



## Schlaglicht Israel Nr. 11/14

### Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen

25. Mai – 09. Juni 2014

#### 1. Papst Franziskus in Israel

*Papst Franziskus erste Reise nach Israel hat unterschiedlichste Reaktionen hervorgerufen: Auf der einen Seite wurde gewürdigt, dass der Papst sich unermüdlich für Frieden und eine Zweistaatenlösung einsetzt, auf der anderen Seite wurde kritisiert, dass er das schwierige Verhältnis des Vatikans zum Judentum und die Situation von Christen in Israel nicht ausreichend thematisiert hat. Während seiner Reise hat Papst Franziskus einen ungeplanten Stopp an der Mauer, die Jerusalem durchtrennt, eingelegt und mit seinem Foto an der Mauer ein Zeichen gesetzt. Seine Einladung an Shimon Peres und Mahmoud Abbas in den Vatikan zum gemeinsamen Gebet wurde als Friedensakt gesehen – und als symbolhafte Abschiedsreise der Amtszeit von Simon Peres. Das Fazit des Besuchs in Rom war: Ein Schritt in Richtung Frieden ist getätigt worden.*

#### **Candidly Speaking: The pope's visit to the region and the president's last hurrah**

"While distressed by some aspects of Pope Francis's recent visit to the region, I strongly disagree with those who accuse him of abandoning Israel. [...] While Pope Francis would certainly not qualify as a candidate for the Zionist national camp, Vatican policies toward Israel must be viewed in the context of a deeply flawed grand strategy. [...] So despite the disappointment with aspects of his visit, we must not describe Pope Francis as an enemy of Israel. To do so not only does him an injustice but is also immensely counterproductive. We should view the situation in context, appreciating that Vatican policies in this region are actually more damaging to Christian interests than to ours. [...] But the most bizarre aspect of the entire trip was the proposal purportedly initiated by President Shimon Peres to

join the pope and Abbas at the Vatican for a ceremonial 'prayer for peace.' This would effectively be the last hurrah for President Peres prior to his retirement, enabling him to reaffirm his commitment to the 'irreversible peace process' and the redundant Oslo Accords, to which he mindlessly adheres. He will, perhaps, express regret at the absence of his former 'friend,' the late Yasser Arafat, and once again hug our current duplicitous 'peace partner,' Abbas. [...] But what is certain is that this charade will make world headlines for Peres. It will also enable the intransigent Abbas, at the very moment of his union with the genocidal Hamas, to continue projecting himself as a man of peace. To be aided in this by the president of Israel suggests we should be examining ourselves rather than becoming obsessed with a pontiff who, despite the constraints imposed upon him by his role, by all accounts is a decent man who in his first meeting with Jews at the Vatican reiterated that 'a true Christian cannot' be an anti-Semite'."

Isi Leibler, JPost/IHY 02.06.14/03.06.14

#### **Palestinians put on show for pope**

"Regardless of the Palestinian spin, Pope Francis' meetings with President Shimon Peres and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu are de facto recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital. The pontiff's meeting with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas in Bethlehem also spelled his recognition of the division of Christian holy sites between Israel and the Palestinians. [...] In his dealing with the Palestinians, Pope Francis is trying to duplicate the miracle attributed to Jesus at the Sea of Galilee. The pope is trying to walk on the proverbial water without being drowned by waves of hatred in a region plagued by Islamic radicalism. He knows that the Jews -- including those fighting to retain Israeli control over David's Tomb -- are not

dangerous, but dealing with the Palestinians and the Islamists requires extra vigilance. The pope's visit has seen the Palestinians go out of their way to prove that Israel infringes on freedom of religion and worship for members of other faiths. [...]

During his meeting with the grand mufti, Pope Francis will no doubt hear the story of how Jesus became the first Palestinian shahid killed by the Jews. Portraying Jesus, the man of peace who preached turning the other cheek, as an icon of violence -- a Palestinian terrorist 'shahid' who kills innocent people -- is spitting in the face of Christianity (which has exonerated Jews in the matter)."

