



Schlaglicht Israel Nr. 01/14

Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen

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1. Eskalation im Konflikt mit den Palästinensern?

Im Konflikt zwischen Israel und den Palästinensern ist es in den letzten Wochen zu einem Anstieg von gewalttätigen Zwischenfällen gekommen. In den Medien wird deswegen diskutiert, ob diese Entwicklungen der Auftakt für eine neue Intifada – einen palästinensischen Aufstand – sein könnten.

So kam es zu einer Messerattacke auf einen israelischen Polizisten im Westjordanland. Am selben Tag wurde in einem Bus in der Stadt Bat Yam ein Sprengsatz gefunden. Außerdem wurde aus Gaza eine Rakete auf den Süden Israels abgefeuert. Wenige Tage später wurde ein israelischer Zivilist bei Reparaturarbeiten an der Grenzanlage am Gazastreifen erschossen. Die israelische Luftwaffe flog Angriffe auf Gaza und tötete dabei ein Kleinkind.

Diese Eskalation der Gewalt findet statt, während US-Außenminister John Kerry sich weiterhin bemüht, ein Rahmenabkommen zwischen Israelis und Palästinensern zu erreichen, auf dessen Basis die Verhandlungen zwischen den Konfliktparteien fortgesetzt werden sollen. Während Israel weitere palästinensische Gefangene im Rahmen dieser Verhandlungen frei lies, kündigte die Regierung gleichzeitig weitere Bauvorhaben in den jüdischen Siedlungen in der Westbank an.

Without prior warning, West Bank terror spills into Israel

"It is impossible to ignore the fact that in recent months there has been a surge in anti-Israel incitement and nationalistic sentiment among Palestinians in the West Bank, which have already resulted in the deaths of Israelis. [...]"

Hamas is also trying to put terror attacks into motion using West Bank operatives to compensate for the restraint it has shown and lack of terror attacks it has launched from Gaza. [...]"

As a result of these activities and the Shin Bet and the IDF's terror prevention operations some 16 Palestinians have been killed in the West Bank and Gaza during the last year. [...] These numbers feed the desire for vengeance among terrorists and could be the driving force behind Sunday's bus bombing. [...]"

Ron Ben-Yishai, JED 22.12.13

The balance of terror

"Neither side is interested in opening a front in the south at the moment, unless someone has reached the conclusion that the flames in the south are a golden opportunity to postpone Kerry's trips to the region to an unknown date. [...]"

The real difficulty stems from the fact that Hamas is taking advantage of the lull to speed up its preparations for the next round. It is digging attack tunnels, manufacturing unmanned aerial vehicles, and extending its rocket range. Any military provocation from Hamas gives the IDF an opportunity to damage those abilities. Hamas, on its part, has no interest in giving the IDF the opportunity to destroy the military infrastructure it is building. That may be what will cause the current round of fire to slowly die down as well."

Alex Fishman, JED 25.12.13

Tit for tat began Friday as IDF killed Gazans

"Rightist Knesset members almost automatically issued statements linking the attack on the Gaza border to the wave of terror in the West Bank. But it's doubtful the connection is as close as they claim. Hamas views Gaza and the West Bank as two separate theaters. In Gaza, it's generally interested in maintaining quiet. [...] In the West Bank [...] it operates terrorist cells [...] in the hopes of causing Israeli casualties and creating complications for the PA. [...]"

All of this violence, of course, is happening against the background of the Israeli-Palestinian talks and the Americans' stated goal of achieving progress within a short time. [...]

In practice, for lack of other options, the Americans might settle for a vague, watered-down document plus an extension of the deadline for talks on a final-status agreement.

This seems unlikely to bring peace to our region within the next few months, as Kerry hopes. But it might at least postpone the outbreak of the next major round of violence between the parties."

Amos Harel, HAA 25.12.13

Let the Gazans live

"A new round of violence is underway. [...] 'I suggest that you don't test us; if it's not quiet in Israel it won't be quiet in Gaza, either,' Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said, and was quick to fulfill his promise. But quiet and occupation cannot coexist. For years, the Gaza Strip has been in dire straits because of the blockade Israel has imposed on it, which was recently joined by Egypt. [...]

