



## Schlaglicht Israel Nr. 03/14

### Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen

21. Januar – 09. Februar 2014

#### 1. Die internationale Boykottbewegung gegen Israel

Die Erfolge der internationalen Kampagne für "Boycott, Disinvestition und Sanktionen" (BDS) gegen Israel haben sich bisher weitgehend auf den kulturellen Bereich beschränkt. So haben Musiker wiederholt auf Druck der Kampagne Konzerte in Israel abgesagt.

Nun sind wirtschaftliche Boykottmaßnahmen jedoch ins Zentrum der israelischen Mediendebatte getreten.

Bei der Münchner Sicherheitskonferenz hatte US-Außenminister John Kerry gewarnt, dass ein Zusammenbruch der Friedensgespräche zu "inakzeptablen Folgen" wie Sanktionen führen könne. In den letzten Wochen hatten bereits mehrere europäische Finanzinstitute eine Einschränkung ihrer Aktivitäten in Israel angekündigt. So hatte der niederländische Rentenfonds PGGM beträchtliche Investitionen in Israels Banken rückgängig gemacht, da diese Filialen in den jüdischen Siedlungen im Westjordanland betreiben und dort Bauvorhaben finanzieren. Auch die Danske Bank bendete ihre Zusammenarbeit mit der israelischen Bank Hapoalim aus diesen Gründen. Deutschland fügte einem Abkommen für wissenschaftliche Zusammenarbeit einen Zusatz hinzu, demzufolge Aktivitäten in den Siedlungen nicht finanziert werden dürfen.

Für Kontroverse sorgte indes die Hollywood-Schauspielerin Scarlett Johansson mit ihrer Werbung für die Firma SodaStream. Diese betreibt eine Fabrik in einem einer Siedlung zugehörigen Industriepark.

Nicht nur Kerry warnte jedoch vor drohenden Sanktionen: Eine Gruppe von 58 israelischen Wirtschaftsgrößen forderte Premierminister Benjamin Netanyahu dazu auf, sich auf ein Friedensabkommen mit den Palästinensern einzulassen, weil sonst schwerwiegende Schäden drohen würden. Finanz-

minister Yair Lapid sagte ebenfalls, dass ein Zusammenbruch des Friedensprozesses zu erheblichen Einbrüchen in der israelischen Wirtschaft führen würde.

#### Boycotting reality

"Kerry's statement [...] that Israel will face boycotts should negotiations with the Palestinians fail, is a level-headed view of reality that the Israeli government chooses to continually ignore. [...]"

It's embarrassing to hear Strategic and Intelligence Affairs Minister Yuval Steinitz demand 100 million shekels for a public campaign against the boycott movement. He doesn't understand that the problem is policy, not public relations."

HAA 04.02.14 Editorial

#### Boycott Israel's boycotters

"The Israeli government should not turn the other cheek to those threatening it with a boycott by agreeing to the suicidal demands of Kerry and the Europeans [...]. Instead, Israel and its supporters in the US must fight fire with fire against those bigoted, misinformed and anti-Semitic boycotters of Israeli universities and companies [...], by boycotting them and hitting them in their pockets where it hurts the most.

Israel and its supporters should call on the US Congress to intervene and legislate against these anti-Israel boycotters, as they did in the 1970s against the Arab boycott, by stopping taxpayer subsidization of the boycott advocates, [...] and levying taxes, civil penalties and fines against European and American companies which participate. [...]"

Let us take the fight to them and hurt them financially through private lawsuits and legislation.

Let Israel find new economic markets in prosperous Asia where they are appreciated, and quickly leave Europe to sink economically under their own self-righteousness."

Shoula Romano Horing, JED 03.02.14

### **Carrot and stick: The real threat to Israel**

"Senior European Union officials said they had agreed to freeze the proposal to boycott products from the settlements for now, [...] but [...] if the Israeli side is blamed for the talk's failure, the EU will renew the initiative with all its energy. [...]

[...] We have already lost this war, and we will be blamed in any event, as the Palestinians are considered the victim side, the underdog."

Shimon Shiffer, JED 02.02.14

### **When hunger trumps satisfaction**

"On the one hand, the leftist camp is in a panic from the sanctions that have been imposed thus far, and from those that may yet come. Without minimizing the importance of the disturbing way Israel is being perceived in the West, it's not unfounded to say that the left is engaged in magnifying the threats and marketing them vigorously. [...] This exaggeration stems in part from the deep shame felt by the Israeli left – which sees itself as part of the liberal West, with its values of freedom – over our isolationist right-wing government, but it comes primarily from the fear of a decreased quality of life. [...]

