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1. Anschlag in Jerusalemer Synagoge

Der Mordanschlag in einer Jerusalemer Synagoge hat die ohnehin angespannte Lage im Nahen Osten weiter verschärft. Zwei Palästinenser richteten mit Messern, Äxten und einer Schusswaffe ein Blutbad an. Vier ultraorthodoxe Betende und ein Polizist kamen zu Tode. Die beiden Täter starben im Feuergefecht mit den Sicherheitskräften. Israels Ministerpräsident Benjamin Netanyahu machte die radikalislamische Hamas und Palästinenserpräsident Mahmud Abbas für den "grausamen Mord" mitverantwortlich, weil sie zur Gewalt angestachelt hätten. Abbas verurteilte die Gewalttat und mahnte zur Ruhe. Die Hamas lobte den Mord. In Ostjerusalem, Wohnort der beiden Attentäter, kam es nach einer Razzia der israelischen Polizei zu Unruhen. Netanjahu ordnete an, die Familienhäuser der Attentäter zu zerstören.

Unjustifiable horror

What motivates two cousins from Jerusalem's Jabel Mukaber neighborhood to enter a synagogue armed with meat cleavers, hatchets, and a hand gun and commence stabbing, hacking, and shooting at men draped in prayer shawls and engrossed in prayer while shouting Allahu Akbar? (...) Experience tells us that mainstream Palestinian organizations like

the Palestinian Front for the Liberation of Palestine, to which the two Palestinian murderers reportedly belonged, hardly need a pretext for killing Jews. (...) Ever since Israel's founding the pretext for killing Jews is Jewish sovereignty on land deemed to belong to Muslims, no matter what the borders. Even the ultra-Orthodox Jews of Har Nof and who have traditionally opposed political Zionism are legitimate targets for Palestinian murderers. Haredi spiritual leaders such as Chief Sephardi Rabbi Yitzhak Yosef have even implored Jews not to go up on the Temple Mount so as not to enrage Muslims. Though Palestinian nationalist movements have always been murderously violent, the most depressing and wretched spectacle of the last decade has been the degeneration of Palestinian nationalism into a theocratic, death-worshipping radical Islamism. (...) The obscenity of what transpired Tuesday morning in Har Nof's Kehilat Yaakov Synagogue cannot be explained away by glib terms like "despair" or "occupation." (...) Religious Jews wrapped in prayer shawls and phylacteries lying in pools of their own blood on the floor of a synagogue is an instantly recognizable image – not just for Jews. It conjures up centuries of violent anti-Semitism and places the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the context of just another example of irrational – and therefore incurable

– Jew hatred. It seems to prove to Jewish Israelis that there is really nothing to talk about with the Palestinians, let alone a peace agreement that must of necessity rest on mutual trust.

Editorial, JPO, 18.11.14

Radical alliance fueling renewed bloodbath

(...) Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas sent a letter of condolence to the family of the shooter of right-wing activist Yehudah Glick, and Prime Minister Netanyahu suggested that Israel's Arabs move to the Palestinian Authority. This is a dialogue of the deaf, or should I say no dialogue, between two people who live a house away from each other, fence by fence. (...) The State of Israel, consciously and unconsciously, has done everything for years to make its Arab citizen remember day in and day out that they are living at the mercy of the land's Jewish rulers. The current government has invested its own efforts in thwarting any solution for coexistence, like US Secretary of State John Kerry's peace initiative, which was suffocated with the generous help of the Palestinian Authority. Like the second tango dancer, Abbas made his own contribution to the failure of the Kerry initiative, like the Palestinian leaders before him, who managed with a lot of talent to shut any window of hope for their people. (...)