Dr. Reuven Berko, IHY 26.05.14

### **Pope joins Palestinian chutzpah club**

"It seems there are no limits to how low the Palestinians will stoop in their unending obsession with vilifying Jews and Israel. [...] In the latest rendition of "how not to coexist with Israel," they took full advantage of Pope Francis' visit to again misrepresent the truth. Simply put, they promoted lies. [...] Tragically they've been given a huge boost of credibility since the pope has now provided his blessing. [...] We've been used to incessant reversal of reality for quite some time by the Palestinians. This papal visit confirms the head of the Catholic Church has become complicit. [...] If anyone believes this visit was strictly religious and not political in nature, said person also likely believes the security barrier was built to steal land rather than save Israeli lives. Since the pope made an unscheduled stop at the barrier to pray, which delighted Palestinians, it appears its true purpose is lost on him as well.

Dan Calic, YNet 27.05.14

### **Pope's visit: Great expectations, great disappointment?**

"The idea that Francis will follow in Paul's steps must have sent shivers down the spine of many an Israeli diplomat. Though it was the first papal visit, at a time when the Vatican did not recognize the Jewish state, Paul's trip centered on Jordan, which then controlled East Jerusalem and the West Bank. His visit deeply disappointed the Israeli leadership. [...] Make no mistake. The church's ties with Jews and Israel are at unprecedented levels, incomparable to what they were in 1964, and Francis' charisma may well make up for his tight schedule. But by framing the trip as a commemoration of Paul's pilgrimage, the Vatican

has sent a subtle but clear message to the politicians and dignitaries who will host Francis. [...]

The message is that any attempt to raise political capital or enlist the pope's support for either side in the Middle East conflict will fail. This is a spiritual pilgrimage, focusing on dialogue with the Orthodox Church and tending to the local Catholic flock; it is not about Jewish ties or apportioning blame for the region's woes. Israel's quiet hope that Francis may finger authorities in the Arab world and the Palestinian territories for the decline of local Christian communities is likely to be disappointed. [...] For Israel, the best bet may be to hope that Francis will enjoy on a quiet, spiritual journey, peppered by generic calls for peace. If the Jewish state's already battered international image emerges without further damage, the Israeli government will be able to count its blessings and pronounce this papal visit a success."

Ariel David, HAA 24.05.14

### **How the pope put Israel to shame**

"There was something very troublesome about the Pope's visit. From the moment he came off the plane, wherever he went, Pope Francis preached a consistent message; he spoke about peace, he prayed for peace and he coaxed others to join him in working toward it. Whether he was among Jews visiting a Holocaust Memorial or praying with the Palestinians in Bethlehem and at the Separation Barrier, his point was the same -- a clear call for a two state solution, an end to violence and the building of good relations between Jews and Palestinians. [...]

At the rabbis' meeting with him the pope, which I attended, Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi David Lau concluded his speech by asking the head of the Catholic Church to use his influence to gather religious leaders to discuss world peace. "Be a partner with us" he said 'and establish an international interfaith conference to advance this crucial message.' Herein lies our disgrace. [...]

We can only admire his ability and determination to express a clear vision of peace and to persuade our president to join him in prayer, but I am left wondering why our own spiritual leadership failed to make the same call to our head of state. [...]

But, instead of seeing us as an inspirational sovereign Jewish state, the nations of the world take pity on us. "You are incapable of taking care of yourselves," they say, "so we will send peace envoys and religious leaders to stand in the breach and do your work for you." We have become the

world's nursery, with a perpetual chain of babysitters dispatched by the international community to coax us into seeking peace. [...]

The pope did not put us to shame because he worships differently or because of his credo that we cannot share. He shamed us because in the very areas where we share beliefs, we have abandoned our sacred role and relied on others to seize the initiative."