The government must reevaluate its policy toward Gaza and do what is necessary to allow its people to live a reasonable life. Gaza is a powder keg waiting to explode. [...]

Shows of force and the bombing of 'infrastructures' only foster the illusion that Israel has some magical solution for preventing Palestinian attacks."

HAA 26.12.13 Editorial

The terrorist threat

"So far, security experts [...] say what we are seeing is not an intifada, because there does not appear to be any central planning being done by a group or groups, rather just an aggregate of isolated incidents [...].

However, there is an atmosphere of increasing tension, which provides a conducive backdrop for terror attacks – whether by organizations or individuals. [...]

Some in the PA have a vested interest in creating the impression that the Palestinians are on the verge of launching a third intifada if the present talks break down so as to put pressure on Israel. [...] Though the PA might not want to see the violence get out of hand, they may be powerless to control it. [...]

The status quo is untenable, not just because the international community refuses to accept it, but because it would mean the end of a Jewish and democratic Israel. But attempts to extricate our-

selves from this status quo carry with them dangers that remind us of the not too distant past."

JPO 23.12.13 Editorial

The price of peace

"No, it's not an intifada. The current wave of violence is still a only a small wave. But [...] the climate of the conflict has changed. [...]

Although at this point it's just a dream on the horizon, the pax Americana is starting to alter the consciousness and behavior of Israelis and Palestinians alike.

Unfortunately, the first change has been the resumption of violence. This is a familiar pattern: When there's a chance that the moderates on both sides might reach a reality-altering arrangement, the extremists of both sides strike. [...] If the process fails, the dashed expectations also lead to violence. In short, whatever happens, the path to peace is a path strewn with killings. [...]

Extremists [...] will try to bury the renewed hopes of peace under the same rivers of blood with which they drowned their predecessors. Does this mean giving up? No. Just as we must not surrender to terror that threatens the state, we must not surrender to terror that endangers peace. Just as we must be prepared to pay a high price during war, we must be prepared to pay a high price for peace."

Ari Shavit, HAA 26.12.13

Contextual reciprocity

"Perhaps the rise of violence is not connected to the peace talks at all, but with something else. Since the peace talks began, over 30 Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza have been killed by Israel. There are over 5,000 Palestinians in Israeli prisons [...]. Hundreds have been arrested since the peace talks began in July. [...] Since July, Israel has demolished over 200 Palestinian homes. [...] Since July the Palestinian economy continues to deteriorate [...]

and the financial horizon for most Palestinian young people is quite bleak. [...]

What appears to be escalation of Palestinian violence since July cannot be separated from what appears to be an escalation of Israeli violence against Palestinians during the same time period. Nothing happens in a vacuum. And none of this is in the interests of the Palestinians or of Israel."

Gershon Baskin, JPO 25.12.13

Intifada for beginners

"One terror attack a day – and even two or three – don't necessarily announce an intifada. The series

of violent attacks we have been experiencing since the start of John Kerry's peace offensive is simply a Palestinian operational routine. From time to time, the Palestinian fighters go on a temporary ceasefire, in order to rest or equip themselves, but their regular condition is the militant condition. [...]

The height of the flames stems from ability, not from desire. There is always a desire. [...]

When does a wave of terror attacks reach the dimensions of an intifada? When the masses join the circle of violence. At the moment, the masses prefer to go to work. They like it that way. They are enjoying economic prosperity, unprecedented freedom of movement and an independent parliament. The famous Palestinian despair exists only in Jewish imagination."

Hagai Segal, JED 30.12.13

Atmospheric terrorism

"What exactly is the origin of this atmosphere, which has triggered small incidents that may easily develop into something more organized ?

This atmosphere [...] which glorifies terror, jihad and slaughtering Jews and Israelis whoever and wherever they are. [...] The people who go for Molotov cocktails, rocks or blades, eventually grabbing a firearm, have been consuming this culture of hatred for years. They and their children were born, raised and continue to live off of notions that Haifa and Acre within the Green Line are the same as Efrat and Ariel in Judea and Samaria. [...] It prospered in a public space where it was the norm to demonize and incite against Israel, to deny the legitimacy of its very existence. [...]