Tami Arad, JED, 19.11.14

Palestinian terrorists should know: It's not going to work

(...) **Abbas**, who swore in an Israeli television interview two years ago that there would be no new armed intifada against Israel so long as he led the Palestinian Authority, and insisted that he had no demands on pre-1967 Israel, has thus helped foster the climate for a new armed intifada which on Tuesday saw despicable, premeditated Palestinian murder of Jews at prayer inside pre-1967 Israel. (...) Unlike Hamas, he does not openly call for Israel's destruction. He may not, in his heart of hearts, even seek it. But he has allied himself to the extremists in castigating as "contamination" the Jewish desire to express the link to the site of the Biblical temples, the site that roots our historical legitimacy here. (...) Palestinian terrorists, and those who incite them and support them, should know: We are not going to be shot and stabbed and bludgeoned out of here by your brutality and the false justifications you invoke to legitimate it. (...) We do not insist on maintaining our majority Jewish state to the exclusion of your rights. Anything but. We seek co-existence. But your rights cannot be achieved by denying us ours. For

this is the homeland of the Jewish nation, the only place we have ever been sovereign or sought sovereignty. And what needs writing and saying, most especially on a terrible day like today, is that we will not be driven from it.

David Horowitz, TOI, 18.11.14

Living side by side in Jerusalem

(...) Protests must be made with words, not by killing and bombing. Knowingly and deliberately killing defenseless people who have come to worship God in a synagogue, ruthlessly butchering them, is the most contemptible cowardice. Every Muslim has a responsibility to support truth and justice. In the Quran, God reveals, "You who have faith! Be upholders of justice, bearing witness for God alone, even against yourselves or your parents and relatives..." (Quran, 4:135) and "... do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness..." (Quran, 5:8). Looking at events in a one-sided manner or being biased in favor of members of one's own faith or people is incompatible with justice, reason and good conscience. One must therefore be honest and moral under all circumstances and evaluate matters reasonably. (...) There will be a state of Israel, and that state will survive until the Day of Reckoning; the Jews will live in that region as God has promised in both the Torah and the Quran. (...) On the other hand, no Muslim should accept the Al-Aqsa Mosque being used for protests and fighting involving stones and Molotov cocktails. That is a sin and disrespect for a place of worship. That is the house of God, a place of worship, and it should be peaceful and tranquil.

Adnan Oktar, JED, 28.11.14

Netanyahu and his ministers are endangering the public

(...) It's hard to understand how human beings can be capable of entering a synagogue and shooting worshippers in cold blood. (...) The most important question of all must be answered by the man who heads it. Is Benjamin Netanyahu's aim really to prevent a recurrence of such tragedies? Is ending the bloody cycle of violence between Israelis and Palestinians one of his primary goals? Assuming that it is, it's hard to understand why he insists, (...) on fingering Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas as the person responsible for these acts of terror. (...) It seems the answer has been provided by members of his cabinet. When Naftali Bennett describes Abbas as "one the worst terrorists the Pales-

tinian people has ever produced" (...), the current government's true goal is revealed: deepening the rift with the Palestinians and torpedoing any possibility of a future agreement. (...)
Editorial, HAA, 19.11.14

2. Reformvorschlag für Grundrecht zur Stärkung des jüdischen Staates

Die israelische Innenpolitik wurde von dem Entwurf dreier Abgeordneter für ein Grundgesetz bestimmt, das den „Nationalstaat des jüdischen Volkes“ definieren würde. Der Staat Israel wird zwar als demokratisch definiert. Die Gleichberechtigung der rund ein Fünftel der Gesamtbevölkerung umfassenden arabischen Minderheit ist jedoch im umstrittenen Gesetzesentwurf nicht ausreichend gewährleistet. Justizministerin Tzipi Livni und Finanzminister Yair Lapid gingen auf Abstand zu der geplanten Reform. Das war wohl der letzte Nagel im Sarg der Regierungskoalition.

