



Schlaglicht Israel Nr. 22/12

Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen

27. November – 10. Dezember 2012

1. Palästina erhält Beobachterstatus bei den Vereinten Nationen

Am 29. November hat die UN-Vollversammlung für die Anerkennung Palästinas als "Nichtmitgliedsstaat mit Beobachterstatus" gestimmt. Nur neun Länder stimmten gegen den von Präsident Mahmud Abbas eingebrachten Antrag, den er als "letzte Chance" für eine Zwei-Staaten-Lösung bezeichnete.

Israels Reaktion auf die Abstimmung wurde seitens der US-Regierung und der EU stark kritisiert. Insbesondere die Ankündigung des Baus von 3.000 Wohneinheiten in Westbank-Siedlungen und die Forcierung der Planungen für das umstrittene sogenannte "E-1 Gebiet" zwischen Ma'ale Adumim und Ost-Jerusalem. Medienberichten zufolge drohten Großbritannien und Frankreich daraufhin mit einem Abzug ihrer Botschafter. Dies wurde jedoch von den betreffenden Regierungen dementiert.

Zu Spannungen kam es auch bei einem Treffen von Premier Netanyahu mit Bundeskanzlerin Merkel. Netanyahu kritisierte, dass Deutschland sich bei der UN-Abstimmung enthalten hatte. Merkel hingegen hatte schon vorher gesagt, dass mit fortgesetztem Siedlungsbau "nichts zu erreichen" sei.

The stage is set for the final act

"Abbas's speech at the UN was a bad one. [...] Great speeches are those used to launch a new policy, to change consciousness, and to signal new opportunities. The Palestinian and Israeli UN speeches were old news, bad news and missed opportunities, once again. [...]"

We have moved into the 'lose-lose' phase of this conflict and leaders on both sides seem to have adopted it fully within the mindset of, 'We will think about tomorrow, tomorrow, or the day after that.' [...] Our two societies are in desperate need for a game changer, a new voice, a vision of hope with the ability to deliver."

Gershon Baskin, JPO 03.12.12

Misguided UN bid

"By emphasizing unilateral declarations – empty of any but symbolic meaning – over dialogue and compromise, the UN bid further delays the day when both sides – Israelis and Palestinians – sit down at the negotiating table and hammer out their differences. [...]"

The UN bid creates the false impression that the Palestinian people [...] are prepared for statehood [...]. In reality, Palestinian political leadership is irreparably split between the Hamas terrorist regime that runs Gaza Strip and the PLO, which controls the West Bank. It is a sad irony that Palestinians may very well achieve UN recognition of 'a unified and sovereign' Palestinian state at almost exactly the moment when internal conflicts between Hamas and the PLO make the realization of such a state more impossible than ever."

27.11.12 JPO Editorial

Why I back Abbas's UN initiative

"I back Mahmoud Abbas's initiative. [...]"

I am for the Palestinian people. They are my neighbors and we are going to live together side by side forever.

In the fight for peace, we have to strengthen the moderates, and I believe that the PLO under Mahmoud Abbas's leadership is interested in peace. [...] We in Israel should have been doing this over the last few years, but instead Netanyahu and Co. have done the opposite. They have weakened and discredited Abbas with continued settlement building."

Meir Javedanfar, TOI 28.11.12

A sad, sad day

"I was hoping that the Palestinian leader would talk of reconciliation and peace. Instead [...] Abbas slandered and accused Israel of ethnic cleansing, war crimes, racism, hatred, incitement and aggression, and called for the rescue of the Palestinian

'victim' from the demonic Israeli 'executioner. [...] There was nothing in his speech about blowing up buses, bombing coffee shops, or stabbing woman and children in their beds. [...]

Listening to Abbas, I realized that he is not seeking reconciliation. It seems that he wishes to achieve internationally imposed statehood, as a phase in realizing the ultimate vision of annihilating the Jewish state."

Reuven Ben-Shalom, JPO 06.12.12

Give them a state

"Non-member status does not threaten Israel; it angers it. Israel prefers to work opposite an organization, an authority, an entity or a cell. It likes to have an 'address' on which to hang responsibility, as long as that address is not a state [...] that would have equal status. [...]

Upon 'territories' it is possible [...] to settle the citizens of the occupying power. A Palestinian state, however, could theoretically determine who has a right to live in it. [...] Such a Palestine angers Israel, which believes that the Oslo Accords have granted it an eternal exemption from actually applying them."