On the other hand, the right, [...] is trying to minimize the threats and dismiss their importance. [...] The right believes that the boycott threats are no more than another link in an ancient anti-Semitic genealogical chain, and a rather marginal one at that. To their mind, the real threat facing Israel is the threat of destruction, pure and simple, and the boycott threat is secondary."

Ravit Hecht, HAA 05.02.14

### **What's wrong with BDS, after all?**

"Put yourselves for a minute in the Palestinians' place [...] and consider what you would do in their position. A violent Palestinian rebellion? No way [...], not least because it will be put down by a much more violent force. [...]

A diplomatic agreement? You've made Bennett and [...] Netanyahu [...] laugh. So then what? Nothing? Should they just say thank you and shut up? Would we remain silent and capitulate unconditionally if we were in their place? Suddenly it turns out that the boycott movement is not just an annoying effort to hit Israelis in the pocket, but a bold and innovative attempt to achieve real diplomatic gains. [...]

It's a local and international expression of a totally different type of Palestinian struggle, something new and not so familiar to us – nonviolent resistance. Is that also forbidden?"

Avraham Burg, HAA 03.02.14

### **Israel failing to heed warning signs**

"Indeed, the European boycott is not felt in Israel yet. Israeli exports to Europe even increased in 2013. But what will happen in 2014? [...] The real problem hiding behind the economic boycott and possible diplomatic boycott (and I pray that we are wrong) is that after it or at the same time a wave of de-legitimization of the State of Israel may sweep over the world. In a world of which quite a large part is really anti-Semitic, that is serious trouble and a recipe for tough times."

Eitan Haber, JED 23.01.14

### **Scarjo and peace**

"Admittedly, Israel's continued control over the lives of over 2.5 million Palestinians is problematic, chock with moral dilemmas, and ultimately unsustainable. However, resolving the conflict takes the cooperation of both sides. Blaming Israeli businesses like SodaStream and the celebrities who help promote them is misguided, unfair, and unhelpful. [...]

Perhaps something good will come out of all the media attention given to SodaStream and Johansson after all. As Johansson noted, the 'light being shed on this issue' might 'contribute to the conversation of a peaceful two-state solution in the near future.'"

JPO 28.01.14 Editorial

### **Scarlett fever gone viral**

"When mega-star Scarlett Johansson signed on to be the famous face of the Israeli soft drink company SodaStream, she was probably unaware of the tsunami it would unleash. [...]

To her great credit, Johansson was not intimidated by the deluge of detractors who [...] try to smear her reputation. [...] Her response [...] was [...] to defend SodaStream for being a factory that promotes peaceful coexistence between Palestinians and Israelis. [...]

The entire episode [...] dealt a blow to the BDS movement in the process.[...]

Scarlett Johansson has opted for sanity in a sea of lunacy, and SodaStream is not the only deserving benefactor. It has been uplifting for the rest of us, as well, to witness her message of moral clarity go viral."

Ruthie Blum, IHY 04.02.14

### **The boycott mirage**

"So far, BDS has not achieved much success; it constitutes a bearable nuisance. [...] Attempts to

boycott Israeli products are unlikely to be successful in America. The American public support for Israel has remained stable for the past two decades at over 60 percent. [...] Even in Europe there are strong pockets of pro-Israeli sentiments. The EU itself has announced that it has no plans whatsoever to boycott the Israeli economy. Israeli products originating beyond the Green Line are a different story, but only a small part of the Israeli economic activity is taking place in the settlements. [...]

Fortunately, Israel is not internationally isolated and most of the world does not care enough about the Palestinians to sacrifice the benefits of good bilateral relations with Israel. Israel has the leeway to decide what is good for itself."

Efraim Inbar, IHY 06.02.14

## 2. Kontroverse um "linken" Sozialkundelehrer

*Nachdem eine Schülerin sich in einem Brief an den Bildungsminister Shai Piron über die "staatsfeindlichen" Äußerungen ihres Sozialkundelehrers beschwert hatte, leitete das Bildungsnetzwerk ORT ein Disziplinarverfahren gegen Adam Verete ein. Dem Lehrer wurde insbesondere vorgeworfen, er habe die israelische Armee als "unmoralisch" bezeichnet. Verete und viele seiner Schüler gaben hingegen an, er habe die Jugendlichen zum kritischen Denken angeregt.*