Nationality law supporters see Arabs as a problem

The nationality law is not the problem. The problem, as the bill's promoters see it, is the Arabs. And the solution, as far as they are concerned, is actually an expression of faith in the rule of law: They seek to turn the act into an actual fact. Because in fact, even without this dubious law, the State of Israel is the state of its Jewish citizens. And the Arabs? More than being citizens, they are a "problem": A demographic, security or cultural problem – depending on how you look at it. The state is making it clear to them in countless ways that they are not partners with equal rights. At the most, they are tolerable. The fact that we have not deported them all makes us tolerant. "They should be grateful." By the way, we don't need surveys and sophisticated articles to know this; a pair of eyes will suffice. And whoever wants to see it can actually find the big things in the small details. (...) In Israel, soldiers (and settlers) are not punished severely for murdering or killing Arabs. It began with the Kafr Qasim massacre, where all those responsible for the death of innocent people were sentenced to serious punishments and set free within a year. And it goes on. The State of Israel conveys the message that there are those who are equal and those who are less equal. Now it wants to turn it into a law.

Aviad Kleinberg, JED, 26.11.14

Jewish State bill is precisely what makes the prophets weep

The Prime Minister is convinced that he is acting to strengthen the Jewishness of the state. His supporters extol and praise him. Those who oppose him criticize him for the same reason. Only I feel like the little boy who is challenging the basic theme and saying out loud: "The emperor has no clothes!" There is nothing in this motion that resembles Judaism. It's not only that this bill grossly crushes the democratic basis of the state, it is damaging — yes, damaging — our Jewish basis. Of all the mitzvot (religious laws) in the Torah, Hillel the Elder chose to tell the convert, while he was standing on one foot, that the entire Torah in a nutshell comes to: "That which is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow." Haven't we learned anything from that? The attempt to oust the other — the Arab minority — from Israeli democracy is not a question of nice clothes or ugly clothes. It's just not clothes at all. And it's not only the mitzvot in the Torah that teach us that this motion is anti-Jewish. Jewish history itself, in which the Jews lived as a minority in lands not their own, shows the way, beginning with: "Love the stranger: for you were strangers in the land of Egypt." And if this was said regarding the Israelites in Egypt, then it is all the more true regarding Arabs in Israel who are a part of this place. Here is their home and here is their future — along with us. That is why I maintain that the "Jewish State bill" is a ringing slap to any Jewish basis of the state. (...)

Michael Melchior, TOI, 25.11.14

'Jewish nation-state' bill sets out to establish democracy for Jews only

(...) The Jewish character of Israel supersedes its democratic character. The Jewishness of the state is manifest in discrimination against Arabs, and its democracy is none other than a regime that lets the majority do anything it wants and exploits the minority. (...) According to the bill, while Jews have a collective right to heritage and culture backed by the state, Arab citizens may foster their culture by themselves. (...) The purpose and significance of the law – to reestablish the constitutional foundation of the State of Israel in a manner that elevates its Jewish character and compromises its democratic character – threatens to destroy Israel's democratic way of government, and to justify claims that Israel is a "democracy for Jews only." This legislation clearly undercuts the Zionist ideal of the establishment of an exemplary, egalitarian and democratic society.

The presentation of the bill at this time, with tensions between Jews and Arabs running so high, is a political move lacking wisdom and sensitivity. It also raises the suspicion that its framers want to raise tensions further for political gain. The government, which is obligated to the Declaration of Independence and the protection of democracy in Israel, must reject this shameful bill outright.
Editorial, HAA, 16.11.14

Jewish nation-state law can only cause damage

(...) Declarative laws don't have the power to solve theoretical or social disputes. At best they are useless, but they do have the power to cause damage. Legislation such as proposed Basic Law: Israel as the Nation-State of the Jewish People will inevitably reach the Supreme Court, which will be required to decide on ideological disputes which are not in its authority. The right-wing camp, which supports this law, will find itself crying out again that the court is giving the law – which was initiated by the right itself – an activist interpretation. We have more than enough laws which declare the state's character, and it's enough to mention the Law of Return, which opens the state's gates to any Jew and his family members. We also have, by the way, the Flag, Emblem and Anthem Law, which was enacted in 1949 immediately after the state's establishment. The additional unnecessary declaration will not add a thing and will not solve a thing. Neither will it answer the question who is part of the Jewish people and whether the State of Israel is also the state of a person born to a Jewish father and non-Jewish mother, or of a person who underwent a Reform or Conservative conversion. (...) In today's explosive situation, the law only has the power to cause damage and worsen our relations with the minorities, and the same could happen even if the law is moderated and softened. (...)

