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Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen

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1. Zum Tod von Nelson Mandela

Der Tod des ehemaligen südafrikanischen Präsidenten und Freiheitskämpfers Nelson Mandela wurde in den israelischen Medien intensiv behandelt. Thematisiert wurden auch Israels Verhältnis zum südafrikanischen Apartheidsregime – Israel kooperierte lange mit Johannesburg und erhob Sanktionen erst 1987, später als alle westlichen Nationen – sowie Mandelas Affinität zur PLO und dem palästinensischen Freiheitskampf.

Der israelische Premierminister Benjamin Netanyahu kündigte zunächst seine Teilnahme an der Trauerfeier für Mandela in Johannesburg an, sagte dann jedoch aufgrund angeblich zu hoher Kosten ab. Da Präsident Shimon Peres krank wurde, wurde Israel von Parlamentssprecher Yuli Edelstein in Südafrika repräsentiert.

In den vergangenen Jahren ist Israels Besatzung der palästinensischen Gebiete immer wieder mit einem "Apartheidssystem" verglichen worden, unter anderem von dem südafrikanischen Erzbischof Desmond Tutu, einem Weggefährten Mandelas.

A symbolic absence

"Given the generous budget for travel [...] and given that Mandela's doctrine and legacy [...] are evidently not the pillar of fire that guides Netanyahu, it's not unreasonable to suspect that the spending issue provided Netanyahu with a pretext to escape a vexing event he didn't want to participate in. [...]"

Mandela [...] symbolized the idea of equality among all human beings and opposition to the apartheid regime. [...] Israel under Netanyahu's leadership, in which segregation, racist legislation and discrimination on the basis of nationality are flourishing virtually undisturbed, cannot say it respects Mandela's heritage. [...]"

The absence of Israel's senior leadership from Mandela's funeral [...] can be seen as a symbol of Israel's increasing diplomatic isolation."

HAA 111.12.13

By avoiding Mandela's memorial, Netanyahu digs Israel's PR grave

"Netanyahu has reinforced the belief of many that he never misses an opportunity to miss an opportunity.

[...] Netanyahu's excuse that the price of travelling to South Africa prevented him from attending today's memorial lies nothing short of pathetic. [...]"

The reality is that the decision not to attend was political in nature. Netanyahu felt that a letter of condolence and sending a low level delegation would be enough. Why attend the memorial of a man who supported the Palestinian cause? [...]"

Yet by acting as he did, Netanyahu critically damaged Israel's image. [...]"

If Netanyahu had attended the memorial of Mandela, despite the political awkwardness, Israel would have stood shoulder to shoulder with the other countries of the world."

Neil Lazarus, TOI 10.12.13

The dearly departed

"The only ones who got angry that Netanyahu and Peres did not attend the memorial ceremony in South Africa were a few Israeli journalists. We may think that the whole galaxy revolves around us, but the Africans showed no anger."

Gonen Ginat, IHY 13.12.13

Mandela and Israel

"Mandela voiced his vehement opposition to Israel's control of the territories it had 'occupied' in the Six Day War, and he urged it to concede land to the Palestinians and Syrians, [...] for the sake of peace. [...]"

He did, however, acknowledge Israel's legitimate security concerns [...].

Mandela had an ambivalent, almost love-hate relationship with Jews and Israel. Like [...] Gandhi before him, his first job had been with a Jewish law firm in Johannesburg, and some of his closest friends, political advisers and business associates were Jewish. [...]

Many South African Jews had supported him, but others had openly backed or implicitly endorsed apartheid. [...]

He supported Israel's right to exist as a democratic Jewish state, yet felt closer to its enemies: the PLO's Yasser Arafat, Libya's Muammar Gaddafi, Cuba's Fidel Castro, Iran's Mohammed Khatami and Syria's Hafez Assad. Nevertheless, he praised his Israeli hosts for their warm reception and peace-making efforts."

Steve Linde, JPO 06.12.13

Mandela is not yet free

"President Shimon Peres [...] who was involved up to his neck in the disgraceful cooperation between Israel and apartheid South Africa [...] is suddenly admiring the man who symbolized the struggle with that regime.

