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Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen

28. Januar – 12. Februar 2013

1. Bildung einer neuen Regierung

Nach Konsultation aller in der neugewählten Knesset vertretenen Parteien hat Präsident Shimon Peres den bisherigen Premier Benjamin Netanyahu mit der Bildung der neuen Regierung beauftragt. Die zentrale Frage für die inzwischen aufgenommenen Koalitionsverhandlungen lautet, ob Netanyahu auf Druck von Yair Lapid, Vorsitzender der zweitstärksten Partei Yesh Atid, auf die ultra-orthodoxen Parteien als Koalitionspartner verzichten wird. Sowohl Yesh Atid als auch die nationalreligiöse HaBayit HaYehudi treten dafür ein, dass mehr ultra-orthodoxe Männer Militärdienst leisten sollen. Das lehnen Shas und United Torah Judaism vehement ab. Bisher schien es sicher, dass Yesh Atid der Koalition beitreten wird. Aber seit Lapid erklärt hatte, er könne den Premierminister innerhalb von achtzehn Monaten ersetzen, zeigt Netanyahu sich reserviert. Auch der mögliche Beitritt von HaBayit HaYehudi wird von den persönlichen Differenzen zwischen dem Parteivorsitzenden Naftali Bennet und Netanyahu überschattet. Lapid, der sich gegen Ministerposten ohne Geschäftsbereich aussprach, machte zudem die Größe des Kabinetts zum Gegenstand der Verhandlungen. Mögliche Koalitionspartner für Netanyahu sind außerdem die auf zwei Abgeordnete reduzierte Kadima sowie Tzipi Livni's HaTnuah. Shelly Yacimovich, Vorsitzende der Arbeitspartei, kündigte jedoch ihr Verbleiben in der Opposition an.

Lapid's damage control

"Netanyahu has declared his wish for a coalition that includes Yesh Atid, the [ultra-Orthodox], Habayit Hayehudi, HaTnuah and Kadima. Ultimately, one can assume that not all of them, comprising 88 MKs, will sit in the next government. It's more reasonable to assume that Netanyahu's declaration was meant to lower each party's asking price. Regardless, Lapid's desire of a government with 18 ministers (there are

currently 27) will have to wait until the next elections, if not longer. It seems that this time around, it's not a realistic goal."

Mati Tuchfeld, IHY 08.02.13

Time waits for no man

"Any coalition that excludes Yesh Atid would be so narrow and right-wing that it would be an affront to [...] the Israeli public. [...]"

Habayit Hayehudi and Shas should be invited to join the coalition only after Likud-Beytenu and Yesh Atid reach a binding agreement on equalizing the distribution of the national service burden. The agreement will be presented to them as a holy writ. If Shas doesn't accept the agreement, Netanyahu should give up on Shas as a coalition partner."

Dan Margalit, IHY 08.02.13

Lapid's future is now – in the opposition

"Netanyahu doesn't want to change anything. The existing social and political structure suits him just fine. He needs Lapid only to lower the price exacted by his natural partners. [...]"

Lapid is [...] his rival who wants to replace him in the next elections. [...] The moment he enters the government, [...] Netanyahu will abuse him. He will push him into the Finance Ministry, and after that he will use him as the bogeyman of budget cuts and tax hikes. [...] One replaces the government from the opposition, not from within the government."

Aluf Benn, HAA 11.02.13

End the shenanigans and form a government

"Netanyahu is in a uniquely advantageous position to create a genuinely broad coalition. [...] A genuine centrist consensus on the peace process dominates the political arena. [...] Even the hawkish Habayit Hayehudi would welcome the opportunity of entering the government in the absence of dramatic changes leading to the emergence of a Palestinian state — which is currently not even on the horizon.

[...] Despite Labor leader Shelley Yachimovitch having pledged not to join a Netanyahu government, she admits that today many of her party members are pressing her to do so. Even Hatnuah head Tzipi Livni [...] is now also almost desperate to join the government. This confirms that in spite of all the posturing, a broad political consensus prevails. [...] With the impending visit to the region by Obama there is a desperate need to present a united front in relation to policies on Iran and the Palestinians. To achieve this, our politicians have an urgent obligation to cease posturing and form a broad national government."

Isi Leibler, IHY 10.02.13

A process rife with traps

"Lieberman decisively declared that 'it's impossible to reach a comprehensive peace with the Palestinians.' [...]

Lieberman's position ought to make it clear to potential coalition members exactly what kind of government they are liable to be supporting. [...]