Zvi Bar'el, HAA 28.11.12

Both sides at fault

"Abbas' achievement in the UN does not impress me, just as I am not enthusiastic over Jerusalem's reaction to the initiative. [...]

While Bibi and Lieberman are busy with heated verbal exchanges and are setting silly conditions for a real diplomatic process, those around them who are not interested in any sort of solution are gaining strength."

Emanuel Rosen, JED 04.12.12

Not pleasant, but not terrible

"We are nowhere near a point where the British and French ambassadors in Israel would be summoned to their home countries for consultations. [...]

Europe has many other troubles at the moment — severe unemployment, economic recession, illegal immigration — so there is a limit to how angry it can become about Israeli settlement construction. [...]

At the meetings in Europe, Israel's ambassadors were only being reprimanded. Not pleasant, but also not terrible. [...]

The demographic changes taking place in important European nations are worrying. These changes are causing the governments of those nations to pay heed to Muslim voters on issues like the Israeli-

Palestinian conflict. Things will not become easier in the future. But we have survived worse."

Boaz Bismuth, IHY 04.12.12

When being right isn't always the smartest thing

"If the government could take back the last 48 hours, it would reconsider its decisions to expand construction beyond the Green Line [...] and freeze the transfer of tax money it collects for the Palestinian Authority. [...]

The government should have trodden carefully in this diplomatic territory, which is seen as the litmus test for Israeli willingness [...] to negotiate the two-state solution. [...]

With the public relations skills possessed by Netanyahu, it is possible to convince people that changing course is preferable to staying on a dead-end road. It's a shame to persist along this path of unnecessary diplomatic hostility."

Dan Margalit, IHY 04.12.12

Israel's punishment

"Israel's decision is also a slap in the face to another loyal friend, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, who explained Germany's abstention in the vote as stemming from Israel's refusal to stop construction in the territories. So, even before the next election [...] Netanyahu has already signaled where he is heading: toward extremism, diplomatic isolation, denunciation and ostracism by the world."

HAA 02.12.12 Editorial

European warning shot

"Four years of no progress or any real dialogue with the Palestinian Authority, along with repeated threats to topple Mahmoud Abbas' regime, have turned Europe against Netanyahu. [...]

The message the European governments sent on Monday, in coordination with the US, [...] was meant to inform Netanyahu that they too know how to intervene in a country's internal elections. During such sensitive political times, turning Israel into a pariah state and isolating it diplomatically can affect the results of the upcoming Knesset elections — not to mention what might happen here if the trade and export agreements between Israel and Europe are hurt."

Attila Somfalvi, JED 04.12.12

Our right to build

"There is a clear consensus in Israel regarding the settlement blocs. There are very few Israelis who believe these blocs will not remain under Israeli

sovereignty even if a miracle does happen and a peace agreement is reached. The decision to build in these blocs is first and foremost an Israeli right. The fact that it also punishes the Palestinians is of secondary importance."

Hanoch Daum, JED 05.12.12

2. Vor den Wahlen: Primaries und neue Parteien

Sowohl die Arbeitspartei als auch der Likud haben mit Blick auf die Parlamentswahlen im Januar Primaries abgehalten, um ihre Kandidaten für die 19. Knesset zu wählen. Im Likud, der mit Außenminister Liebermanns Yisrael Beitenu auf einer gemeinsamen Liste antritt, gab es einen deutlichen Rechtsruck. Als liberal geltende Abgeordnete wie Benny Begin oder Dan Meridor sind auf der Liste weit nach hinten gerutscht und werden vermutlich nicht mehr in die Knesset einziehen.

In der Arbeitspartei unter dem Vorsitz von Shelly Yacimovich hingegen gibt es auf den vorderen Listenplätzen einige neue, linksgerichtete Politiker, darunter Führer Organisatoren der sozialen Proteste vom Sommer 2011. Yacimovich ist jedoch bestrebt ihre Partei im Zentrum des politischen Spektrums zu positionieren.