Daniel Friedman, JED, 23.11.14

Why we need the Jewish State law

(...) Of course, equality has always been a crucial value in Israel. But the disappearance of Jewish national self-determination from the Court's list of the legitimate aims of Israeli policy called into question many of the most basic aims for which the state had been founded. Would it soon be illegal to send Israel's security services to protect Jewish communities in other countries? To maintain a Law of Return offering automatic citizenship to Jews from other lands? To teach Judaism in the public schools? These and similar concerns are what stand behind

Netanyahu's present "Jewish State Law" — whose purpose is to re-establish the previous status quo on issues of Jewish national self-determination. (...) Israel, built around a cohesive and overwhelming Jewish majority, was able to establish internal stability without repression, and quickly developed into a fully functioning democracy. Whereas the other states of the region have been able to retain their integrity only through brutality and state terror. (...) The proposed Jewish State Law reaffirms Israel's commitment to the political principle of national self-determination, which made the existence of a free Jewish nation a reality in our time. (...)

Yoram Hazony, TOI, 23.11.14

The 'nation-state' bill: Jews should know exactly where it leads

(...) One need not be a historian to see the resemblance between the Israeli nationality bill and nationality laws of 80 years ago. Like them, it delineates the boundaries between the most important, dominant group of citizens and the rest, who are turned into guests of a sort in their own country — tolerated ones, for the present. At the extreme nationalist fringe of the bill's promoters, efforts are already under way to define its final goal. The followers of the late Rabbi Meir Kahane and members of Lehava will not settle for formulas specifying Israel's Jewish character and the Jews' sole claim to national privilege in the state. Their model for the nationality law is the Nuremberg Laws. Their main goal is to preserve Jewish racial purity and to wage war on marriages or romantic relationships between Jews and members of minority groups. (...) In 1936, two Nazi jurists, Bernhard Lösener and Friedrich Knost, published a book about the Jewish question in Germany that spoke about the Nuremberg Laws. The purpose of these laws, they wrote, was not to cause racial hatred. On the contrary, it was to ease and regulate the relationship between Jews and Germans over the long term. What can we learn from all the efforts to pass nationality laws? Mainly that we know what they lead to. We also know that many of the individuals who laid the ideological foundations for such legislation or who supported them never envisioned that they had set in motion a process whose end they could not have imagined.

Daniel Blatman, HAA, 27.11.14

3. Vorgezogene Neuwahlen

Das Verhältnis zwischen Regierungschef Benjamin Netanyahu und seinem Koalitionspartner von der Zukunftspartei, Finanzminister Yair Lapid, war schon seit längerem getrübt. Lapid's 0-Prozent-Mehrwertsteuerreform beim Erstkauf von Wohneigentum für junge Ehepaare, stieß auf Netanياهو's Widerstand. Umgekehrt lehnte Lapid, gemeinsam mit Justizministerin Tzipi Livni (HaTnua), die Grundgesetzinitiative zur Stärkung des jüdischen Staates Israel ab. Zwar suchte Lapid nach Kompromissen, um vorgezogene Neuwahlen noch abzuwenden. Die letzten Umfragen geben dem Blitzstarter von 2013 anstelle seiner 19 Mandate derzeit nur noch elf. Am 2. Dezember setzte Premier Netanyahu dem Spiel ein Ende, indem er Lapid und Livni als Minister kündigte. Netanyahu war zum Schluss gekommen, dass das Misstrauensverhältnis zwischen ihm und seinen Koalitionspartnern das Fortbestehen der Regierung verunmögliche. Nun sind Neuwahlen für den 17. März 2015 angesetzt.