Centrist and left-wing parties have always explained their entering right-wing governments as an effort to fight for their positions 'from within,' or at least to moderate the right-wing policies. But this explanation won't hold water after Lieberman's clear and pointed message. [...] Being a fig leaf is not a policy."

HAA 11.02.13 Editorial

The coalition minefield

"Of the four major issues on the table, the security/peace issue will, surprisingly, be easiest to reach an agreement on. Of the major potential coalition partners, the majority [...] are not in favor of undertaking any major new peace initiative, while Yesh Atid's position is unclear; [...] Livni may hold out, but she will be irrelevant, as will Kadima, if and when the other parties are in place.

The spectre of a nuclear Iran will continue to be thrown up by Netanyahu as the major security issue on the table. This will forestall any serious debate on the Israel- Palestine issue, to which lip service – but nothing more – will be paid during the coalition negotiations."

David Newman, JPO 04.02.13

Netanyahu in a jam: [Ultra-Orthodox] or Lapid and Bennett?

"Netanyahu trusts the [ultra-Orthodox]; he knows they will not try to topple him or run against him, as opposed to Yair Lapid and Naftali Bennett, who

consider themselves the future leaders of the country.

The alliance between Netanyahu and the ultra-Orthodox is [...] practical. Netanyahu knows [they] won't give him any trouble. [...]

On the other hand, Yesh Atid and Habayit Hayehudi are ambitious parties. Their leaders are looking to the future. The prime minister is well aware of this, and he is concerned. [...] Both parties want a government without the [ultra-Orthodox].

It remains to be seen whether Netanyahu will have the courage to give up on those who kept him in power over the past four years and form a coalition that reflects the wishes of the voting public."

Attila Somfalvi, JED 04.02.13

Netanyahu's policies taint coalition partners

"Netanyahu's partners will discover that he has a bag of commitments that he will bring to any new government, and that they will have to be paid. This is the budget hole of tens of billions of shekels that he wants to cover. This is a hole partly created by profligate promises about budget sources made by the outgoing government to the settlers, to the [...] ultra-orthodox, and other cronies. The problem is that there is no way to change these promises as they have been enacted in law.

This should be made clear to every new MK who will be part of the new coalition [...] you will share Netanyahu's past and future deeds the moment the coalition agreement is signed."

Avi Temkin, GLO 03.02.13

2. Angriff auf Ziele in Syrien

Ende Januar hat die israelische Luftwaffe offenbar Ziele in Syrien bombardiert. Während westliche Medien berichteten, dass ein Transportkonvoi, der Abwehrraketen in den Libanon transportieren sollte, zerstört worden sei, behauptete die syrische Regierung, ein Forschungszentrum nahe Damaskus sei angegriffen worden. Amerikanische Zeitungen wiederum gaben an, die mit russischen SA-17 Raketen beladenen Lastwagen seien nicht an der Grenze zum Libanon, sondern in der Nähe eben jener Forschungseinrichtung für Waffenentwicklung bombardiert worden.

Die israelische Regierung bestätigte den Angriff nicht. Verteidigungsminister Ehud Barak sagte jedoch, der Transfer von hochentwickelten Waffensystemen in den Libanon sollte nicht erlaubt werden. Bereits im Vorfeld hatten israelische Regierungsglieder ihre Sorge geäußert, dass das untergehende

Regime von Präsident Bashar Assad chemische und andere Waffen an die verbündete Hisbollah im Libanon übergeben könnte. Vor dem Angriff waren zwei Batterien des Abwehrsystems "Iron Dome" in Nordisrael in Stellung gebracht worden. Bisher blieb eine militärische Antwort auf den Angriff seitens der Hisbollah oder Syriens aus.

Why the attack on Syria suits Netanyahu

"A little more than five years separate the attack on the Syrian nuclear reactor in [...] 2007 and the strike on Syria this week [...]. In reality, the two episodes are light years away. [...]

If he had responded in 2007, Syrian President Bashar Assad could have lost his whole world. Today, he doesn't have much to lose. [...] On the contrary, as when a fire erupts in an oil well, sometimes the only way to extinguish the flames is through a large explosion.

Confronting the IDF, missiles on Tel Aviv, drawing Iran into the chaos, might all suddenly create alternative energies that somehow extend the desperate Syrian ruler's lifespan. [...]

Bibi took a calculated risk, but in this crazy region, there is no calculation that can't suddenly go wrong and turn into a huge mess."

