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1. Vorgezogene Neuwahlen

In der letzten Runde vor den vorgezogenen Parlamentswahlen konnte das Mitte-Links Bündnis Zionistisches Lager laut Umfragen seinen Vorsprung zum konservativen Likud des amtierenden Regierungschefs Benjamin Netanyahu weiter ausbauen. Mehrere Reden im Verlauf einer Kundgebung der Gegner Netanyahus, die sich unter dem Motto „Wir lösen die Regierung ab“ in Tel Aviv versammelt hatten, verärgerten die Rechten. Umgekehrt sorgte ein Wahlspot, in dem Netanyahu die Hafenarbeiter, das Personal des öffentlich-rechtlichen Rundfunks und Hamas-Terroristen auf eine Ebene stellte, für Zorn bei den Linken. Unmut und Enttäuschung herrschten in den Reihen von Meretz, nachdem die Vereinte Liste der arabischen und der antizionistischen Parteien ein Abkommen mit der „zionistischen“ Meretz über die Überschussvoten ablehnte. Bei der Wahl am 17.3.15 machte am Ende der Likud zur großen Überraschung aller Wahlanalysten mit großem Vorsprung das Rennen und erhielt 30 Mandate. Das Zionistische Lager musste sich mit 24 Mandaten begnügen. Die Vereinte Liste wurde mit 13 Mandaten drittstärkste Partei in der neuen Knesset.

The final week

(...) Since the days of former prime ministers Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres, the Center-Left

has not produced a charismatic leader that Israelis who do want a change can enthusiastically back. Herzog and Livni, while running neck and neck in the polls with the Likud, have not generated the fervor and passion that could have made them the front-runners in the campaign. Instead, they have for the most part campaigned on a similar “anyone but Bibi” platform (...). It’s a shame that they haven’t been able to offer a campaign of hope instead of a negative message. (...) This campaign season has been one of the most uneventful and uninspiring in recent memory. The days when voters gathered to raptly watch the party election TV ads, party volunteers jammed intersections handing out flyers, and huge banners dotted the country’s landscape are largely of a bygone era. (...) despite the country being led for the last six years by the same person, a viable alternative with broad-ranging appeal has not emerged.

Editorial, JPO. 08.03.15

Between amulet kissers and 'Hamasniks,' election campaign going downhill

I kiss the mezuzah. Sometimes. (...) It’s a habit. (...) According to Israeli artist Yair Garbutz, that makes me part of a dark “handful” which has taken over the country. (...) I have news for Garbutz. (...) This “handful” is made up of people, including downtrod-

den people. They carry this country on their shoulders. Some of them vote for the right. Some of them vote for the center and even for the left. (...) Most mezuzah kissers are working people. They didn't even have time to recover from Garbuz's arrogant, patronizing, racist blow, when they found out that they are not only dark. They are part of a group which also includes Hamas members. That's what the Likud's horrifying clip succeeded in producing. (...) This isn't Hamas' first appearance in the election campaign. It was already attached in earlier stages to Prof. Yossi Yona of the Zionist Union. (...) Likud was forced to attach Hamas not only to a dove like Yossi Yona, but also to those who are part of organized labor. (...) Netanyahu is a prime minister. (...) He is supposed to be the responsible adult. (...) Ben Dror-Yemini, JED, 10.03.15

Meir Dagan is a true patriot

Anyone who is capable of comparing dock workers and Israel Broadcasting Authority employees – including people who fought in Israel's wars – to Hamas terrorists, is also capable of turning Meir Dagan – who was wounded twice in wars and operations, received a Medal of Courage and led bold operations in the IDF and the Mossad – into an ungrateful leftist (is that a bad word?) and almost an enemy of Israel. (...) if Dagan is a 'leftist' by nature, then Netanyahu and the Likud spokespersons secretly hold a membership card in the joint Arab list. (...) Dagan has done more about the Iranian issue (...) than Netanyahu and all the other Likud spokespersons combined. (...) One can agree or disagree with Dagan. (...) But why stoop so low? (...) Yuval Diskin, JED, 11.03.15

Why I'm voting Meretz and not for the Arab ticket

The actions of the Joint List of Arab parties for the Knesset over the question of a surplus votes agreement with Meretz was the straw that broke the camel's back for me. Meretz was willing to cancel its surplus votes agreement with the Zionist Union to sign such an agreement with the Joint List, just to prevent tens of thousands of votes from going to waste – but the Joint List refused. (...) When Islamist imams declare in the Arab media that a vote for the Joint List will bring down the rule of the right, yet the Joint List includes an Islamic Movement whose candidates live a polygamous life, I wonder which right they are talking about. (...) the Joint List includes not only the equivalent of Yisrael Beiteinu of the Arab street, in the form of the Arab nationalism of Balad; but also the racist parallel of Habayit