Neither Peres nor Netanyahu have any right to eulogize Mandela; both are responsible, more than any other statesmen in the free world, for undermining his legacy and establishing the (nonidentical) twin of the regime he battled. [...]

Mandela said he was not liberated as long as the Palestinians were not free. Those in Israel who seek to eulogize him can't continue to ignore this."

Gideon Levy, HAA 08.12.13

South Africa's true test begins now

"Different from Gandhi, [...] who from the beginning of his endeavors negated the option of using violence, Mandela eventually became a protagonist of armed struggle, guerilla tactics, and terrorism -- after believing that all other nonviolent methods of resistance were exhausted. [...]

In contrast to Arafat, Mandela knew how to make the career change from terrorist to statesman, to man of peace, and he understood that sincerely extending his hand was the only way toward political progress."

Boaz Bismuth, IHY 08.12.13

On charisma and humanity

"Mandela clearly saw Israeli-Palestinian peace as a mission of the same magnitude of his life's chal-

lenge: Turning South Africa into a democratic country.

Even after 27 unbearable years in prison, Mandela remained a man of peace, a man of compromises, a man of forgiveness. He always saw the best in people and believed that every person could be persuaded.

In the past few years, as we saw Middle East leaders abusing their citizens, I thought to myself more than once that they could use some private lessons from Nelson Mandela, precisely at a time when these lessons could no longer be delivered."

Alon Liel, JED 07.12.13

Misrepresenting Mandela

"Imagine a person who planned acts of sabotage and incited violence, resulting in the deaths of innocent civilians and damage to public property. A man who embraced brutal dictators throughout the Third World, such as Libya's Gaddafi and Cuba's Castro. [...] A person who hugged Yasser Arafat at the height of the intifada. [...] Picture all this and [...] you will be staring at a portrait of Nelson Mandela. [...]

By painting Mandela solely in glowing terms and ignoring his violent record, the media and others are falsifying history and concealing the truth. [...]

To gloss over or ignore his failings and flaws is hagiography, not history."

Michael Freud, JPO 09.12.13

Netanyahu's Mandela manipulation

"Netanyahu described him as 'a man of vision, a fighter for freedom who rejected violence.'

Really? [...]

For Mandela, violence was a means, not an end. He operated peacefully as long as he could, until the apartheid regime closed off every peaceful avenue. When he had no other option, he adopted violent resistance — and he paid for it with 27 years in prison. [...] Mandela knew that there was a time for violence, but that it would always, inevitably, be followed by a time of peacemaking. [...]

It's a pity that Netanyahu [...] tried to manipulate Mandela for his own purposes. It might be comforting to contrast the supposedly peaceful anti-apartheid legend with the obviously nonpeaceful Palestinians — but that's not the way it was or is."

Roy Isacowitz, HAA 09.12.13

We need Mandelas

"Our region, more than others, is in need of a Mandela. [...]

An Israeli Mandela, one can assume, would first and foremost tell his people the truth – that the occupation of another people, taking away their freedoms, is immoral, impossible and self-defeating. [...] An Israeli Mandela would speak directly to the Palestinians in their parliament in Ramallah about his full respect for their human and natural rights and their desire for freedom and self-determination, without ever giving up on his own pride, identity and interests. [...]

A Palestinian Mandela would also tell his people the truth – that Israel is here to stay, that it must, for their own good, be turned from enemy into a neighbor [...]. He would express understanding and support for Israel's security needs in a hostile region. [...]

Well, unfortunately there are no Mandelas on the Israeli or Palestinian horizon."

Uri Savir, JPO 12.12.13

Why Israel supported South Africa's apartheid regime

"Starting in the 1950's, Israel developed close ties with African states. [...] Israel supported the struggle of weaker African states for freedom and prosperity, and avoided establishing ties with South Africa at a time when other Western countries had good relations with Pretoria. [...]

How did Israel [...] become a friend of the apartheid regime, to such an extent that by 1986 it was the only Western nation that did not take part in sanctions imposed on South Africa? [...]