*Während das ORT-Netzwerk zunächst Veretes Kündigung androhte, zog es diese nach einer zweiten Anhörung zurück. Piron sagte, es sei verboten, Lehrer aus ideologischen Gründen zu suspendieren, sie dürften aber ermahnt werden.*

*Sozialkunde ist in Israel ein besonders kontroverses Fach, da es zu Themen wie Rechte und Pflichten der Bürger und dem Zusammenspiel von Religion und Staat keinen gesellschaftlichen Konsens gibt. 2012 war der Koordinator für Sozialkunde im Bildungsministerium entlassen worden, nachdem er sich bemüht hatte, eine facettenreichere Debatte in seinem Fach einzuführen. Die Stelle ist seitdem unbesetzt.*

### 'Leftist' teacher must not be fired

"If we start firing or boycotting people over their opinions, we'll end up in abyss. [...]

Political opinions are the most legitimate thing. It's every person's basic right in a free society. [...]

And so an open debate among teenagers is a positive thing. It's exactly what we want to encourage among the youth: Involvement and concern. [...]

The argument over this country's image, its borders, its character, are the most important thing for every person here. Those who think this debate can be decided – regardless of which side – through silencing and intimidation, are making a serious mistake. Such steps will only hurt all of us, because they undermine the strongest foundation of the Israeli society: Our democracy."

Nitzan Horowitz, JED 22.01.14

### Free speech, free conscience and caution

"Education in democracy is anchored in our students' abilities to be exposed to a vast array of ideas [...]. The market of ideas must remain open, interesting and stimulating.

The teacher, however, must not exploit his or her position to disseminate personal beliefs among students. [...] It does not matter if the teacher has right-wing or left-wing persuasions.

The teacher's job is to facilitate debate without affecting its outcome. [...] In light of the Adam Verete scandal, it is highly important that Israeli teachers understand that transforming classrooms into political arenas calls for a yellow card."

Haim Shine, IHY 31.01.14

### The Orwellian tactic of Israel's rightists

"The affair surrounding Adam Verete [...] exposes a dangerous tendency in Israel's society. [...]

Instead of protecting Verete, who says he has received death threats, the school is trying to fire him because many of the parents support the view that Verete is a treacherous left-winger.

There are strong forces in Israeli society that push it toward right-wing totalitarianism and theocracy and make use of Orwellian tactics by delegitimizing anybody who disagrees with the right wing. [...] The result is that people feel free to threaten the life of a liberal teacher."

Carlo Strenger, HAA 29.01.14

### Leave politics out the classroom

"Unfortunately, Verete has been presented by his advocates and ideological fellow-travelers as a victim of an infringement of freedom of speech and thought. [...]

As opposed to those who claim that the action taken against Verete is a form of 'silencing', the contrary is true. Verete's actions are a form of silencing informed debate, imaginative, broad and open discussions and are a dispensary of intellectual dishonesty. [...]

Even if one student feels that they are alienated because of a teacher's political diatribe, then that teacher has failed their profession. This is what happened in the Verete case and this is what we should be protecting our children against."

Shimon Ohayon, TOI 02.02.14

### **Opinionated teachers**

"In many national-religious schools, teachers take right-wing positions on issues such as settlements, state and religion, and IDF policies. Moreover, national-religious high schools for boys and girls regularly encourage their students to take part in demonstrations against territorial compromise or in favor of settlement expansion. [...]

In secular schools, in contrast, the political environment is more diverse. Nevertheless, expressing certain political positions, even in the classroom, are considered acceptable and even desirable. A teacher would never be disciplined for expressing unqualified support for the IDF or for defending Israel's right to promote Jewish immigration via the Law of Return.

Ideally, however, while a teacher can and should deal with controversial issues, particularly in civics class, he or she should do so without presenting personal political opinions in the classroom."

JPO 03.02.14 Editorial

### **An educator's responsibility**

"Can radical opinions, ones that deviate from the values of the education system and the State of Israel, be considered legitimate? [...]

State-run schools in Israel cannot permit Kahanistic racist education. By the same token, there is no place for anti-Zionist education. [...]

There is no place in the education system for teachers who support so-called 'price-tag' attacks by right-wing activists, or, on the other hand, teachers who support the Zochrot agenda, advocating the Palestinian right of return."

Uri Heitner, IHY 29.01.14

### **Shay Piron's test**

"The education minister cannot and must not stand aside when a teacher is being punished for trying to engage in education. [...]

Teachers who try to discuss controversial issues with their students have been under attack in recent years. Under Piron's predecessor, Gideon Sa'ar, the Education Ministry itself led the campaign to silence and intimidate those whose views deviated from the permitted line.