Eine neue Partei, HaTnua („Die Bewegung“), gründete Tzipi Livni. Ihr schlossen sich sieben Abgeordnete ihrer vorherigen Partei Kadima an. Außerdem trat der Ex-Verteidigungsminister Amir Peretz überraschend aus der Arbeitspartei aus, um Livni zu folgen. In einer Umfrage der Tageszeitung Haaretz wurde deutlich, dass Livnis Partei das Mitte-Links-Lager weiter zersplittert: Während 81% der Befragten davon ausgingen, dass Premier Benjamin Netanyahu die nächste Regierung anführen werde, glaubten nur 6% das Livni bzw. 4% das Yacimovich Premier werden würde.

The new Likud

"While the Likud's move to the Right is a democratic reflection of the will of a majority of Israelis, we must be wary of undermining other aspects of Israel's democratic character. [...]

We must be careful of a situation in which there is a 'tyranny of the majority.' The rule of the majority is just one aspect of a healthy democracy.

Careful protection of minority rights, freedom of expression for all and a strong, independent judiciary are no less important."

JPO 28.11.12 Editorial

Danny Danon's state

"The extreme right is consolidating its rule over the self-described 'national camp'. While the center-left is splintering [...], the right-wing is growing ever stronger. [...]

The new faces of the Lieberman-Netanyahu duo's renewed ruling party are problematic faces. They herald the erosion of the rule of law, the castration of liberal democracy and the loss of national responsibility. [...]

It's already clear that Netanyahu's third government will be that of an Israeli Tea Party and will end in disaster."

Ari Shavit, HAA 29.11.12

The public is shifting Right

"70,000 Likud members voted, reflecting the current public mood.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu may not like it; Leftist parties may laugh at it; and senior ministers may pay the price for it, but the Likud shifted Right because the public, overall, has shifted Right."

Mati Tuchfeld, IHY 28.11.12

The good news

"Labor Party members have selected an impressive and varied ticket [...]. In a week that Likud chose the extreme right, Labor chose [...] the left (and center). [...] Yacimovich deserves kudos for breathing new life into the party [...].

After months of Shelly being the sole voice of Labor, it must now be hoped that the new voices will be added [...]. Michaeli, Shaffir, Peretz and company must not permit Yacimovich to persist in her idiotic habit of pushing moral and foreign issues off the agenda."

Gideon Levy, HAA 02.12.12

Promise and delivery

"Yacimovich has worked unerringly to shift her party's central focus away from prospective peace with the Palestinians [...] to a social-economic agenda. [...]

Moreover, Yacimovich was successful in recruiting new candidates associated with her social-economic agenda, such as Stav Shaffir and Itzik Shmuli. This has allowed her to increase her appeal in the eyes of younger voters from the potential middle class. [...] Yacimovich's test will come after the election, when the opportunity either to deliver or to renege on her promises arrives."

Jonathan Rosen, JPO 05.12.12

The false messiahs

"[Yacimovich] devoted all her efforts in yesterday's Labor Party primary to curbing the dangerous 'people on the left' like Peace Now leader Yariv Oppenheimer. Because Labor is a centrist party, not heaven forbid, left-wing.

Just like Netanyahu, she is trying to sell an illusion – that there is no link between peace and economics, that there is no link between peace and social gaps, that there is no link between the huge sums transferred to the territories and the distress in the country's outskirts."

Nehemia Shtrasler, HAA 30.11.12

The importance of faithfulness

"The voters in the Likud primary hold exactly the same positions as in the past, and they are ensuring that Likud remains true [...] to its path. [...] [Meridor, Begin and Eitan] spoke out as spokesmen of the left do, and tried, often successfully, to sway the government from its ideological line. [...]

Putting Likud princes in their place is a lesson for all those who want to use an ideologically unified party to implement a political doctrine which is alien to it. If they internalize this lesson, the flood of personages, especially former senior military officers, switching between parties heedless of their direction in an attempt to grab a political foothold, may possibly diminish."

Israel Harel, HAA 29.11.12

The people behind number one

"The new Likud and Labor tickets actually have much in common. Both are clear ideologically, spawned as the perfect antithesis to Israeli politics' biggest trauma in recent years: public activity without values.

A high point of this trauma was the tactical decision to vote for Kadima under Tzipi Livni in the 2009 election [...]

- a party without an agenda, conceived under the patronage of strategic advisers. [...]

By contrast, the new Likud list, no matter what you think of its values, represents a return to a profoundly ideological vote. The same thing was achieved by the Labor people who clearly delineated the two main sides of the political map."