Among the many reasons was the 1973 war [...] that led most African countries to break off their ties with Israel, yielding to Arab pressure and the embargo on oil [...]. Isolated, and possibly due to its nuclear requirements, Israel was cornered into seeking relations with South Africa. This obviously does not remove the moral stain. The historic truth, however, is that Israel never willingly supported the apartheid regime, and is far from being the villain in this complex saga."

Avi Shilon, HAA 11.12.13

2. Israelisch-palästinensische Friedensverhandlungen

Vor vier Monaten haben direkte israelisch-palästinensische Gespräche unter der Ägide von US-Außenminister John Kerry begonnen. Doch die Verhandlungen zwischen der israelischen Justizministerin Zippi Livni und dem palästinensischen Chefunterhändler Saeb Erekat haben bisher keine

Früchte getragen. Deswegen hat die amerikanische Regierung ihre Strategie geändert: Statt als passiver Mediator zu agieren, will Washington nun eigene Vorschläge präsentieren.

So unterbreitete Kerry den Konfliktparteien einen Vorschlag für Sicherheitsarrangements in der Westbank nach Errichtung eines palästinensischen Staates. Laut diesem Vorschlag würden israelische Truppen für zehn Jahre in einem Sicherheitspuffer an der jordanischen Grenze stationiert sein. Die palästinensische Führung lehnte diesen Plan jedoch ab.

Kerry kündigte außerdem an, in den kommenden Wochen ein Rahmenabkommen präsentieren zu wollen. Durch die Vorlage eines amerikanischen Friedensplans sollen Israelis und Palästinenser dazu gebracht werden, die wichtigsten Konfliktpunkte zu verhandeln, statt sich hinter Vorbedingungen zu verschanzen.

Crunch time for peace talks

"The Americans were not surprised by Palestinian opposition to the security plan devised in Washington. They found two advantages in Mahmoud Abbas' intransigence. First, it allows the administration to align itself with Israel following the fresh wound of the nascent Iran deal in Geneva. Second, when Mahmoud Abbas accepts the main points of the U.S. security vision, it will be hard for Israel to reject them. [...]

The round that starts today with Kerry's visit, brings each side closer to a situation where they may have to make concessions. This is the first time when they cannot fall back on general statements, but are under pressure from America [...] to talk about territory, about the essentials and the substance."

Dan Margalit, IHY 11.12.13

Wacko in Washington

"Kerry [...] advocates the patently preposterous precept that the key to regional tranquility and development is Israeli withdrawal to indefensible borders [...].

As implausible as this idea was in the dizzying days of the '90s, when there was a semblance of regional stability and a sense of US credibility and influence, today in the tectonic post-'Arab Spring' upheavals and accelerating erosion of America's standing, any such notion is so detached from reality as to be borderline deranged.

It is difficult to know what would be more disconcerting, that the secretary of state of the United States

believes the tripe he is disseminating, or he doesn't, and is disseminating it anyway."
Martin Sherman, JPO 12.12.13

American bayonets for a Palestinian state

"Kerry's proposal to allow Israel to maintain its security interests over the Green Line for an extended period is a non-starter for the Palestinians. [...]"

Our obsession with our own security dilemma, albeit understandable, blinds us to the Palestinian position that any Israeli occupation of their land violates their sovereignty and embitters their lives. After more than 45 years of occupation, they cannot trust that any deal allowing Israel to maintain its forces legitimately in the West Bank temporarily won't become permanent.

The best and perhaps singular way to break this Gordian knot is to introduce third-party forces to replace withdrawn Israeli troops from the West Bank. [...] If the Americans and Palestinians can come to agreement on this issue, they could begin to rally international pressure on Israel to accede, which will be a Herculean task itself. Anything short of that, [...] won't be good enough.

Steven Klein, HAA 17.12.13

Time to leave the bunker

"The Israeli government [...] is agreeing to allow foreigners, even if they are Americans, to prepare a defense plan for it [...]. That is weakness."

Israel Harel, HAA 12.12.13

Security isn't everything

"Officials seem to believe that security will be solved through technical means: cameras, warning stations, international observers, U.S. guarantees. In other words, a folk remedy which has proved to be nothing but a fraud [...]"

