



Schlaglicht Israel Nr. 09/14

Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen

29. April – 10. Mai 2014

1. Doppelte Kritik an price tag Attacken

In den vergangenen zwei Wochen sind vermehrt öffentliche Gebäude und Privatgeschäfte in israelisch-arabischen sowie palästinensischen Ortschaften mit Graffiti beschmiert worden. Die sogenannten "price tag" Attacken werden von israelischen Siedlern und extrem rechten Aktivisten ausgeführt, um Druck auf die Regierung auszuüben, keine weiteren Zugeständnisse im Westjordanland zu machen.

Der anti-arabische Vandalismus inkludierte das Aufstechen von Autoreifen, das Einwerfen von Fensterscheiben und das Sprühen von "Tod den Arabern" auf ein drusisches Schaufenster. Eine weitere Eskalation war der Vandalismus in der israelisch-arabischen Kleinstadt Fureidis am 29. April, bei dem Graffiti auf eine Moschee gesprüht wurden. Die Stadt liegt im Norden Israels und gilt als nicht radikal.

Die Reaktionen der Regierung, der Polizei und des Geheimdienstes waren anfangs sehr verhalten, was in der Öffentlichkeit – von Juden und Arabern – stark kritisiert wurde. Wären diese Aktionen an jüdischen Gebäuden und Besitztümern ausgeübt worden, wäre die Antwort umgehend und ungleich härter ausgefallen, hieß es allumfassend.

If this continues, there will be murder

"Let us begin by refuting the claims that are now being made: 'We didn't know', 'We were surprised', 'These are sporadic incidents', 'The security forces are making maximum efforts to catch the perpetrators of Price Tag crimes' and 'Noxious weeds'. Yeah, right.[...]

They are trying to provoke us, to cause us to lose our cool, and perhaps even our sanity, and the civil discipline to which we have committed ourselves. If this continues, the conflagration will surely come."

Zuhair Bahloul, JED 01.05.14

Is Israel facing a war between religions?

"The Arab public – particularly the youth – suspiciously wonders on social media why law enforcement's resourcefulness and speed disappear when it comes to Jewish terror. [...] It seems the Jewish public is unaware of the dangers of a negligent law enforcement authority. The ongoing Palestinian frustration in light of the waves of racism and indifference among law enforcement could bring about religious war. A few of the thousand or so people who demonstrated recently at Umm al-Fahm Junction held signs that read, 'The Israeli government is abandoning us, we will defend our holy sites ourselves.' A law-abiding Muslim or Christian who sees Israeli law enforcement does nothing to bring justice to lawbreakers could decide the best way to prevent harassment is to adopt Hammurabi's Code – 'an eye for an eye'. From that point, setting synagogues on fire is not far off."

Hussein Abu Hussein, HAA, 05.05.14

What will happen tomorrow?

"The hate crime epidemic in Israel must be brought under control. This has got to stop. It is urgent and can no longer be swept under the carpet! [...] If it were the other way — Palestinians vandalizing synagogues and Jewish institutions — the culprits would be apprehended the same day! And put in jail under 'administrative detention'. [...] The anger is growing. Thousands of Jews and Arabs are beginning to demonstrate against this phenomenon, but not enough. [...] It is totally incredible and inexplicable that the government of Israel simply gives lip service to the fact that law enforcement should act quickly and forthrightly. [...] Moreover, there is a law in Israel against incitement and rebellion. According to Gillon, this law has not been

used against these rabbis yet. And it is time to use this law, and enforce it!"

Rabbi Dr Ron Kronish, Blog TOI 29.04.14

Apply an equal standard of justice

"It's obvious that the Arab street won't accept price-tag attacks, and in a place where the police and the Shin Bet security agency aren't doing their jobs with a reasonably high level of success, hot headed civilians are doing no less than taking the law into the own hands, adding to the travesty. But these past few days, it seems that the Shin Bet and the police have started taking action and no longer view price-tag attacks as negligible mischief by bad apples. [...] It's time to make sure that we apply an equal standard of justice to all acts of nationalist-inspired revenge, whether perpetrated by Arabs or by Jews."