This is how you plant the seeds of intifada. [...] We cannot continue playing this game. [...] We need to say, loudly and clearly, that we accept negotiations, but not at any cost. Until further notice, Israel should seriously reconsider the third phase of the prisoners release. After all, the first two phases just added more fuel to the fire of terror. Why stoke the flames even more?"

Nadav Shragai, IHY 25.12.13

Living by the knife

"A new intifada? Not quite yet. [...]

Even if a peace treaty is signed, there will be no love lost between extremists of both sides. There will always be Palestinians who will stab Israelis, and there will always be a Jewish extremist who will burn down an olive grove. Still, we won't be repelled – neither by stubbornness nor by knives."

Yoel Marcus, HAA 27.12.13

Both sides wary of escalation

"The majority of terrorist activity is conducted by Hamas and the Islamic Jihad, which seek to undermine the Palestinian Authority and sabotage the peace process. Terrorist activity in Gaza Strip is promoted by radical fringe groups seeking to discredit Hamas. The common denominators may be desperation over the economic situation and an ever-present desire to harm Israelis.

Even in the absence of a direct link, this disconcerting string of events requires Israel to reassess the situation. The desire to contain the conflict rather than allow it to deteriorate is true for both Gaza Strip and the West Bank, but each requires a different approach.

If security assessments prove true, the peace talks looming deadline spells an increase in terrorist attacks. Israel will need to employ every diplomatic, military and political avenue to avoid an unwanted escalation that might set both sectors ablaze."

Yoav Limor, IHY 25.12.13

2. Akademischer Boykott gegen Israel

Die American Studies Association (ASA), ein US-amerikanischer Zusammenschluss von Wissenschaftlern in den Amerikastudien, hat einen Boykott israelischer Institutionen beschlossen. Damit folgt sie der kleineren Association for Asian American Studies, die bereits im April einen Boykott Israels beschlossen hatte. Die Boykottbeschlüsse wurden als großer Erfolg für die weltweite "Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions" Kampagne (BDS) gewertet, die für eine Isolation Israels eintritt, um auf das Los der Palästinenser aufmerksam zu machen. Bisher hatte sich diese Kampagne hauptsächlich im künstlerischen Bereich bemerkbar gemacht – immer wieder haben Popstars und andere Künstler Auftritte in Israel abgesagt. Auch Wirtschaftsunternehmen, jüngst die holländische Firma Vitens, haben Kooperationen mit Israel abgelehnt, allerdings zumeist nur, wenn es um Aktivitäten in den besetzten Gebieten ging.

Der Boykott der ASA hat in den USA viel Kritik nach sich gezogen. So kritisierte eine ganze Reihe von anderen akademischen Organisationen den Boykott.

More than an Academic boycott

"There seems to be a misconception that the [ASA] lacks importance and the boycott has no practical consequences [...]. We couldn't be more wrong.

The decision has serious implications beyond the academic realm. The campaign of [...] BDS is gaining a momentum that soon will be unstoppable. What was once a militant agenda of a handful of extremists may become a larger organization before we have enough time to respond. The idea that was taboo until now – a boycott of all Israeli academic institutions – has become legitimate, while the State of Israel is losing its legitimacy in the eyes of respected and influential organizations and institutions throughout the world."

Rivka Carmi, TOI 29.12.13

ASA boycott: Victory for bigotry

"If an academic group chooses to engage in the unacademic exercise of boycotting the academic institutions of another country, it should do it in order of the seriousness of the human rights violations and of the inability of those within the country to seek redress against those violations.

By these standards, Israeli academic institutions should be among the last to be boycotted. [...]

Shame on those members of the American Studies Association for singling out the Jew among nations. Shame on them for applying a double standard to Jewish universities. Israeli academic institutions are strong enough to survive this exercise in bigotry. The real question is will this association survive its complicity with the oldest and most enduring prejudice?"

Alan Dershowitz, HAA 18.12.13

Boycotting the boycotters

"My love and loyalty to my people and my country obligate me to fight my country wherever I believe it to be flawed. I fight it, however, through speech and advocacy, and at the ballot box. The coercive and punitive dimensions of BDS I find both arrogant and inappropriate [...].

That said, I believe that boycotting the boycotters [...], whether in Israel or particularly on college campuses, is a serious strategic error. [...]