Rabbi Gideon D. Sylvester, HAA 03.06.14

## 2. Terroranschlag im Jüdischen Museum in Brüssel

*Der Erschießung von vier Personen im Jüdischen Museum in Brüssel, darunter zwei Israelis, hat nicht nur schockiert, sondern wird als Zeichen der Radikalisierung und als Merkmal für steigenden Antisemitismus in Europa gesehen. Der Täter ist inzwischen gefasst und sitzt in Frankreich in Haft – allerdings ist seine Verhaftung vermutlich eher einer Routinekontrolle zu verdanken, als einem gezielten Zugriff der Polizei. Die Ermordung der Israelis sowie der beiden anderen Besucher des Jüdischen Museums in Brüssel wird in eine Reihe von antisemitischen Vorfällen und den Erfolg einiger radikaler Parteien bei der Wahl des Europäischen Parlaments eingebettet.*

### **Don't tell Europe's Jews to leave**

"Should we be outraged by violent attacks on Jews? Absolutely. Should we be concerned about the electoral success of extremist parties peddling anti-Semitism, xenophobia, and racism? Certainly. And should we be outspoken about a climate in Europe too slow to acknowledge the magnitude of the growing anti-Semitic threat, and too quick to demonize Israel and its supporters? Unquestionably. But Europe is important to the Jewish people, the democratic world, and, more specifically, the United States and Israel. [...] The current struggle against anti-Semitism is also a struggle for the defence of Europe's foundational values. If Europe fails on the Jewish front, it fails, period. It cannot be that anti-Semitism grows, Europe's Jews leave, and the EU continues to proclaim its championing of human dignity. Europe must succeed. [...] As Europe faces growing anti-Semitism and intolerance more generally, emerging extremist parties, and slow economic recovery, now is precisely the time to remind ourselves of what hangs in the balance – and stand with those defending the democratic and pluralistic EU envisioned by its postwar founders."

David Harris, HAA 02. 06 2014

### **Tragedy in Brussels**

"Apparently, the attacker or attackers – whose sole objective was to kill Jews because they are Jews – took advantage of the lax security arrangements. [...] From attempted bans on circumcision and ritual slaughter to Israel bashing, Europe has become an increasingly inhospitable place for Jews. The tragic attack in Brussels and the intolerable beatings outside Paris are just the latest examples of anti-Semitism again rearing its ugly head, even among Europeans who should have learned from their past. [...] While one possible motivation for these attacks is undoubtedly anti-Israel and anti-Zionist sentiment, there is also an old-new form of anti-Semitic expression sweeping across Europe in recent years. Symptoms of this particular strain of anti-Judaism are campaigns against aspects of Jewish religious expression. [...] We call on all European leaders not only to condemn these attacks, but to act swiftly to catch their perpetrators and bring them to justice." JPost Editorial 25.05.2014

### **Is European Jew-hatred spreading to America?**

"The ugly events in Europe over the past two weeks -- the murders at the Jewish Museum in Brussels by a French jihadist and alumnus of the Syrian carnage, and the assault on several French Jews in Paris -- have served to confirm what is increasingly obvious: Europe is not a place where Jews are safe or welcome, and it is becomingly increasingly problematic to live visibly as Jews in various countries on the continent. [...] Some analysts believe the assault on Jewish ritual practices, including kosher slaughter and circumcision, are in reality aimed at making Europe less friendly to Muslims, who share some of these practices, than one more blast aimed at the shrinking, pretty much negligible Jewish population in most European countries. [...] There is a pattern to aggressive anti-Semitism, and more often than not, it spreads rapidly when it is not condemned and called out for what it is quickly. The proliferation of hate speech makes it more likely that some of the vilest of the Jew-haters will jump from words to action when given the opportunity. The ethnic dynamics in America may be different than in Europe, but some of the same patterns are emerging. There is an alliance of sorts among the hard Left and the angriest Muslims directed against Israel, which increasingly targets individual Jews while people in official capacities behave like cowards in the face of

the new brown-shirts, afraid to cross the loudest and angriest among the rabble. The Jew-killing games and the Jew-killing are signs that Jew-hatred has come out of the closet for a revival run on world stages, including in America."