Security arrangements are not a recipe for promoting peace. [...] Netanyahu alone understands that peace cannot grow out of a diplomatic process designed to extend the diplomatic horizons for the enemy, not for the Jews. [...] Israel should not be proud of starting negotiations without preconditions. The enemy understands this. The Palestinians laid out strict conditions that, under the American auspices, have transformed into directives. [...] Israel needs to learn from its adversaries how to set preconditions.

The first necessary condition [...] is that if a Palestinian state is formed [...] it must absorb Arab refugees. [...] Another necessary condition [...] is that

no one can banish people from their homes. This includes Jews."

Dr. Ron Breiman, IHY 09.12.13

The politics of subversion

"Unfortunately, Israel cannot trust the US. Kerry and the Obama administration as a whole lost all credibility when they negotiated the deal with Iran last month. [...]"

The fact that Kerry had the nerve to show up here with 'security guarantees' regarding the Palestinians two weeks after he agreed to effectively unravel the sanctions regime against Iran in exchange for no concrete Iranian concessions [...] shows that he holds Israel in contempt.

But then, even if Kerry had all the credibility in the world it wouldn't make a difference. The real problem with the notion of an Israeli withdrawal to indefensible borders is that those indefensible borders will be insecure. Both the PLO and Hamas remain committed to Israel's destruction.

[...] So the whole peace process is doomed. Kerry's attempt to dictate security arrangements is a waste of time."

Caroline Glick, JPO 12.05.13

The al-Qaeda takeover

"The 'security arrangements' the Americans are talking about may have been relevant for the 1980s. [But] the Salafi Spring changed everything. The Salafi gangs, al-Qaeda terrorists, have turned into one of the main threats. [...] No force of 'peace' or 'security' will stop these terrorists.[...] Their proclaimed aspiration is to establish Islamic caliphates all across the Middle East. [...]"

Let's just imagine a reality in Judea and Samaria without the permanent presence of the IDF and the defense establishment. Why, within several days the territory will turn into Salafland. [...]"

So please bring security which is relevant to the present time; not to history."

Guy Bechor, JED 08.12.13

No more excuses

"Kerry, in his hectic efforts to advance the negotiations, is imposing quite a difficult problem on Netanyahu. The military plan devised by a huge team of experts [...] robs Netanyahu of the immediate argument he has raised every time he was required to discuss the outline of the future border between Israel and Palestine: Security arrangements. Now there are security arrangements. [...]"

[So] Netanyahu skipped the security argument. He preferred to withdraw to the next defense line: The Palestinians refuse to recognize Israel as a Jewish state. [...] The demand to recognize Israel as a Jewish state was first raised by Tzipi Livni in the Sharon government. Livni believed that at the end of the negotiations, as part of the declaration on ending the claims, there is room for recognizing Israel as a Jewish state. Netanyahu has turned it into a precondition."

Nahum Barnea, JED 09.12.13

American aid for Netanyahu

"The talks are stuck in place and there is fear that Netanyahu is not at all willing to reach an agreement that will be acceptable to the other side, but just continues the show for the sake of reducing the international pressure. [...]

He decides only under pressure, as if he is only capable of showing how the decision was forced on him by the president of the United States, or by public outrage. [...] Netanyahu will make progress in the peace process only if he is forced to accept or reject a proposal from the American mediator. The security plan for a final agreement that U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry presented to him on Thursday is an important precedent on the road to an overall settlement. Now the Americans must present an outline for the border between Israel and the Palestinian state. Without this, Netanyahu won't move forward."

HAA 06.12.13 Editorial

Between negotiations and reality

"The Palestinians speak of peace but their intentions are sinister. Their unwillingness to recognize Israel as a Jewish state, abandon their demand for 'return' or end their incitement [...] makes this abundantly clear.[...] The national narrative repeatedly voiced by the leaders of the Palestinian 'nation'[...] is the promise [...] to liberate all of 'Palestine.' [...]