It's not what the public wants, it's what Netanyahu wants

(...) You don't call elections because of disagreements between Yesh Atid and the Likud over the budget, which has already passed its first reading. You don't send the state into a whirlwind and an election campaign which will cost much more than any concession regarding the budget. And as for the other disputed issue which has been threatening the coalition's integrity since Sunday – the Jewish nation-state bill – we should remember that this bill has already gone through so many changes that it's hard to remember that the first person who submitted it was Avi Dichter from the Kadima party when Livni was its chairwoman, and today she is the bill's main opponent. In other words, there is nothing on the agenda that cannot be solved. The question, as always, is not what the public wants, but what Netanyahu wants. (...) So don't ask if there are going to be elections. Ask if Netanyahu wants elections. Because that, and only that, will determine where we are headed.

Sima Kadmon, JED, 17.11.14

Israel needs elections now

It began with the release of hundreds of murderers in the framework of the Gilad Shalit prisoner-exchange deal. And were I a cynical man, I'd add that by their despicable actions, the two killers who

butchered the worshipers in the synagogue also "thanked" Netanyahu for the release of one of their family members in the Shalit deal, alongside other released prisoners who are steering the Palestinian uprising from the Gaza Strip and Turkey, to which they were "exiled." Moreover, we were told that Hamas was dealt a resounding blow in last summer's military operation. This doesn't appear to be the case. The Hamas government is readying for the next round of conflict with Israel, and its people are spurring on the perpetrators of terror in Jerusalem and the West Bank. With this in mind, it's hard to understand why the country's decision-makers persist in proposing responses that have already been tried in the past and failed to restore calm to the streets. Why the attack on Mahmoud Abbas, who Netanyahu and ministers in his government ministers hold responsible for the attacks? (...) Make no mistake, the individual directly and solely responsible for not providing security to the citizens of Israel is Benjamin Netanyahu. (...) Regrettably, the foreseeable future doesn't appear to hold much chance for any change in our faceoff with the Palestinians. Early elections to the Knesset, with the formulation of courses of action that also include talks with the Palestinians, is the solution to what now appears to be total chaos.

Shimon Shiffer, 21.11.14

End the early elections tailspin

(...) All the coalition partners have stressed they have no desire to dissolve this government. But the government is suffering from the chronic condition that every time a bill comes up for a vote, a crisis ensues. Our leaders, it seems, are unable to get their act together, and assert leadership within their own party. Whenever some inconvenience comes up, they run for the hills, rather than making sure their subordinates fall in line. They would do anything rather than bite the bullet. The party leaders have caused internal dissent among their own factions, creating a situation where there are effectively two governments marching along two separate paths. (...) Regardless of how we got here, this madness must stop. The snafu of the past few days must come to an end right now, not in the coming days, not in the coming week. The coalition's tribal chiefs must convene and collectively walk back the slew of statements they recklessly made throughout this crisis. They must announce a moratorium on the legislative barb-trading by putting their ongoing spats on hold. They would then put each other to the test to see who abides by the truce. We cannot let

this chaos continue because it may result in long-term damage.(...)

Dan Margalit, IHY, 18.11.14

4. Medienquerschnitt

Sorge in Israel vor **gefährlichem Kompromiss mit Iran**

A nuclear deal with Iran is best for Israel

(...) Iranians showed they favored positive engagement with the world over belligerent rhetoric and escalation in 2013, when they cast their ballots for Hassan Rouhani. Rouhani ran his campaign on a platform of "moderation" and constructive engagement with the world. His team reflects this view. (...) This team has a relatively moderate position on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: once Israel and the Palestinians solve the conflict amongst themselves, Iran won't consider the issue to be any of its business anymore. This means that, unlike other factions in Iran and across the Arab world, this team isn't fundamentally opposed to Israel's very existence, but rather has objections to particular policies. (...) A nuclear deal is a viable policy option for Israel, as it is for Iran. It would empower the moderates who support the two-state solution and are likely to engage with Israel. (...) Ultimately, a strong moderate government in Iran, even within the confines of the limitations placed by the current regime, can only be beneficial to Israel. But the moderates will only be empowered with a nuclear deal because they have put all their political capital into the negotiations. Far from threatening Israel, a nuclear deal with Iran would benefit it. It would limit Iran's nuclear program and buy some time without the potential of a long and devastating war between two major regional powers.