Ben Caspit, JPO 31.01.13

Assad's choice

"Assad is currently the world's most hated man, including in the Arab world. Doing battle against Israel is a guaranteed popularity booster in the Muslim world. Assad would need to inflict some serious damage to get people to forget the 60,000 Syrian dead and 700,000 refugees he has caused. But the entire Syrian military is occupied with fighting the rebels — there are no troops to spare against Israel. In addition, a Syrian military response would bring about an Israeli retaliation. The last thing the Syrian regime wants is an entanglement outside its borders. [...] A military response to Israel [...] would lead to his regime's rapid demise. [...]

In short, we can safely say that should Assad strike out against Israel, he will fall. If he doesn't act, he will fall, but at a later date. Most likely Assad would prefer the second option."

Boaz Bismuth, IHY 31.01.13

A sign of things to come

"Assad [...] is fighting for his life and that of his regime. [...] An Israeli attack [...] is the least of his worries. So it seems unlikely that Israel is worried about a Syrian response.

Rather, the critical question is what Hezbollah [...] will do. Over the past year, Israel has worried that its deterrence against Hezbollah was eroding, after six years of quiet following the Second Lebanon War. [...]

On the other hand, Hezbollah, too, is worried by the precarious state of its patron in Damascus. [...]

The bigger problem is that this wasn't a one-time event: The worse Assad's position grows, the more attempts Hezbollah will make to grab whatever weapons it can get its hands on. And it seems Israel [...] has made its red lines clear. Thus the tensions in the north are liable to persist for a long time to come."

Amos Harel, HAA 31.01.13

Syrian spillover

"As expected, Iran and Hezbollah began saber rattling in the wake of the reports of an Israeli attack, warning of 'serious consequences.' Interestingly, both backed the Syrian story-line claiming the attack had been staged on a 'research center' and mentioned nothing of an attack on a convoy carrying SA-17s.

Perhaps Syria does not want Russia to know that missiles it provided to Bashar Assad are making their way to Lebanon. Perhaps it is convenient for Russia to pretend that arms supplied to Syria are not making their way west to Hezbollah. Whatever the facts regarding purported Israeli attacks, it is clear that Israel has a right and an obligation to prevent the anarchy in Syria from spilling over to Lebanon and endangering Israeli citizens."

JPO 31.01.13 Editorial

Syria is Iran's weakest link

"The reality that currently characterizes the Syria-Lebanon border is insane. Weapons and fighters are constantly being smuggled all along the border. Iran and Hezbollah are sending weapons and men to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's regime. [...]

Efforts by the Syrian regime to transfer anti-aircraft batteries to Hezbollah [...] could be interpreted as a sign of Assad's impending collapse. It is likely that this approach led to the desire to store the batteries in a secure place to prevent the rebels from gaining control of the weapons. [...]

It is also possible that the instructions to transfer the batteries came from Tehran [...]. In this way, Iran may have sought to enhance Hezbollah's power to attack Israel under a defensive umbrella of advanced anti-aircraft missiles."

Reuven Berko, IHY 03.02.13

Israel does as it pleases

"Israel may fly in Lebanon's sovereign airspace [...] as often as it desires – that's taken for granted. It may, of course, bombard anytime that someone foresees danger. [...]"

What the hell, the world wants to destroy us anyway. That's why Israel allows itself to take aggressive steps without asking itself anything – like, for example, what would it do if Arab planes had invaded Israeli airspace, even for mere intelligence-gathering flights. Not to mention what would happen if they dared bomb a convoy of 'deal breaking' weapons. [...]"

Defensive anti-aircraft missiles, intended to prevent Israel from making the impudent, provocative flights above Lebanon, are doomed to destruction. [...] Only Israel is permitted to have all the weapon systems – including the most horrific in the arsenal. " Gideon Levy, HAA 03.02.13

The legality of Israel's use of force

"International law is not a suicide pact. Israel's very carefully measured and discriminate use of force against terrorist-bound military targets in Syria was fully consistent with pertinent legal rules. [...]"

By allowing its territory to be used as a source of weapons for Hezbollah to use against Israel, it is Syria that is in flagrant violation of the [UN] Charter. [...] Article 51 [...] entitles an endangered state to use appropriate force preemptively, whenever the danger posed is 'imminent in point of time.' [...]"

In the final analysis, the basis of any government's lawful authority must be the assurance of protection for its citizens. While Damascus remains feverishly engaged in imposing egregious harms upon its own civilian populations, Jerusalem is bent upon defending all Israelis from Syrian-supported war and terror."

