposten im Sinai 16 Polizisten getötet worden. Die Angreifer, laut ägyptischen und israelischen Quellen militante Islamisten, stürmten dann die israelische Grenze, wo die israelische Armee das Feuer eröffnete und den Angriff stoppte.

Die Sinaihalbinsel gilt spätestens seit dem Sturz von Ex-Präsident Husni Mubarak als gesetzloses Gebiet, in dem Menschen- und Waffenhandel florieren. Die Zahl der dort stationierten ägyptischen Truppen ist jedoch durch den israelisch-ägyptischen Friedensvertrag beschränkt.

Der neue ägyptische Präsident Mohammed Morsi versprach, mit Härte auf den Anschlag zu reagieren und ließ mit Panzern und Kampfflugzeugen Jagd auf die Extremisten machen. Außerdem entließ er den Gouverneur von Nord-Sinai und schloss den Grenzübergang zum Gazastreifen.

Während die israelische Regierung erwägt, einer ägyptischen Bitte um mehr Truppen im Sinai stattzugeben, sagte Premierminister Benjamin Netanyahu, der Anschlag beweise, dass Israel sich nur „auf sich selbst verlassen“ könne und müsse.

Egypt's challenge

"The escalation along the border is of extreme concern to Israel – but no less so to Egypt. [...] It won't be easy for Egyptian authorities to reassert control in Sinai and along the border with Israel. But with help from Israel and the US, it certainly can be done. [...]"

The US provides a huge amount of military aid to Egypt [...] Some of this money should be used to clear the Sinai peninsula of terrorists and secure the border with Israel.

Above all, this is a test for Egypt's new president, who also happens to be leader of the Muslim Brotherhood. Now is the time for him to choose the West over Iran and strengthen ties with Israel to combat our common enemy: terrorism.

If Morsy can restore calm on the Egyptian-Israeli border, the impact on the whole region will be enormous."

JPO 06.08.12 Editorial

Revise peace treaty to uproot terrorism

"The lack of a significant Egyptian military presence has left a dangerous void in Sinai. Islamist terror groups became aware of the region's potential more than 10 years ago. [...]"

The Sinai terror threat has intensified since the establishment of Hamas' Islamist entity in Gaza in 2007. The tunnels and other secret passageways between the Strip and Sinai allow the terrorists to transfer arms and materials used to make bombs and missiles.

[...] Egypt is aware of the severity of the terror threat in Sinai and of the need for cooperation between the new government in Cairo and the army, as well as between Egypt and Israel. [...]"

However, the eradication of terror in Sinai will be possible only if the Israel-Egypt peace treaty is revised in such a way that would allow for the mobilization of forces from both sides of the border to fight the jihadists."

Yaron Friedman, JED 07.08.12

A crucial alliance

"Israel has allowed Egyptian fighter jets to enter Sinai air space to strike terrorist bases [...]. Egypt has not taken advantage of the situation to flex its muscles at Israel; it does not see the move as a precedent to take advantage of. To Egypt, as to Israel, which acted wisely, the move was an inevitable necessity if the two countries seek to fight a common threat seriously.

[...] Considering the political conditions in Israel and Egypt, such a decision isn't obvious. Israel's concerns about the Muslim Brotherhood's regime and the Brotherhood's revulsion for Israel could easily tear apart the flimsy peace.

[...] When the test came this week, we may note with satisfaction that the peace treaty, cold or freezing though it may be, has fulfilled its purpose.

The two countries recognize the importance of their cooperation and the need to strengthen Egypt's control over the Sinai. Israel should extend its military cooperation anywhere it can strengthen its alliance with its neighbor."

HAA 10.08.12 Editorial

Jihadists goal: Israel-Egypt war

"The incident [...] indicated that the jihadist terrorists [...] plan to ignite the region by creating a situation whereby the Egyptian army appears to be involved in an attack on Israel. [...]

The terror attack, had it not been thwarted, could have led to a direct clash between the Israeli and Egyptian armies. The third victim was supposed to be the Muslim Brotherhood movement in Egypt, which global jihad deems too moderate. [...] Movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood have relatively moderate religious ambitions that incorporate the national goals of their respective countries. [...] The jihadists have just one goal – to establish 'global Islamic emirates' that are ruled in accordance with sharia law. [...] These groups threaten not only Israel and the West, but also the recently-established Muslim regimes in Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, Yemen and other countries.

[...] Further cooperation is required between Jerusalem and Cairo to prevent the jihadists from achieving their main goal – which is igniting the region and instigating war between Israel and Egypt."

Ron Ben-Yishai, JED 06.08.12

A job well done

"For the first time, a terror attack has managed to penetrate Egypt's denial threshold. [...] Israel has witnessed over the last few days the beginning of action, rather than just words, from Cairo. The question is whether this trend will continue and yield results. Israeli officials aren't very optimistic that anything will actually change. [...] One can only hope that this shared goal — combating radical terrorism — will help preserve the peace between Jerusalem and Cairo."

Yoav Limor, IHY 07.08.12

The 'common enemy' is still Israel

"The event does not illustrate that Egypt and Israel now have a common enemy on which to focus renewed cooperation. Though it is true that the dozens of jihadists [...] slaughtered 16 Egyptian policemen [...] they did so to infiltrate Israel. [...]