Dan Margalit, IHY 07.05.14

Good news, bad news on 'price tag' attacks

"The good news is that there are indications of substantial progress toward the integration of Israel's minority populations into the fabric of Israeli society. The bad news is that sectarian vandalism directed against Israel's minority populations continues almost unchecked, greatly overshadowing the futile debate over who was responsible for the breakdown of the negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. [...] Here's the good news: The number of draft-age Arab teens volunteering for national civil service is increasing from year to year [...] Most impressive of all is the fact the majority of the volunteers are female. [...] Far more serious than the opposition of some of Israel's Arab politicians to Arab national civilian or military service are the acts of vandalism perpetrated by Jewish youths against Muslim and Christian places of worship and the property of Arab citizens. These gangs of hooligans — it does not matter whether they are called terrorists or neo-Nazis — have the same aim as some of the Arab politicians, namely to prevent the integration of Israel's Arab citizens into Israeli society. The potential damage here is less to Israel's international reputation than to Israel itself."

Moshe Arens, HAA 12.05.14

Amos Oz calls perpetrators of hate crimes 'Hebrew neo-Nazis'

"The writer and Israel Prize laureate Amos Oz said [...] that those responsible for hate crimes against Arabs and Christians are "Hebrew neo-Nazis."

Speaking at a Tel Aviv event marking his 75th birthday, Oz said that terms like 'hilltop youth' and 'price tag' are 'sweet names for a monster that needs to be called what it is: Hebrew neo-Nazis groups.'

Oz added that in his mind, perhaps the only difference between neo-Nazis around the world and perpetrators of hate crimes in Israel is that 'our neo-Nazi groups enjoy the support of numerous nationalist or even racist legislators, as well as rabbis who give them what is in my view pseudo-religious justification.'"

Amos Oz, HAA, 10.05.14

2. Israel feiert seinen 66. Unabhängigkeitstag

Das Statistische Bundesamt hat fast zeitgleich zum 66. Unabhängigkeitstag die neuesten Zahlen des Landes veröffentlicht – nun wird einerseits diskutiert, wie man mit den steigenden Bevölkerungszahlen umgehen soll. Andererseits gibt es immer klarere Kritik an der politischen Richtung, die Israel einschlägt.

It's going to get crowded

"Last year, Israel's population increased by 157,000, a 2% increase, which is much higher than in other developed countries. [...] Population growth is unfamiliar territory to environmental groups in Israel. The topic is sensitive, raising religious and cultural issues. Anyone dealing with it gets caught up in a geopolitical mess involving an Israeli-Palestinian competition to achieve demographic dominance. [...] A document called 'Sustainability Outlook for Israel 2030' recognizes that the projected population growth will impact the environment, but lacks any proposed strategies to deal with the matter. The document states that "Israel in 2030 will be a state providing economic prosperity, social strength and personal safety within diverse communities. [...] This is indeed a lovely vision, full of promise, which, however, cannot be fulfilled in a society experiencing the current rate of growth. Only a combination of a consistent damping of population growth with a marked improvement in planning the distribution of built and open areas will enable a reasonable quality of life [...] The Palestinians will have to do their share, although at this stage there is little chance of their doing so. On the contrary, they, like Israelis, are obsessively trying to win the demographic struggle [...]"

Zafir Rinat, HAA 07.05.14

How Zionism became a dirty word

“As soon as Zionism became a figure of speech of the settler-right movement, as soon as dispossession and occupation received a Zionist seal of approval, I began to cringe at the term and the implications that came with it. [...]

Terms like “Judaism” and “national homeland” have been part of the language of Labor movement leaders throughout the generations, and something traumatic had to happen for a Zionist like me to end up feeling this way.

When MK Yariv Levin (Likud) and his cohorts say that legislation is needed to prioritize the Jewish over the democratic, I feel that Judaism is being weighed against a value that, for me, is equally important – democracy – and I know what the hidden intentions of the idea’s proponents really are. Their Judaism is an imperialistic Judaism, one that is dismissive of the Arab minority that lives in Israel. And Avigdor Lieberman, who does not come from a religious-Jewish background or motivation, openly and shamelessly offers his seal of approval. [...]It’s true that the composition of the population and traditional attitude of Mizrahi Jewry (Jews of Middle Eastern descent) gave a push to Israel’s religiosity, and as a democrat I must come to terms with the way society has changed on the religious front. But the draconian combination of imperialistic religiosity with extremist nationalism means Israel is liable to slide into severe racism, to which some rabbis will always offer their stamp of approval.”
Uzi Baram, HAA 05.05.14