Our challenge now is less with the limits of free speech than with those who want to limit it. While every society allows for emergency measures which can suspend for a time democratic principles and rights, right now we need emergency measures which will suspend legitimate legislation for the sake of ensuring our democratic principles and rights. [...]

While we need not be so open-minded as to allow for our dissolution, we also need to recognize that we are not so weak that we cannot take chances for our ideals."

Donniel Hartman, TOI 18.12.13

Academic boycotts are unacceptable

"The State of Israel must fortify our front lines and carry out counterattacks if we want to prevent real damage and preserve the international reputation of Israeli academia. [...]

Israeli institutions of higher learning promulgate diverse views. They rest of the credo that all views should be heard, examined and analyzed in the context of freedom of expression and debate. An academic boycott prevents scholars from expressing themselves and being heard for illegitimate reasons that have nothing to do with them personally. [...]

Even if the battle seems lost when it comes to the American Studies Association, it is far from over. We must persevere in our efforts to preserve international cooperation for the sake our academic future, for the next generation of Israeli children, and for all of humanity, which will benefit from academic breakthroughs made in Israel."

Uri Reshtik, IHY 30.12.13

Worrisome boycott

"The ASA's decision is a worrisome development, but should not be cause for undue alarm. [...] Condemnations of the resolution have come from many sectors. [...]

The ASA decision was made by a minority of members of a relatively small academic organization that has a long history of radical activism. [...] Grass roots activism must go to work to repeal this motion, and to keep track of upcoming attempts to delegitimize Israel and pass discriminatory hypocritical boycotts like this."

JPO 18.12.13 Editorial

The un-American Studies Association

"There are 200,000 dead in Syria and millions of refugees, zero academic freedom in China ... well, why go on; none of these matters seems worthy of notice by the ASA. [...]

This move by the ASA will not harm Israel, but it is enlightening [...] that this group of academics harbors such an extraordinary bias. [...] Those votes express not only bias against Israel, [...] but a bias as well against the spirit of free inquiry that is supposed to infuse American academia."

Elliot Abrams, IHY 17.12.13

The bad Jews who deserve a boycott

"Getting back to the boycott, let's just call it what it is: Nothing but old-fashioned Jew hatred dressed up

with fancy words, a remnant of the conviction that some people have that Jews are inherently bad. [...] In my own view, Israel's policies – like those of the UK, the US, France, and other members of the democratic west – are deeply flawed, sometimes even immoral. But to single it out for condemnation as the American Studies professors have done is not only shameful, but proof – as if the world needs it – that the existence of Israel as a nation in which Jews refuse to be victimized is as urgent as it's ever been."

Jennifer Moses, JED 03.01.13

3. Israels Asylpolitik

Anfang Januar fand in Tel Aviv die größte Demonstration von Asylbewerbern in Israels Geschichte statt. Etwa 20,000 Menschen demonstrierten gegen ein neues Gesetz, dass es ermöglicht, Asylbewerber zeitlich unbegrenzt in einem Auffanglager zu inhaftieren. Das Mitte Dezember eröffnete Zentrum ist zwar tagsüber offen, befindet sich jedoch abge-schieden in der Negev-Wüste. Außerdem müssen sich die Insassen drei Mal täglich melden, so dass es ihnen fast unmöglich ist, das Zentrum zu verlassen. Auch der UN Flüchtlingsrat kritisierte die israelische Asylpolitik.

In Israel leben etwa 54,000 Asylbewerber – offiziell als "Infiltrators" ("Eindringlinge") bezeichnet - der Großteil aus Eritrea. Sie erhalten keinen Flüchtlingsstatus, sondern lediglich eine Duldung, die ihnen jedoch weder ein Recht auf Arbeit noch jegliche staatliche Unterstützung gibt.

Premierminister Netanyahu sagte, die Demonstrationen würden nicht zu einer Politikänderung führen und betonte, dass Israel alles daran setze, die Asylbewerber abzuschieben.

The manhunt against asylum seekers

"It is hard not to discern the true motivation of the State of Israel: To trap the migrants one way or another, until they despair and can be forced into 'leaving of their own will.' [...]

The government has chosen to exacerbate the racism and fear among the local Israeli population, and endanger the migrants' lives. When the state forbids them to work, it sentences them to hunger and crime; when it kidnaps them on the street, [...] and in the end jails them without trial, it violates their human dignity."