Noa Landau, HAA 03.12.12

Vote for the women

"It would be fitting for Livni [...] to show her cards so as not to mislead the public. [...] Livni must make clear that Hatnuah is a sane right-wing party and

must erode the strength of Likud, which has become an extremist right-wing party [...]. It must not erode the strength of Yacimovich or Gal-On."

Aner Shalev, HAA 29.11.12

Livni, Labor and loathing

"It would be hard to characterize Amir Peretz's move from Labor to Hatnuah as opportunistic. [...] Rather than undermine Shelly Yachimovich [...], Peretz preferred to distance himself from all of this and open a new political chapter.

Peretz was supposed to spearhead the battle to prevent Labor from entering the next government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who is likely to win. With Peretz gone, the chances that Yachimovich could join a Netanyahu government and receive a high-level position seem more realistic than ever."

Mati Tuchfeld, IHY 08.12.12

Lessons for the Left

"Peretz's dramatic announcement Thursday that he was leaving the Labor Party for Tzipi Livni's new list underscores the malaise of the splintered and embattled left-of-center camp. [...]

By failing to overcome their differences, center-of-left parties gave up on the thesis [...] that unity has the potential to change the psychology of the race and draw support greater than the sum of the Left's disparate parts. [...] A political culture in which public figures with a strong following opt to create their own political parties instead of joining a larger, established party results in an unstable political system."

JPO 08.12.12 Editorial

Elections 2013 — the best reality show in town

"Former Kadima Chairwoman Tzipi Livni left the Knesset after losing to current Kadima Chairman Shaul Mofaz in the party's primaries. Remember that? [...] But Livni has now created a new party, stealing seven seats from Kadima in the upcoming elections and some campaign money as well. She is washing her hands first though, because it's important to enter the elections with clean hands. [...] How low these elections have brought us. We have sunk to the bottom of the abyss. There is no ideology, no loyalty, no consistency."

Boaz Bismuth, IHY 08.12.12

3. Ehud Barak kündigt Abschied aus Politik an

Ehud Barak, Verteidigungsminister und ehemaliger Premierminister, hat seinen Rückzug aus der Politik angekündigt. Barak machte zunächst Karriere in der Armee und wurde in der Arbeitspartei aktiv. Von 1999 bis 2001 war er Premierminister sowie von 1997-2001 und 2007-2011 Vorsitzender der Arbeitspartei. 2011 gründete er eine eigene Partei (Atzmaut), um im Gegensatz zur Arbeitspartei, die einen Regierungsaustritt angekündigt hatte, Teil der Regierung Netanyahu bleiben zu können. Obwohl Barak Ende November, nach den militärischen Auseinandersetzungen mit der Hamas, für seine Rolle als Verteidigungsminister gelobt wurde, wurde seiner Partei in Umfragen ein schlechtes Ergebnis für die kommenden Wahlen vorausgesagt. Er verließ seine Partei im laufenden Wahlkampf und sagte, er wolle sich in Zukunft mehr seiner Familie widmen. Allerdings hat er die Möglichkeit, auch der nächsten Regierung als Verteidigungsminister zu dienen, nicht ausgeschlossen.

A sad farewell

"Barak is a unique individual. His shortcomings are painful, but his contribution is great. He is emotionally obtuse, but his wisdom is unparalleled. The five and a half years he spent at the head of the Defense Ministry were characterized by long-term policy management. He knew that allocating budgets to the development of weapons of the future [...] would not bear fruit during his term. He will not be the one who ultimately enjoys the public's gratitude. But through his ties with the administration of U.S. President Barack Obama, he raised a lot of money to ensure Israel's military superiority."

Dan Margalit, IHY 27.11.12

Ehud Barak: A political eulogy

"The man [...] will forever be synonymous with political dilettantism, tragedy and farce. [...]"

Barak wanted to be a peacemaker, but having previously spent decades ordering people around it never crossed his mind that peace involves two parties. That is how, to everyone's astonishment, his announcements in 1999 of deadlines for peace deals with Hafez Assad and Yasser Arafat later proved to have been made without any previous dialogue [...] between him and either of the two. [...] Barak proceeded to his Palestinian fiasco, whereby what started off as the peace of the brave ended up as the war of the suicides. [...]"