Piron cannot speak in praise of involved teachers and curious students – and sometimes, perhaps even critical ones – while simultaneously keeping mum when a teacher who acted on his recommendations has been put in the dock."

HAA 22.01.14 Editorial

### **If I were a teacher**

"Here it's forbidden to even ask if the IDF is a moral army, the way Adam Verete dared to do [...], as he tried to present a different version of things than what's deemed acceptable. [...]

The job of the Israeli educational system is to prepare our girls and boys for army service. That's a pedagogical poem that's scary and distorted. In no democratic state does the school system constitute paramilitary service, with the schools as military academies. But that's exactly why they instill our pupils with all the fears and hatreds and the sense of victimhood and nationalism. [...]

If I were a teacher [...] I would not try to turn my students into rightists or leftists; I would try to present them with the truth – actually, truths, not just ours. [...]

I would teach them that all human beings are born equal, including, believe it or not, Jews and Arabs.

If I were a teacher, I would never teach in the ORT network."

Gideon Levy, HAA 29.01.14

## **3. Spannungen zwischen Netanyahu und Bennett**

*Nach einer Äußerung von Premierminister Benjamin Netanyahu ist es zu einer kurzzeitigen Koalitionskrise gekommen. Netanyahu hatte im Zusammenhang mit den Friedensverhandlungen gesagt, es sei denkbar, dass jüdische Siedlungen im Westjordanland unter palästinensischer Souveränität bestehen bleiben würden.*

*Naftali Bennet, Wirtschaftsminister und Vorsitzender des nationalreligiösen Koalitionspartners HaBayit HaYehudi ("Die jüdische Heimat"), reagierte darauf mit heftiger Kritik: Jüdische Bürger in einem palästinensischen Staat würden von den Palästinensern umgebracht werden, behauptete er. Netanyahus Aussage sei ein „Verlust von Grundwerten“, und "Ahnen und Nachkommen" würden einem israelischen Führer, der das Land "aufgabe und aufteile" nicht verzeihen.*

*Netanyahu drohte Bennett daraufhin mit seiner Entlassung, sollte er sich nicht entschuldigen. Damit war die Regierung in Gefahr, die ohne die Unter-*

*stützung der Siedlerbewegung ihre Mehrheit verlieren könnte.*

*Eine Regierungskrise wurde jedoch abgewendet, als Bennett sich entschuldigte.*

### **Spat between Netanyahu and Bennett over, but cold war rages on**

"The relations between the prime minister and the economy minister are so toxic, that it's hard to imagine the two surviving an entire term together. Even though, at the end of the day, this is the most convenient coalition for Netanyahu – as long as he does not commit the sin of making peace – and it's certainly the most convenient one for Bennett, under those same conditions. [...]"

Politically, Bennett was probably not hurt by the squabble with Netanyahu, even though he had to back down eventually. From his perspective, he did his thing, searing into national consciousness the fact that leaving Jewish settlements in enemy territory, or in effect agreeing to the 1967 boundaries, is not an option. [...] If there's one thing he learned from the episode, it's that you have to argue substantively, not personally. To attack the issue and not the issuer."

Yossi Verter, HAA 31.01.14

### **Netanyahu's maneuvers, feints and deceptions**

"It came as no surprise that [...] Bennett so harshly attacked [...] Netanyahu for the latter's remark that settlers should be allowed to remain in their homes under Palestinian rule. Bennett [...] is the emissary of the settlers in the government and as such he must protect those who sent him, who see any agreement to be signed with the Palestinians as a 'irrationality of values.' [...]"

Netanyahu was not angry about the fact that Bennett's hysterical statements harmed the negotiations [...], but that Bennett is thwarting a tactical move whose purpose is to present the Palestinians as 'obstacles to peace.' In fact, the prime minister is complaining about the fact that officials at home are not allowing him to carry out maneuvers, feints and deceptions of the international community with the goal of sinking any future agreement."

HAA 27.01.14 Editorial

### **Bennett, leave the coalition now!**

"I would suggest [...] [to] leave the coalition now. [...]"

Bennett and company need to understand that unfortunately they, together with several good nationalist MKs from the Likud, have no real influence on the

direction that Netanyahu and Livni are dragging the country. This being the case, their continued presence in the coalition actually causes damage since it provides cover for Netanyahu. [...]"

The best thing they can do now, [...] is to leave and force Netanyahu to expose his true colors by bringing Labor on board to help him implement the final stages of the Oslo nightmare.