Richard Baehr, IHY 03.06. 2014

### **The World From Here: After Brussels: Assaulting the anti-Semitism-terror nexus**

"These assessments beg a larger question as to what drives these anti-Semitic sentiments. [...] However, in 2014, demonization and delegitimization campaigns targeting Israel are the 'elephants in the room.' The incessant boycott, divestment and sanctions campaigns and concomitant incitement against the existence of the nation state of the Jewish people that are fuelled by the Palestinian Authority in Ramallah, Gaza's Hamas leadership, Palestinian NGO groups and their supporters across Europe and the throughout United States have contributed to an atmosphere of revulsion and rejection of both the Jewish state and Jews in the Diaspora. [...] This culture of hatred is not restricted to Europe. It has also become a force multiplier for anti-Semitic and anti-Israel invective on US University campuses that help pave the path to deadly terror attacks around the globe whether in, Brussels, Burgas, Kansas City, or in Israel's towns and cities. [...] The nexus of anti-Semitism and terror must be aggressively confronted. Israel, its allies, Jewish organizations and civil rights groups in Europe and the United States should step up the fight against these anti-Semitic delegitimization campaigns and confront BDS groups such as the SJP with the same zero-tolerance approach with which they hunt down the terrorists who just murdered four civilians in the Jewish Museum in Brussels."

Dan Diker, JPost 28. 05. 2014

### **Syrian shooting, European blood**

"It would be foolish to hope that Nemmouche, who appears to have been acting alone – at least in Belgium – is the only wannabe European terrorist nurtured and armed in the deadly Syrian circus. Thousands of radicalized, trained and deadly warriors are returning to Europe after gaining their spurs in the war against Assad. [...] There is no political will to detain them without charge, and there aren't enough resources in European police and intelligence services to keep track of them all. Even after Nemmouche was arrested, the Belgian official in charge of demanding his extradition from

France for the murders was at pains to stress his right to due process. [...] It's one thing to capture a killer in a lucky drugs sweep a week after the crime. It's quite another to prevent the next killing spree before it occurs. As long as European citizens continue to visit the jihadi training grounds in Syria and elsewhere unhindered, and European officials focus on protecting the killers instead of their victims, the next attack, unfortunately, is just a matter of time."

Matthew Kalman, HAA 05. Juni 2014

### **3. Politische Schlammschlacht rund um die Präsidentschaftswahlen**

*Die Tage vor den Präsidentschaftswahlen in Israel waren so spannend wie ein Krimi – es war eine politische Schlammschlacht, die drei Tage vor der Wahl mit dem Rückzug der Kandidatur von Benjamin Ben-Eliezer, einem Knesset-Abgeordneten der oppositionellen Arbeitspartei, einen neuen Höhepunkt fand. Ben-Eliezer wird der Korruption verdächtigt. Wahlpolitisch profitierten davon im ersten Wahlgang Dalia Dorner, eine ehemalige Richterin beim Obersten Gerichtshof, der die Meretz Partei die Unterstützung zugesagt hatte, und Meir Sheerit von Tzipi Livnis 'HaTnuva'. Doch das Rennen machte schließlich der ehemalige Parlamentspräsident Reuven Rivlin von der Likud-Partei.*