Independence and Nakba: Intertwined and inseparable

“Israel’s Independence Day is also Nakba Day. This is inescapable. The reality of Israeliness can’t help but incorporate not only the Jewish story but the Palestinian story as well (Nakba, or ‘the catastrophe’, is the Palestinians’ term for what happened to them when the state was founded in 1948.) Space limitations prevent a full consideration here of the complex interrelations between Independence and Nakba. [...] The pivotal question is a thoroughly practical one: Can the Nakba and Independence coexist in the same space? If the answer of the Jewish-Israeli public is that the two are mutually exclusive, it follows that we should revoke the clauses in Israel’s Declaration of Independence that mandate equality for all: “The State of Israel ... will foster the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants ... will ensure complete equality of social and political

rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex; it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture; it will safeguard the holy places of all religions ...’ If the answer to the question is that the two cannot coexist, Israel becomes the state of all its Jews, with all that this implies. Jewish, yes, but a lot less democratic; much more ethnic, far less civic. But perhaps, despite everything, a positive answer is possible – one that allows for a joint, mutually respectful existence, which esteems and accommodates both narratives, the one happy, the other sorrowful, side by side. It’s clear that Israel and the Israeli way are in dire need of a completely different path from the one that has been staked out here for nearly seven decades. The Nakba must be absorbed into the Israeli mainstream consciousness.”

Avraham Burg, HAA 05.05.14

3. Präsidentschaftswahl in Israel

Anfang Juni wird in Israel der neue Präsident gewählt – vermutlich. Denn derzeit verdichten sich Gerüchte, dass Premierminister Benjamin Netanyahu die Wahlen gerne um ein halbes Jahr verschieben möchte bzw. das Präsidentenamt gänzlich abschaffen will. Das an sich unpolitische und vor allem repräsentative Amt des Präsidenten wird von den Knesset-Mitgliedern vergeben. Mögliche Kandidaten sind der in den vergangenen Wochen wegen eines sexuellen Übergriffs in den Medien gewesene Minister für regionale Entwicklung Silvan Shalom (inzwischen sind die Ermittlungen aus Mangel an weiteren Zeugenaussagen eingestellt worden), Knessetabgeordneter der Labor-Partei Binjamin Ben-Eliezer und der ehemalige Knessetvorsitzende und Knessetabgeordneter der Likud-Partei Reuven Rivlin.

Think about it: Why the presidency should not be abolished

“From what one gathers from the media, Netanyahu’s approach is neither based on a serious study of the office and its role in the Israeli democratic system, nor on a desire to cut state expenditure – if the latter were Netanyahu’s goal, he would certainly have taken a closer look at the budget of the prime minister’s residences first. [...] Netanyahu’s position is apparently based on two main factors: the tribulations he has experienced with outgoing president Shimon Peres, and his

loathing of the candidate most likely to be elected to replace Peres since Silvan Shalom is supposedly no longer in the race – Reuven Rivlin [...] Though Rivlin was and remains a loyal Likudnik, who rejects the two-state solution and favors Jewish settlement in Judea and Samaria, Netanyahu acted to prevent his being reelected Speaker of the Knesset in the 19th Knesset. Today it is said that if push comes to shove, he would prefer seeing Laborite Binyamin Ben-Eliezer in the president's residence to Rivlin, and if the only way to prevent Rivlin from getting there is to abolish the presidency – so be it. My own preference regarding who ought to be elected as Israel's tenth president, which I have already expressed in a previous article – either Reuven Rivlin, or retired Supreme Court justice Dalia Dorner [...]"

Susan Hattis Rolef, JPO 11.05.14

Abolishing the presidency? Think again, Netanyahu

"For months, though, there have been rumors that Netanyahu is pursuing this goal, and these culminated on Monday morning with an Army Radio report quoting 'sources in the Prime Minister's Office' enthusing about the plan — a 'historic change that would finally enable the proper management of the world's most challenged country.' [...]"

News reports have ascribed Netanyahu's enthusiasm for the notion to a variety of factors. Some say he wants to save the millions that the presidency costs the state — an absurd argument which might equally be invoked to cancel the prime minister's job or, for that matter, to abolish our entire costly Israeli democracy. Dictatorship is so much cheaper.