Ariane Tabatabai, TOI, 20.11.14

Erhöhung des Mindesteinkommens geplant

Histadrut finally remembers minimum wage is too low

After many years of relative indifference to the fate of poorer workers, and under growing pressure from workers organized in the framework of the "Democratic Workers' Organization (Koach La Ovdim)," the Histadrut (General Federation of Labor in Israel) has suddenly remembered that the minimum wage in Israel is too low. Even if the Histadrut is only jum-

ping on the bandwagon, however, and even if it comes late in the day, its power is likely to help bring about a needed change in the Israeli labor market. In an economy in which poor workers are increasingly common, productivity is low outside the high-tech sector, and positive incentives are very small, raising the minimum wage is really necessary in order encourage a higher rate of participation in the labor force. (...) To tell the truth, raising the minimum wage will not solve all the of the problems and distress fostered by economic policy for many years, but at least some of the working families in Israel will be able to increase their income without the help of the National Insurance Institute, income supplements, and negative income tax.

Avi Temkin, GLO, 18.11.14

Häuserzerstörung als Strafmaßnahme nach Terrorakt **umstritten**

Home demolitions?

Almost 10 years ago, the Israeli government effectively abandoned its practice of demolishing the family homes of Palestinians who had committed terrorist acts. (...) The committee found not only little evidence that the demolitions effectively deter future terrorist actions, but also that whatever disincentive they provide is significantly outweighed by the rage they engender. (...) Now, in the wake of the recent spate of terror attacks – presumably attributable, at least in part, to the collapse of the Kerry-led peace talks, this summer's Gaza conflict, and, most recently, the escalating tensions around access to and control over the Temple Mount – the demolition policy has been reinstated.(...) Needless to say, acts of intentional violence and brutality are reprehensible. Those who commit them deserve to answer for their crimes. But what about their families? Absent evidence of and conviction for a crime that they themselves have committed, is it just to submit family members to punishment for the acts of their relatives? (...) This is a practice I would remind that the Israeli government itself discontinued in the past, recognizing its effects. (...) All those who commit acts of terrorism deserve to face justice. But punishing family members who have committed no crime – based on the unproven assumption that such action will prevent future attacks – is unjust. It's also ineffective in promoting either Israel's security or its standing in the world.

Michael Felsen, JPO, 26.11.14

Gadi Eizenkot als nächster Generalstabschef benannt

The right man for the job

The best thing about Deputy Chief of Staff Maj. Gen. Gadi Eizenkot's appointment as the military's next commander in chief was that it was free of any drama. For once -- and for a change -- the predictable, sensible, right choice was made, and the process was kept aboveboard, businesslike and clean, devoid of any games or trickery. Much like Eizenkot himself. (...) The main criticism about Eizenkot concerns his overall nature. Too mellow, some said over the weekend, or as others chose to put it -- he does not carry a dagger between his teeth. (...) Eizenkot, who has proven he knows how to take a deep breath and think before he speaks or acts, has come to understand that the main challenge of having military might is knowing when to rein it in. (...) As long as Eizenkot maintains true pluralism in the General Staff, and listens even to officers who do not share his worldview, he will be able to minimize his shortcomings.

(...) The new chief of staff will state his opinion on financial, diplomatic and operational issues before the government, and while this conduct is a recipe for potential conflicts, it is good to know that the 14th floor of the General Staff's building will house a man who strives to serve the public, one who speaks his true mind.

Yoav Limor, IHY, 30.11.14

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