### **We don't need a yes-man**

"The presidency is clearly one of the best jobs in the country. Unlike in the state's early days, the president needn't live in a cabin to prove his humility. Nor does a president find himself, after leaving office, with no place to live. Nowadays the future is assured. There's a good pension and guaranteed housing, and maybe even a little respect as a former president. [...] In the seventh year of his term, Shimon Peres enjoys his international standing and reputation as a professional peacenik. [...] David Ben-Gurion saw to it that the presidency would be a toothless office. World Zionist Organization President Chaim Weizmann did not seem overjoyed to be appointed as the country's first president. He once commented that the only place he could stick his nose in was in his handkerchief. [...] Most of our presidents were akin to wax figures. [...] Meanwhile, it's not clear why, despite his endorsement, Bibi is so staunchly against Reuven (Ruby) Rivlin. After all, they come from the same political family. Because it's the

president who invites an MK to assemble a governing coalition – Bibi fears that this is where Rivlin will be waiting to let the ax fall. But Rivlin and Netanyahu are cut from the same ideological cloth, so it likely won't come to that. Certainly not after Rivlin has received Bibi's reluctant endorsement.

It's too bad, because we don't need a yes-man as president. We need a president who will strike fear into the prime minister."

Yoel Marcus, HAA 30.05.2014

### **Presidential Chess**

"Bibi's proposals suffered an immediate setback when President Shimon Peres refused to serve an additional year, even if the Knesset were to pass a temporary term extension. [...] It looks very much like the presidential election will go off as usual this year. [...] It is probable that direct election of the presidency would produce better results and offer candidates like Shechtman and Dorner a better showing, but at what cost? [...] All for an office with no real power? [...] The presidency has been a source of scandal and embarrassment for Israel. [...] The current election already threatens future scandal. [...] One argument raised internationally for retaining the separate head of state is that no nation can be left without a leader: the head of state is an insurance policy. If there were an extended time without a government, the head of state could at least appoint a temporary government on an interim basis, until the legislature establishes a new government. In Israel the President lacks even this power of interim appointment."

Isaak Kight, TOI 27.05.2014

### **Grumpy Old Man: Peres for president**

"Shimon Peres has accomplished one thing as president: He has restored dignity to the office. [...] Who would want the job today, you might ask. For politicians the answer is really no one, primarily because it means that your career is over and they're offering you a kind of consolation prize. I mean, just look at Reuven Rivlin, Binyamin Ben-Eliezer, Meir Shearit and Dalia Itzik, fine and talented politicians all, just not exactly ready for prime (ministerial) time. And Dalia Dorner, one of the two non-politicians running, never made it to the presidency of the Supreme Court, having to be satisfied with heading the lofty Israel Press Council. Only one candidate, the other non-pol in the running, can say he already reached his Olympus. Dan Shechtman, a professor at the Technion and a member or consultant to a long string institutes,

think tanks, laboratories and councils here and around the world, won a Nobel Prize for chemistry in 2011 for his discoveries in the realm of quasiperiodic crystals. [...] Rivlin, the current front runner, is a nice enough guy but exudes zero gravitas. Ben-Eliezer, one of his two closest competitors, exudes even less. Itzik, who is the only other candidate with a chance, seems to suffer from congenital humorlessness. [...] Perhaps we should just give it up. Or better yet, maybe we should undo the law of succession and ask Peres to sign on for another seven years, or for as long as he wants. He's close to 91 yet has the snappy gait and clear eyes of people a third his age. Of course, this wouldn't sit well with wing-nuts, what with all his showboating and subversive behavior. But there's time before June 10. Waddaya say, Shimi?"