The kibbutznik [...] proved to care little [...] for social inequality [...]. First he dedicated his time almost entirely to defense and foreign affairs, and then he nestled in glitzy skyscrapers from where the working class that his social-democratic party pretended to represent seemed even smaller than his integrity.

[...] All this, of course, is besides his shrinking of Labor's following to its smallest size ever, [...] and then also splitting in half its Knesset faction. That Barak was a political disaster is therefore indisputable."

Amotz Asa-El, JPO 29.11.12

Barak's exit eases defense budget battle

"Ehud Barak will be remembered [...] as the man who turned Israel's defense budget [...] into just another political shenanigan. The fact is that in every one of the past four years, the actual defense budget was far larger than what had originally been approved. [...]"

[...] Barak always preferred to maneuver in secret and make behind-the-scene deals. [...] The annual ritual was understood. The defense minister would agree to a lower budget than what the IDF needed, which would help the government and Netanyahu present a small state budget and restrained deficit. Later in the year, Barak would demand, and get, defense budget supplements, which thus taught the IDF high command that formal acceptance of government and Knesset decisions was meaningless. Barak did not care that the end result could have been achieved more simply and transparently."

Avi Temkin, GLO 26.11.12

No favors

"Justifiably or not, throughout his entire career Barak considered himself a better leader than others; someone who understood situations better than others. [...] And in many cases he was right. He was never chummy with people. You never saw anyone pat him on the back in a friendly manner. He never cursed, and rarely spoke ill of anyone [...]"

These traits made Barak an intolerable figure in the Israeli political arena, where politicians suck up to everyone. [...] Barak's status within Israeli politics gradually declined until it reached its current level. Politics may not miss Barak, but security will."

Eitan Haber, JED 27.11.12

The Barak legacy

"Barak [...] played a key role in the last few years in Benjamin Netanyahu's right-wing government. Despite his limited political power, Barak served as a

moderating element [...]. Barak attempted, not always with success, to slow down the expansion of the settlements [...]. But he did not succeed in navigating Netanyahu in the direction of serious negotiations with the Palestinians or toward the necessary apology to Turkey. That is where his political energy ran out, and the realization of his weakness led him to announce his retirement ahead of the election."
HAA 27.11.12 Editorial

The commando leader strikes again

"Despite the recent improvement in his position in the polls, it was clear to him that, the best-case scenario, Atzmaut would barely make it over the Knesset-entry threshold in the coming election, he would be shamed and his stock on the political market would drop.

On the other hand, now, after a glorious exit when so many people are praising his deeds over the years as Mr. Security, he will be the classic candidate to serve in the next government as the Responsible Adult Defense Minister - a professional appointment on the part of the prime minister."
Nehemia Shtrasler, HAA 27.11.12

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 erneuten Proteste in Ägypten:

The death of Egyptian democracy

"If Egypt ever really did have democracy, it was born and died with the election of Mohamed Morsi in June. [...]

Since taking office Morsi, the Muslim Brotherhood and its Freedom and Justice Party have taken control of the presidency, the military and the parliament, and are sidelining the judiciary. [...] Morsi wasted little time doing what many feared most: instituting Islamist government. Brotherhood followers were placed in government posts across the spectrum, including governors, ministers and presidential advisers.

His boldest move to date came on November 22 with a power grab that gave him near-dictatorial powers and created a rift with the country's judiciary as well as the secularists who helped push Mubarak from power.

[...] Protests grew as hundreds of thousands went back to Cairo's Tahrir Square, where the revolution had begun nearly two years earlier."
Douglas M. Bloomfield, JPO 05.12.12

The spring that wasn't

"The power majority given to the Muslim Brotherhood is problematic in more than one way. The grassroots movement has maintained over the years a clearly anti-American, anti-Israeli and anti-Semitic set of policies, yet now they feel the need to accommodate their worldviews with semi-pragmatic policies in their direct and indirect dealings with the White House and the State of Israel.

While these problems influence the decision making process, Egyptian youth keep on demonstrating against the political establishment as they consider the revolution hijacked by the Islamists and their value system.

The result of such a crisis is the creation of grey areas such as the terrorist presence in the Sinai and the increase and unchecked military and logistical support provided to Hamas, which are to be considered as a major risk for the peace and security in the region."

Riccardo Dugulin, JED 03.12.12

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

Veröffentlicht: 13. Dezember 2012

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