Others claim it stems from his determination to thwart presidential frontrunner Reuven Rivlin — a former Knesset speaker from his own Likud party whom Netanyahu stripped of the speaker's post in this parliament. [...]"

Creative thinking for the benefit of Israel is a quality to be appreciated in the holders of high public office. But when prime ministers come up with lousy ideas — and cancelling the presidency is one of them — there ought to be people in trusted positions with the credibility and seniority to quickly shoot those ideas down."-

David Horovitz, TOI 12.05.14

Presidential race pits Netanyahu against Israeli democracy

"He is running amok, he's crazed; say his interlocutors. They describe him as a raging bull that sees nothing but the red cape whirling and provoking him, and he is determined, determined to strike at Israeli democracy. [...]"

He is determined to keep Reuven Rivlin, whom he loathes, out of the President's Residence. And he's even more determined to do away with the presidency altogether, because at stake is the ultimate thing; the source of the continued existence of the state and the entire Jewish people – his next term as prime minister. [...] The key person in this smelly saga is Knesset Speaker Yuli Edelstein. The former Prisoner of Zion, who displayed such incredible courage in the Soviet Union, has turned into a meek and frightened serving tool, a puppet of the prime minister. He has been suspending and delaying and avoiding confirming a date for the presidential election to give Netanyahu a chance to implement his plot. That way he, Edelstein, will be interim president for at least six months. [...] So now, more than a year after the last general election, everything is starting to float to the top. Before we could only smell the stench. Now we can see its source."

Yossi Verter, HAA 12.05.14

Is Sara behind this?

"On Sunday, senior Likud officials speculated that Netanyahu's wife Sara was behind the move to delay the election because of her animosity toward Rivlin. [...] 'Netanyahu and Rivlin have a history of conflicts from the years Rivlin was Knesset speaker', said a Likud source. 'One argument relates to a slip of the tongue by Rivlin — when he said at a Knesset gathering that his wife was not involved in his decision making. Those present understood that Rivlin was criticizing Sara Netanyahu and her involvement in her husband's doings, even though Rivlin denied this.'

The source said that since then, 'Sara has been working to stymie Rivlin's election to the presidency, and the move to delay or cancel the election is part of the bad blood.'"

Jonathan Lis, HAA 11.05.14

4. Medienquerschnitt

Die Vielfalt der in Israel relevanten Themen kann in einem Medienspiegel nicht umfassend wiedergegeben werden. Um den deutschen Leser_innen

dennoch einen Einblick in das breite Themenspektrum, das in den Medien behandelt wird, zu gewähren, veröffentlichen wir in dieser Schlaglichtausgabe wieder eine kleine Auswahl an weiteren Themen, die in den vergangenen zwei Wochen die israelische Gesellschaft bewegten.

Über die Diskussion rund um die **Senkung von Einfuhrsteuern für Kälber**

Customs are no ideological tool

"Until now, there have been no duties on calves weighing under 250 kilograms, so importers [...] I understand and even respect the concerns of animal-rights organizations. I also identify with their battle to improve animals' living conditions. There should be laws to prevent animal abuse. [...] But they can't use customs duties as an ideological tool. They can't be allowed to prevent the government from doing its job: providing cheaper food for all Israelis, including the poor and anyone who enjoys eating meat. [...]"

Sixty percent of the meat in Israel is frozen and comes from South America. The rest is fresh meat from calves raised in Israel. Frozen meat is far cheaper than fresh meat, but it's also of lower quality. The people who buy it have low incomes. The rich eat expensive fresh meat. [...]"

But if we lower customs, the price of fresh meat will fall and the poor will also be able to eat fresh meat, which is tastier and healthier. Why should only the rich benefit? Don't the poor have rights?"

The truth is, the animal-rights organizations want to outlaw the import of calves entirely. If that happens, the price of fresh meat will rise sharply and the middle class won't be able to buy fresh meat either." Nehemia Shtrasler, HAA 08.05.14

This calf is my child

"A calf is like a child. When it is thrown trussed up on the floor, the light taken from its eyes, I know I can't save it. There's nothing I can do. God only knows what it has been subjected to in the hold of the ship that brought it here on a transport. (Pardon, a thousand pardons, for using the sacred word that has become a Jewish taboo.) The transport went from Australia to Eilat. [...]"