In such a scenario, Netanyahu [...] will be hard-pressed to remain within the Likud as it will be nearly impossible for him to look most rank and file Likud members in the eye."

Yoel Meltzer, JED 04.02.14

### **Netanyahu versus Bennett: It's a matter of time until the next coalition crisis**

"Netanyahu's associates said this week that if Bennett is suffering so much in the government he is welcome to quit, but these are empty words: Bennett holds the keys to 12 Knesset seats, and it is only thanks to them that Netanyahu still inhabits the Prime Minister's Office. Netanyahu's associates can continue spreading fables about a coalition based on the Labor's Knesset seats or on those of the haredi parties, but I doubt that even they believe them – after all, the Likud Beiteinu member will not let the prime minister establish his third term on politicians from the Left who support a withdrawal from the territories, or on the black skullcap wearers with whom Yair Lapid and his friends refused to sit at the same table."

Shimon Shiffer, JED 30.01.14

### **Bennett, think before you act**

"Netanyahu's anger at Bennett is understandable, but it is doubtful he has any interest in allowing it to destroy the coalition. The last thing Bennett wants now is to quit, but his statements against the prime minister, whether to placate or satisfy party members, only serve to bring his dismissal one step closer.

Several analysts have pondered why, in this government and unlike the previous one, Netanyahu chose not to establish a forum of seven top ministers, who mull sensitive security and diplomatic issues. One of the main reasons is that the exclusive forum would have had to include Bennett – a concept Netanyahu could not have borne under any circumstances."

Mati Tuchfeld, IHY 28.01.14

### **Toning it down**

"Netanyahu explained he was not seeking to, heaven forbid, shut Bennett's mouth; he allows every minister to freely speak his mind. But the problem was not with the content of Bennett's remarks, but rather the tone used to refer to the prime minister -- and not for the first time. Bennett now understands there is a price to pay for disparaging remarks, and will be sure to be more cautious in the future. [...]

An apology was obtained, although it is clear that the conflict is far from over. Netanyahu has read drafts of the American agreement and knows all too well that there will be future reasons to clash with Bennett. [...] He will want to, or be forced to, issue statements that will automatically put Bennett on the offensive. This story has only just begun -- and this week's skirmish promises to be the first in a long series."

Dan Margalit, IHY 30.01.14

#### 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 eine Rede der EU-Außenbeauftragten **Catherine Ashton** anlässlich des **Holocaust-Gedenktages**, in der sie Juden nicht erwähnte:*

##### **Ashton's lapse**

"It is highly doubtful that Ashton's lapse is inadvertent. Not everything can be ascribed to unintentional slipups. The bizarre homage Europe's spokeswoman paid to 'every one of those brutally murdered in the darkest period of European history,' without any reference to their identity, strains common sense. Ashton obscured the Jewish context with a short collection of hackneyed platitudes on tolerance and human rights.

This is a cogent example of how Holocaust history is increasingly watered down, especially in Europe. [...] By robbing the Holocaust of its uniqueness and likening it to any subsequent, yet very different ethnic massacre, it becomes less of a moral stain. Any corollary obligation to the Jewish people is thereby expunged.

Second, the disingenuous pretense that the Holo-

caust's victims were anonymous and faceless reduces friction with the Arab/Muslim world, which chafes against Holocaust commemoration lest it even theoretically imply sympathy for Jews. [...]

Such moral blindness cannot be ignored when assessing EU attitudes toward the Jewish state."

JPO 29.01.14 Editorial

##### **Anti-Semitism in Europe? Not a problem**

"The Holocaust was an exclusive outcome of European anti-Semitism. [...] Ashton doesn't think she should address anti-Semitism individually -- as far as she and the EU are concerned, it's just part of a more general phenomenon of 'racism.'

In the past few years, the EU has waged a consistent battle against every effort to hold a discussion on the anti-Semitic frenzy in Europe. In 2003, a report commissioned by the EU on the issue was buried, mainly because it mentioned Muslim anti-Semitism. Later on, the EU [...] asserted that Islamophobia is Europe's big problem, and that in fact there is no longer significant anti-Semitism but just 'legitimate criticism against Israel's policy.' [...]

'In the European foreign service, the famous and known anti-Israel stance has turned into open anti-Semitism long ago,' admits a senior source in the European Commission, who is in constant touch with Ashton's people.

That is, apparently, the explanation for European anti-Semitism: The anti-Semites never treated anti-Semitism as a problem."

Eldad Beck, JED 03.02.14

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