Did Israel's swift and precise targeting of the terrorists elicit even a moment's gratitude, solidarity, or desire for warmer relations from its neighbors to the south? Not on your life.

[...] Has it occurred to anybody that it was Morsi's very rise to power that provided the impetus to all radical Islamist factions in Egypt and the Gaza Strip to step up activity against Israelis and 'infidel' Arabs? Has it crossed anyone's mind that it was Morsi's own cool treatment of the military which signaled to the Islamists that soldiers and police no longer posed a threat to them? [...]

The only 'common enemy' in the region remains Israel."

Ruthie Blum, IHY 07.08.12

4. Medienquerschnitt

Die Vielfalt der in Israel relevanten Themen kann in einem Medienspiegel nicht umfassend wiedergegeben werden. Um den deutschen LeserInnen dennoch einen Einblick in das breite Themenspektrum, das in den Medien behandelt wird, zu gewähren, veröffentlichen wir in dieser Schlaglichtausgabe wieder eine kleine Auswahl an weiteren Themen, die in den vergangenen zwei Wochen die israelische Gesellschaft bewegten.

Über die Zukunft der sozialen Protestbewegung:

It's political, not grass roots

"The reason that we saw just a few thousand people protesting in Tel Aviv's squares on Saturday night isn't because the situation has suddenly improved [...]. It's simply that the left-wing activists are once again trying to hijack last summer's social justice movement for their own purposes. This was an opportunity for the handful that align themselves with [...] the left wing of the political map to call on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to go home. That is legitimate and their right, but you cannot call this a 'popular protest movement'. [...]. The people are much smarter than the left-wingers. And that's why the masses stayed home.

The real battle needs to start up again and encourage the government to increase competition. The findings of the centralization committee need to

be implemented quicker, and even toughened up where possible. This is the real message that should be carried forward."

Hezi Sternlicht, IHY 05.08.12

The summer of our discontent

"Unlike in 2011, before protests could even begin this summer, it was up against powerful, organized opposition. For months, activists and leaders were summoned to interviews with the Shin Bet security service [...], as if demonstrations about fiscal policy were a threat to Israel's national security. [...] Such a coordinated nationwide misuse of our security apparatus [...] could only have originated at the top. Some media bosses let their reporters know [...] that favorable coverage of renewed demonstrations should not be expected. [...]"

Perhaps most damaging of all, the inaccurate claim that the 2011 protest had failed [...] was allowed to go unchallenged.

In fact, the influence of last year's protest has been enormous. The entire economic discourse has changed, and new government policy decisions are increasingly measured [...] according to their impact on the middle class and their relationship to the social protest agenda. [...] There have been concrete victories [...]: free preschool education from age 3; postponement of planned tax cuts for the rich; promises to increase the stock of affordable and public housing [...].

We must resist the lie that the largest protests in Israel's history was not successful, whether by making corporate interests bend to boycotts or political leaders pay at the ballot box. We can't afford to sit on our hands and watch our leaders drag us further into the abyss."

Don Futterman, HAA 10.08.12

*Über die **Entlassung des Verantwortlichen für Civic Education im Bildungsministeriums**, Adar Cohen, der ein Sozialkundebuch mit israelkritischen Passagen abgesegnet hatte:*

Time for a teacher revolt

"Education Minister Gideon Sa'ar pushed out Cohen. [...] Anyone who doesn't dance to his tune is immediately kicked out of the dance troupe. [...]"

Many books contain errors, and they should be corrected, not shelved. Even inspectors can make mistakes, and they should be called in for a talk, not fired. [...]"

The time has come for a teachers revolt. When the government is bad we must encourage good

citizenship. [...] We don't have to hide forbidden books under the desk, we can offer them to the students. Let them read and judge for themselves. [...] Sa'ar is a man with a single truth, and such truth is a lie.

[...] There is no way to replace tens of thousands of teachers. And if parents join in, the defeat of the border patrol is guaranteed. Because freedom of education has no government, and no political commissar will determine its borders."

Yossi Sarid, HAA 10.08.12

Civics lesson

"Politicians, media headliners and literati pulled out all stops to decry what amounts to [Cohen's] dismissal as mortal blow to Israeli democracy. [...] The argument was that Cohen is a victim of politicization.

There is no denying that his post-Zionist orientation grates hard against Education Minister Gideon Sa'ar's guiding principles. This became blatantly evident when Cohen approved a secondary school civics text book [...] rife with inaccuracies and tendentious assertions. [...] The book [...] brands Israeli presence beyond the 1949 armistice lines as illegitimate and blames Israel for the absence of peace.

[...] It is not the task of public education to indoctrinate and certainly not to force a radical minority's agenda upon a majority. [...]"

The people choose representatives, whom they expect to implement those policies that received the voters' approval in the electoral process. Yet these elected representatives can hardly fulfill their promises if surrounded by executives who espouse opposing opinions. Like-minded appointees are indispensable, not evidence of corruption."

JPO 08.08.12 Editorial

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

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