Lawrence Rifkin, JPO 05.06.2014

### **Either Rivlin or Dorner for president**

President Shimon Peres is concluding a successful seven-year term, during which he rehabilitated the presidency from the nadir to which it fell under his predecessors, Ezer Weizman and Moshe Katsav. Peres' success led to an unprecedented competition to succeed him, featuring a plethora of candidates; police investigations that led two MKs, Silvan Shalom and Benjamin Ben-Eliezer, to withdraw from the race; and the embarrassment of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's desperate efforts to either postpone the vote or unearth a candidate of his own. Tomorrow's election for the 10th Israeli president will herald a change in the presidency's agenda – from foreign policy to domestic affairs. None of the candidates has the international standing and prestige of Peres, so they won't be able to compete with Netanyahu in representing Israel abroad the way Peres has. [...] Two of the five candidates stand out for their steadfast commitment to democracy and human rights: MK Reuven Rivlin (Likud) and former Supreme Court Justice Dalia Dorner. For years, Rivlin has preached the need for cooperation between Jews and Arabs. And as Knesset speaker, he extended a hand to the Arab factions, in sharp contrast to his colleagues on the right. He opposed the wave of nationalist legislation in the previous Knesset, and paid for this stance in the Likud party primary. [...] Dorner dealt with important public issues in her various judicial posts, especially her 11 years on the Supreme Court, during which she wrote important rulings on civil rights (like allowing women into air force pilot training, and extending rights to gay couples). [...] Both candidates also

have obvious weaknesses. Rivlin comes from Likud's right flank; he opposed the 2005 disengagement from Gaza and backs the Jewish settlers in Hebron. His support for a single state between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea, in which Palestinians would be given citizenship, seems to be merely a gentler version of the annexation proposed by his right-wing colleagues. Dorner's problem is the opposite: As a judge and, before that, a senior Israel Defense Forces officer, she was forbidden to speak out on diplomatic issues, so her views are unknown. Her statement that the presidency is "an apolitical role" that shouldn't engage in diplomacy attests to her lack of experience in politics. Despite their weaknesses, however, their firm stands in favor of protecting democracy and human rights make these two the most suitable candidates for president. Editorial, HAA 09.06.2014

#### 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.*

Meinungen rund um die **neue palästinensische Einheitsregierung** von Fatah und Hamas

#### **The Palestinian unity charade**

"The new Palestinian unity government is not about the re-establishment of one Palestinian political entity that could develop into a functioning Palestinian state. [...] Despite the current unity discourse, the Palestinians remain as divided as before. The only true test for unity of a political entity is monopoly over the use of force. As long as the military branch of Hamas remains independent there is no unity, but just evidence of the Somalization of Palestinian politics. Islamic Jihad also remains fiercely independent in Gaza, as well as other jihadist organizations. Moreover, instead of the PA regaining lost Gaza, Hamas is gaining better access to the West Bank. [...] Moreover, it is hard to believe that Hamas will give up control over the Gaza Strip. A de facto state is a good business as it allows extraction of taxes and fees. In addition, it serves

the extremist Hamas ideology that demands building Islamist political structures and keeping alive the military and theological struggle against the unacceptable Jewish state. [...] From an Israeli point of view, the mass demonstrations in favor of unity and the very few Palestinian voices opposing the deal with Hamas are depressing. The Palestinian unity deal reinforces the image Israelis have of their close neighbors. It is a society addicted to violence, where the shahid (martyr) that attempts to kill as many Jews as possible is the role model." Prof. Efraim Inbar, IHY 05.06.2014

#### **A coward posing as a macho he-man**

"No one can deny that Benjamin Netanyahu has a manly voice. [...] In action and demeanor, Bibi is a coward who frightens his people. He keeps saying what's bad and what's inadmissible "for Israel's security." He's more afraid of his wife Sara than of Chancellor Merkel. He's more afraid of Bennett than of President Obama. That's why he doesn't initiate anything unusual in the way of peace. Instead of taking advantage, for the sake of peace, of the unity government formed between Fatah and Hamas, with America and Europe's blessing, Bibi is angry again, panicking again. Why, really? [...] With all due respect for Bibi's fears, even the Iranian threat has been neutralized, or at least is no longer as menacing as it was. The panic Bibi created may have been in place, but America did well to warn him and acted as it should have done, of its own accord. [...] When Bibi threatens Abbas that we'll cut off ties if a unity government arises, he is irritating the whole world, especially President Obama. [...] Not doing anything out of fear and torpedoing the initiative out of hand is the worst option of a coward who sees himself as a macho he-man."