Louis Rene Beres, JPO 10.02.13

3. Bericht UN-Menschenrechtsrat

Der UN-Menschenrechtsrat hat Anfang Februar einen äußerst kritischen Bericht zu Israels Siedlungsaktivitäten in der Westbank herausgegeben, in dem er Regierungen und Unternehmen auffordert, Sanktionen gegen Israel in Erwägung zu ziehen. In dem Bericht wird dargelegt, dass die israelischen Siedlungen auf palästinensischem Gebiet gegen internationales Recht und die Genfer Konventionen verstoßen. Israel hat die Untersuchungskommission, die den Bericht verfasst hat, nicht bei ihren Nachforschungen unterstützt. In einer Stellungnahme des

Außenministeriums wurde er als "einseitig und un- ausgewogen" bezeichnet. Außerdem boykottierte Israel als erstes und einziges UN-Mitglied die alle vier Jahre stattfindende allgemeine Überprüfung seiner Menschenrechtslage. Israel ist der einzige Mitgliedsstaat, dessen Menschenrechtsverstöße als fester Posten auf dem Programm jeder Ratssitzung stehen. Außerdem hat der Menschenrechtsrat gegen Israel mehr Resolutionen verabschiedet als gegen jedes andere Land.

Sanctions are just around the corner

"All right, we know that the UNHRC [...] is a biased, anti-Israeli organization. [...] But [...] for most governments around the world, not to mention international public opinion and the business community, a UN report comes with an international seal of approval. [...] The report is a flashing light, warning of what could be waiting around the corner for Israel if it continues its current policy in the West Bank. [...] Any sanction imposed on Israel will hurt more than the settlements. It will affect the daily lives of all Israelis."

Barak Ravid, HAA 01.02.13

Enough of this sham council

"If an alien descended from the heavens and looked in on the UNHRC's agenda, they would immediately conclude that one country above all others is the most grotesque human rights violator of all time. And it's not Syria, Iran, North Korea or even the Council's venerable vice president, Sudan. It is Israel, the Middle East's only democracy. [...] So, while I find much to criticize in terms of the foreign policy of the current government, I could not agree more strongly with the decision to withdraw from this particularly disgraceful UN body. And I find it appalling and hypocritical in the extreme that the Council's 'fact-finding mission' report would dare call for sanctions against Israel, even as they routinely and conveniently ignore the grossest human rights violations of many of its member states. [...] There are appropriate times and occasions for engagement with international bodies, and there are also times for saying, 'Enough!'"

Nachman Shai, HAA 03.02.13

A warning signal from the UN

"Israel may, of course, play the victim persecuted by a wicked international community. [...] But Israel cannot ignore the fact that the report reflects the winds of time blowing not only from the 'pro-Arab automatic majority states' but from Israel's friends as

well. [...] Israel would do well [...] to treat the report as a summary of the international consensus on its policy in the territories, and acknowledge that this policy is not only destructive to Israel, but has also isolated it in the world and rendered it vulnerable."
HAA 03.02.13 Editorial

UNHRC probe ups anti-Israel atmosphere

"From Israel's point of view this is just another step in the Palestinian strategy – increasingly successful – for confronting Israel in the international diplomatic arena. [...] Netanyahu [...] will come under increasing pressure [...] to initiate some step with the Palestinians to alter the perception that it is Israel [...] who is the intransigent party blocking a return to the peace talks. [...] Reports like those drawn up by the UN Human Rights Commission on the settlements have little importance and can be easily discarded when something else is happening. [...] But in the absence of any diplomatic motion, reports such as these take on more significance because – essentially – that is all that is out there, and there is no diplomatic motion which Israel can use to bury these types of reports."

Herb Keiron, JPO 01.02.13

Talks as response to UN hypocrisy

"For years Israel has been fighting international councils that damage its standing in the world, and Israel's legal establishment has been doing great work in this regard. But the issue, in its essence, is political rather than legal. It is not enough to boycott hostile councils or speak of their hypocrisy. Israel must engage in serious discussions with the Palestinians and the Western world, particularly the US, on the basis of the 'two states for two peoples' paradigm that Netanyahu supported.

Seeing that nearly the entire world, including Israel's closest allies, considers the settlement enterprise to be illegal, Israel must [...] end the construction policy based on 'punitive diplomacy'. [...] Israel must express its willingness to swap lands and agree to an extensive evacuation of settlements in the event that a peace agreement (or any other agreement) is reached."