HAA 03.02.14 Editorial

Hear our outcry

"We are very thankful to you for letting us in, for giving us work, for handing out blankets when it's cold and cold water when it's hot. There are many good Israelis, good Jews, and there are not enough words for me to thank them for this hospitality.

But Israel has another face too. There are people who spit on me when they see me on the street, there are those who want to throw me and my friends out of here just because we're 'contaminating their street.' I have learned history, I have read about the Holocaust, I identify with your pain and loss. But that is precisely why you should understand us too more than anything.

I am a refugee. I have nowhere to go back to right now. [...] Let me live in dignity, that's all I'm asking."

Anonymous Eritrean Refugee, JED 29.12.13

Infiltrators are existential problem for Israel

"The fact that thousands of infiltrators can hold a protest rally in Tel Aviv proves beyond any doubt that Israel is a democratic and liberal country – perhaps the only one of its kind. In other countries the different types of infiltrators wouldn't dare protest, and in any case the authorities wouldn't let them do so. Israel is also the only country which has paid – and is willing to pay more – a lot of money to different countries in Africa so that they would take in infiltrators who agree to leave voluntarily.

And different countries or bleeding hearts should not come along and accuse us of racism. Let them turn to bigger and stronger countries than Israel, those which prove on a daily basis how non-liberal and even inhumane they are in their 'treatment' of those Africans."

Noah Klieger, JED 07.01.13

We have no other country

"Human rights' groups, concerned about the rights of everyone except Jews, will, with help from most of the media, embark on a huge and exhausting propaganda campaign to turn Israel into 'a state for all its citizens'. [...] This is the deeper meaning of the propaganda campaign on behalf of the rights of the work infiltrators. [...] Few of the infiltrators are war refugees. [...] The jobs they fill come at the expense of jobs for Israelis from disadvantaged sectors.

It is difficult to live in Africa. But does that mean we must absorb all citizens of that continent? [...]

Israel is the only state the Jewish people have. We need to preserve this place for the future generations of our people. We have no other country."

Dror Eydar, IHY 07.01.13

NGOs and migrants

"Many of these NGOs are striving to undermine the character of Israel as a Jewish state by fighting to keep as many African migrants as possible in Israel and by encouraging more to come. But they rarely declare their true intentions publicly because they know that they would lose public support in Israel if they did. [...]"

Israel, created to be the only state in the world where the Jewish people can exercise self-determination, will never solve the socioeconomic ills of Africa. It does, however, risk losing its strong Jewish majority if it continues to absorb thousands of African migrants.

Some NGOs would actually like to see this happen. The government's migrant policy is designed to prevent such a scenario."

JPO 01.07.13 Editorial

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 **NSA-Dokumente**, die enthüllten, dass auch die ehemaligen israelischen Premierminister Ehud Barak und Ehud Olmert von den Amerikanern abgehört wurden:*

An open secret

"Exposure of these documents will not change the world much. Even before Snowden's revelations, millions of people around the world just assumed America was always listening. Certainly listening in on Israel. Politicians spoke amongst themselves in a way that presumed an American 'Big Brother' was watching. [...]"

It is reasonable to assume that the more conscientious politicians even planted information intended to divert American surveillance.

The two Israeli leaders [...] may have staged meetings specifically designed to convince the spying Americans that Israel intended to attack Iran on its own. [...]"

The situation resembles the debate over legalizing marijuana. It is already widespread, and hard to

eradicate -- so why not legitimize international surveillance."

Dan Margalit, IHY 22.12.13

Big Brother Obama

"The liberal president has in fact turned into the Big Brother: [...]"

It's true, everyone listens in on everyone, and the US is not the only country tapping Israel. But the troubling aspect of this affair is the extent of the American addiction to any piece of information – particularly when it has nothing to do with national security issues [...]. The American passion for information is insatiable, and Obama's administration is acting like someone who has become addicted to endlessly digging in friends' communication lines.

[...] Obama [...] will have to gather all his strength not only to minimize the damage from the recent revelations, but also to save something much more important: His legacy as a president."

Orly Azoulay, JED 22.12.13

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

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