Yoel Marcus, HAA 06.06.2014

#### **The Fatah-Hamas honeymoon is already over**

"That honeymoon didn't last long. Just days after they formed a unity government, fissures have emerged between Hamas and Fatah that show how long and grueling the road to reconciliation will be. [...] The famous cliché "the devil is in the details" has turned out to be as relevant as ever for implementing the Palestinian unity agreement. The first crisis, as anticipated, concerns the salaries of PA and Hamas clerks in Gaza. [...] And on the horizon hovers the biggest crisis of all — the presidential and parliamentary elections, the prime purpose for which the national unity government was established. Their date has yet to be set, but it

is already clear that Israel will not allow elections in East Jerusalem with Hamas participation.

When this becomes overt, the two organizations are expected to oppose holding elections at all, leaving this government's future even more uncertain."  
Avi Issacharoff, TOI 06.06.2014

### **A win for the moderates**

"The prime minister, for his part, choose again to talk a lot and do a lot less; and now the time has come for empty threats of economic sanctions against the Palestinians in response to the inauguration of a Palestinian unity government comprised of Hamas and Fatah. It is redundant to note that this response did not impress the White House, and accordingly it announced it would continue to work with the new Palestinian government, and continue to offer it economic aid. Thus Israel leaves this current round of peace talks with the underhand: Not only did it begin a sad bout of the blame game, it also lost at its own game. And it will be us who will probably have to pay the price for this loss."

Shimon Shiffer, YNN 04.06.2014

Debatte um den Machteinfluss und ein etwaiges Einstellen der kostenlosen Tageszeitung **Israel Hayom**

### **Why are journalists silent?**

"The fact that the Knesset is deliberating a flawed bill, designed to have Israel Hayom shut down, underscores the enormity of the crisis that has affected every media outlet in Israel. [...] You would expect journalists, politicians and intellectuals to lead the charge without fear or hesitation. [...] 'Israel Hayom threatens democracy and free speech,' they claim. That is pure nonsense. [...] The crisis in the media is, in no small part, the work of journalists who undermined the media's own credibility through their biased coverage. [...] Journalists have unsuccessfully tried to cast themselves as public advocates who are motivated solely by a desire to protect free speech and serve democracy. They have no vested interests, they claim. Is that so? [...] Time and again they resort to the tried and tested approach, screaming "Democracy in under attack!," "Free speech is being stifled," "McCarthyism." Because of the public backlash this conduct has created, such journalists are no longer held in high regard. They have lost their luster."

Mati David, IHY 05.06.2014

### **Candidly speaking: Have they no shame?**

"The campaign against Israel Hayom is beneath contempt. It emanates from Noni Mozes, the publisher of Yediot Aharonot which, prior to the advent of Israel Hayom, totally dominated the Israeli mass media. Israel Hayom was established by billionaire philanthropist Sheldon Adelson, a friend of Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and who is also probably today the greatest financial donor to Jewish and Israeli causes.

The bizarre argument employed by those promoting the legislation is that in order to ensure freedom of expression and maintain competition, a newspaper must not be permitted to be circulated on a free basis. This premise is so primitive that it does not warrant a serious response. The suggestion that legislation denying free circulation of newspapers would strengthen freedom of expression is a concept George Orwell would have relished. [...] Even though the legislation will not pass, it remains a blot on the Israeli political system that these hypocritical politicians felt sufficiently secure that they could behave so arrogantly without a massive electoral backlash. [...] Unless they withdraw their wretched legislation, we would be doing ourselves and the nation a great service if we communicated our intention of punishing them at the next election.  
Isi Leibler, JPO 21.05.2014

HAA = Haaretz  
JED = JediothAhronoth  
JPO = Jerusalem Post  
IHY = Israel HaYom  
TOI = Times of Israel  
GLO = Globes  
YNN = Ynetnews

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