While the Palestinians are divided in their hostility toward each other, and while most consider Abbas an illegitimate figure, they are, incidentally, unified in their desire to destroy Israel. The sad part of this story is the naivete of many Israelis, who yearn to sign a peace deal that no one among the Palestinians, including those who sign it, intends to or will be able to honor."

Reuven Berko, IHY 10.12.13

Building and talking

"There is some hope that against all odds the present talks will actually lead to a substantial breakthrough. [...] The fact remains that a majority of both Palestinians and Israelis realize that a negotiated two-state solution is the only option."

JPO 02.12.13 Editorial

3. 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 **ungewöhnlich kaltes Dezemberwetter**, das in Jerusalem zu tagelangen Stromausfällen, Verkehrschaos und eingeschneiten Menschen führte:*

Written on ice

"How is it possible that in a storm which in Europe is considered a regular winter day, here there is a multi-system failure? How is it possible that hundreds of thousands of people sit in the dark and cold for so many hours with no one to turn to? And how is it possible that all those who should be taking responsibility somehow emerge from this story as heroes, from the Electric Corp to the local authorities – until the conclusions of the commission of inquiry [...], which will anyway be buried in the cemetery of commissions of inquiry. [...]

Perhaps we should simply stop whining about being among the backward countries in the Western world, and start taking pride in the fact that we are among the advanced countries in the Third World.

After all, it's all a matter of perspective."

Sima Kadmon, JED 15.12.13

Have we gone mad?

"Such wildly intense natural events happen from time to time in countries around the globe. [...] So what are we complaining about?

It is unpleasant to find yourself cut off from electricity for even one hour, let alone 48. But when thousands of trees across the country topple under the weight of snow and bring down power lines with them, who is there to complain to? The Israel Electric Corporation is generally deserving of public criticism, but in

this case, IEC employees stood out there in the cold trying their best to restore power. [...]

Ahh, the wise guys in the media say, why not bury all power lines in the ground? [...] Wouldn't this be a waste of money? If we were about to enter a new ice age, the idea might make sense. But if the next storm of such size is not coming for another 100 years, then not so much. [...]

It was cold and unpleasant, but good people did their jobs [...] and in the end we received a lot of water from the skies, which is a good thing."

Gonen Ginat, IHY 15.12.13

*Über die Knesset-Abgeordnete Pnina Tamnu-Shata, deren **Blutspende abgelehnt** wurde, weil sie aus Äthiopien stammt:*

Blood scandal

"An unfortunate incident occurred in Israel's parliament on Wednesday. Yesh Atid MK Pnina Tamnu-Shata [...] sought to donate blood at a [...] donation station at the Knesset. She was turned away because the organization rejects donations from Israelis born in Ethiopia. [...]

The organization argues that this is an issue of public health and that it applies to anyone who was born or lived in parts of Africa, Southeast Asia and the Caribbean before 1977. [...]

The AIDS excuse for rejecting blood from Ethiopian-born Israelis has never had solid scientific backing and it has often been part of a stereotyping campaign subjecting this group to discriminatory and secret policies. There was no evidence that those like Tamnu-Shata, who made aliya in 1984, were more likely than other Israelis [...] to have the disease; and yet there has always been a policy defining them as a risk group. The essence of equality is having the same criteria for people, regardless of skin color and country of origin. [...]

It is patently illogical to reject the blood of people who have been citizens of Israel for almost 30 years and who are no more likely than average to have blood-born diseases."

JPO Editorial 12.12.13

Equality? It's complicated

"A Knesset member of Ethiopian descent cannot donate blood. [...]

I can already imagine many people saying, well, Ethiopians carry diseases. [...] They will say that and wash their hands in justification, in a society where discrimination based on ethnicity and gender

and sector and language and economic status and religious lifestyle has become a norm.

[...] The civilian rage is clearly rising in me in light of the daily injustice suffered by immigrants of Ethiopian descent, even before they donate blood. But in order for us not to forget this headline, and for it to become a thing of the past, Israel needs a commission on civil equality issues. One which will gather all the discriminations and injustices the abuses and humiliations and begin repairing them for the sake of all of us."

Ariana Melamed, JED 14.12.13

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