Yossi Shain, JED 07.02.13

Hypocrisy, deceit and evil

"The UNHRC [...] warned that if Israel failed [...] to dismantle construction and withdraw from these areas, charges of war crimes at the International Criminal Court could ensue. This amounted to a U.N. body purporting to promote human rights, de-

manding the ethnic cleansing of disputed territories. [...] Had Israel submitted its case in advance to such a kangaroo court, it would merely have legitimized the procedure. [...] Israel must reconcile to the reality that it will never achieve justice from this dysfunctional assembly of nations dominated by tyrannies and dictatorships."

Isi Leibler, IHY 04.02.13

Headed to history's dustbin

"The U.N. report will end up in history's dustbin, just like the Goldstone Report. Both were issued by the Human Rights Council, which has proven since its establishment that every person on earth has rights except the Jews.

On its way to the dustbin, the report will cause damage to Israel, legitimize terror against us and add another layer to the diplomatic culture of lies.

[...] The main contributors to Israel's delegitimization in the report were Israeli organizations funded by European governments, with a large portion of them also funded by the New Israel Fund. The report used controversial data provided by organizations like B'Tselem, Yesh Din, Adalah, and of course Peace Now, to prove dozens of points. The investigators who compiled the report also relied on editorials and op-eds from a single journalistic source. You guessed it: Haaretz. A magnificent work of empirical scientific research."

Dror Eydar, IHY 01.02.13

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 den angekündigten Israel-Besuch von US-Präsident Barack Obama:

Better late than never

"The visit presumably attests to the new order of priorities of Obama's second term, the great importance he attaches to immediate movement in negotiations with the Palestinians. [...] Obama also seeks to influence the coalition negotiations, and to make it clear to whatever Israeli government is

formed that he won't allow it to shove the diplomatic issue onto the back burner or into the deep freeze. [...] The leaders of the parties that want to be part of the coalition, and especially those that define themselves as centrist, must now pay their dues: They are not entitled to ignore the visit, or to cooperate with those who will try to fob our guest off with empty declarations. Even if he is coming belatedly, this is an exceptional opportunity to embark on a diplomatic rescue mission."

HAA 07.02.13 Editorial

Age of innocence over

"The president is under no illusions when it comes to the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. [...]

The equation is quite simple: Netanyahu [...] cannot agree to a Palestinian state with 'temporary borders' because this would require new maps that do not include certain settlements. The Palestinians cannot accept futile negotiations 'without preconditions' and without taking past agreements into consideration. A mock process would cause them to lose the support of the international community.

The idea that the process can be reignited with declarations and perhaps a three-way summit in Washington is ludicrous. Moreover, Obama is not coming with an original plan of his own to bridge the gaps. Rather, he is, at best, going to present a package of 'trust-building measures.' Therefore, the visit is an important one, but not in relation to the 'peace process,' which will remain frozen until a new, paradigm-breaking way of thinking emerges."

Alon Pinkas, JED 09.02.13

*Über den Rassismus, der unter den Fans des **Fussballclubs Jerusalem Beitar** grassiert:*

Racism has no place in Judaism

"No, we're not merely talking about the 'handful' of infamous fans who sit in the east section, but a phenomenon that spans the fan base and transcends the different sections in the stadium. Some of them are only willing to voice their views behind closed doors, in whispers, while others shamelessly boast 'in front of the entire country.' [...] Despite attempts to camouflage and minimize its scope, the phenomenon of racism and discrimination has no boundaries. [...] This phenomenon is a gigantic black stain on Israel. Not only does it damage its democratic values, but, and perhaps to a greater extent, its Jewish and ethical values. [...] Only [...] war against the phenomena of racism and discrimination, and uprooting them from our midst, will ena-

ble us to be worthy of the title 'a Jewish and democratic state'."

Aviad Hacohen, IHY 29.01.13

National struggle on the soccer pitch

"If such violence and racism were seen elsewhere, the full force of law enforcement and the judicial system would be brought harshly to bear against the offenders. And yet it has been allowed to thrive in stadium bleachers, with no appropriate action taken. [...] Now, after the violence has grown and media worldwide are presenting Beitar as a symbol of Israeli racism, government officials have begun to decry the phenomenon. But there is no real value to general statements [...]. They must be backed up by action. [...] Law enforcement and the courts must convey the clear message that sports stadia and pitches are not outside the law. [...] At the same time, Beitar Jerusalem must act to bring Arab players into the team."

HAA 10.02.13 Editorial

HAA = Haaretz

JED = Jedioth Ahronoth

JPO = Jerusalem Post

IHY = Israel HaYom

GLO = Globes

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Verantwortlich:

Dr. Ralf Hexel,

Leiter der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Israel

Redaktion:

Maike Harel

Stefan Pantekoek

Homepage: www.fes.org.il

Email: fes@fes.org.il