But that's not the end of the suffering, nor is it the beginning of the end, but maybe the end of the beginning. There will be another selection, during which we will decide if the confused, tortured, half-conscious calf continues in the crowded, boiling-hot truck to a slaughterhouse or is killed on the spot

because it's no longer of any use. In the abattoir – and that will really be the end – they won't euthanize it but prod and abuse it, chop up and behead it. All this to serve it up as a delicacy. [...]"

I write to Sara Netanyahu because the next day the cabinet will decide on the fate of hundreds of thousands of calves. The ministers will decide whether to lower duties on imported 'beef' from Australia, giving the go-ahead to the hellish transports. [...]"

I text Sara Netanyahu because I have her phone number. [...]"

Sara responds: 'I've taken your remarks seriously.'

I'm thinking that if Sara Netanyahu keeps her promise, she will do exactly what she ought to do, what is expected of her, and instead of maligning her we will praise her. At 5 P.M. the headline appears: 'Netanyahu rejects cancelling import duties on calves.' The article says the prime minister 'expressed concern for the suffering incurred to animals during their transport.'"

Eyal Megged, HAA 08.05.14

*Diskussion über Lapid's Plan, **nur spezifischen Bevölkerungsgruppen 18% Mehrwertsteuer bei Erst-Immobilienkäufen zu erlassen***

Lapid's plan

"Lapid should cut his losses now and scrap his VAT plan. It makes no economic sense. Instead of lowering prices, it will jack them up; instead of cutting red tape and bureaucracy, it will generate more; and instead of helping the two fastest growing populations in Israel who suffer most from the ongoing housing shortage, it discriminates against them. The plan is lacking from nearly every possible perspective: socially, economically and democratically."

Editorial JPO 12.05.14

Leave Lapid's education out of it

"The Israeli economy depends on people, not on numbers. The people make decisions, the numbers only corroborate them. [...] Finance Minister Yair Lapid didn't study economics. As a matter of fact, he probably didn't study anything. Lapid is a product of the educational system. It failed with him, and he failed with it. [...] In spite of that, Lapid made a career on words, and eventually became finance minister. After a year in office, the arguments against him on the educational issue should be dropped. His new plan for a VAT exemption on new apartments is as good as educated economists'

plans. It has a lot of potential to be beneficial, and it also has some potential for damage[...] .
Yoaz Hendel, YNET 04.03.14

*Über den geplanten Verkauf von **Tnuva an den chinesischen Lebensmittelkonzern Bright Food***

Selling Tnuva: not much benefit, loss of control

"Israel's largest food manufacturer and distributor, a household name and icon since 1926 – is about to be sold to Bright Food, China's second- largest food conglomerate and a state-controlled one at that. Calling Tnuva Israeli may not be totally accurate, since the dairy company has not been Israeli-owned since 2007, when kibbutz shareholders sold a 56 percent stake to the London-based Apax Partners investment firm. [...] What did Israel gain from Tnuva's initial sale to foreign holders? Not much. What did the foreign holders gain? A whole lot. [...] As Tnuva's case exemplifies, such sales do not necessarily net Israel much benefit, but they do signify loss of control. [...] This by no means denotes opposition to any sales of Israeli holdings to overseas firms. [...] We need to examine just what we collectively get from foreign deals. This must not necessarily revolve around tax revenue. It should, however, involve at least minimal actual investment in Israel. In the Tnuva case there is too much doubt that the transitory Apax episode was at all worthwhile."

Editorial, JPO 03.05.14

Can a billion Chinese, minus one, be right?

"The state is not exactly making major efforts to open up the food industry to competition via imports. [...] That's why the state is now reconsidering its position on the large food manufacturers – first and foremost, Tnuva [...] Another possibility, much more moderate than actually breaking up the companies, is to put strict price controls in place on a significant number of products from Tnuva, to ensure that the company is not exploiting its market power. And since all of its competitors always toe the line with Tnuva on prices, this will affect its competitors' prices, too. [...] Both of these options are being considered at the same time, but it's not clear whether one will be chosen, or whether any decision will be made at all."

Meirav Arlosoroff, JPO 27.04.14

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

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