Hayehudi in the shape of the Islamic Movement. (...) If the choice is between a vote that will give Meretz a Knesset seat or a vote that will give another seat to the Arabs from the Joint List who are the counterparts of Habayit Hayehudi or Yisrael Beiteinu, then the proper choice of every responsible citizen is clearly Meretz. Every vote for Meretz is a sure vote for separating religion and state, for civil equality and equality between the sexes. Every vote for Meretz is a sure vote for social justice, cultural and national justice, freedom of expression and freedom of thought. And above all, every vote for Meretz is a certain vote for the peace we all aspire to. (...) Salman Masalha, HAA, 12.03.15

Save Meretz, save your soul

The size of the biggest party is critical this time, but if four Knesset seats are "lost" because Meretz fails to pass the vote threshold, there will be no electoral upset. (...) Therefore, supporters of both Meretz and the Joint List — who were justifiably appalled by the alliance of Arab parties' separatist error of refusing a surplus-votes agreement with Meretz — must see to it that Meretz exceeds the threshold, for the sake of the upset. (...) This time it's possible: The desire not to vote for Netanyahu is enormous. (...) This is no time for hesitation or idle chatter. Either you help Meretz pass the threshold or you vote for Herzog. There is no other choice. If even one person who wants an upset to stop the extremism votes Lapid, heaven will have no mercy on us. Sefi Rachlevsky, HAA, 10.03.15

Israel's new existential threat – Ayman Odeh

(...) Ayman Odeh represents a new stage in the struggle of the Arab population in Israel. (...) Today, the Arabs in Israel seek to be a major force in determining the country's future. They are calling on their allies, who are a decisive majority in the state, to unite in order to further their common interests. After all, in Israel a handful of old rich men have the state by the throat while an overwhelming majority of the population – from the Bedouin living in unrecognized villages in the Negev to the slum-dwellers and middle-class denizens of Tel Aviv – are humiliated every time they go to the supermarket or try to find an apartment they can afford. And then, along comes Ayman Odeh and says: I propose an alliance of the disadvantaged. Why is that a bad thing? (...) On (...) Channel 2, the socialite, investor and media personality Judy Shalom Nir Mozes (...) said that Odeh was a dangerous man. Soon they'll be saying that he's behind the Arab-Jewish solidarity terror.

And so, after the Iranian threat disappears, we will, God willing, have a new existential threat called Ayman Odeh.

Oudeh Basharat, HAA, 01.03.15

To win, Herzog must convince Israelis that peace, prosperity are intertwined

(...) How long will it take before the descendants of the Mizrahi residents of the immigrant transit camps of the 1950s get rid of the sorrow of those hard years and stop placing all the sins of Mapai at the doorstep of today's Labor Party? (...) does anyone know how the people being thrown out of public housing these days are going to vote? Why don't they remember the key role Ran Cohen's Meretz had in the Public Housing Law and the battle its current leaders are waging for same goal? And what else needs to happen here before people in Dimona and Ofakim realize that if not for the settlements on the West Bank, the huge funding that flows to the territories would instead be invested in education and welfare, their schools, enrichment activities for their kids, more math and English lessons, all of which would open the gates of the universities to them? (...) It's true that to this day the Labor Party has not learned how to present a credible social and economic program that makes people enthusiastic. (...) Isaac Herzog and Tzipi Livni should have long ago shouted it out: Israel's existential problem is the occupied territories, because our relations with the Palestinians are what will define our future and the future of our children, not Iran. (...) To win these elections, Zionist Union must invest in those naïve people who could still follow the charlatan Yair Lapid in droves. These people must be persuaded that Zionist Union has a credible plan to reach a peace agreement as well as the desire to truly improve quality of life. (...)

Zeev Sternhell, HAA, 08.03.15

Bennett hurts the Right

(...) Right-wing voters who view Israel as the eternal homeland of the Jewish people and yearn for maintaining the unity of Jerusalem do not want a national unity government. They want a large right-wing party to receive the mandate from the president to form the next government, as this would enable the establishment of a functioning homogenous coalition. For this hope to be realized, Likud must receive more seats than the Zionist Union. Bennett's conduct could lead to a situation in which the president gives Zionist Union leader Isaac Herzog the first chance to form the next government, with all that

implies. Conversely, if Habayit Hayehudi receives 11 or 12 seats, its position as a senior partner in a right-wing coalition would be assured. So it would be best for Bennett to focus on winning back voters from Yesh Atid, rather than attacking Netanyahu and Likud (...). Instead of working to build basic trust with Netanyahu, Bennett is using a phony report to slam him. What a shame, as this is not the way to build a strong right-wing bloc.

Dr. Haim Shine, IHY, 09.03.15

Israelis want a different political agenda

(...) Growing numbers of young people are ready to turn their backs on the hard right, as characterized by the Likud leader, Prime Minister Benjamin "Bibi" Netanyahu, and Habayit Hayehudi chairman Naftali Bennett. (...) it's very likely that we are witness to a trend. (...) Zionist Union leader Isaac Herzog is gaining more and more legitimacy; Yesh Atid chairman Yair Lapid is proving his ability to survive; the fears for Meretz's fate will help it cross the electoral threshold; the awakening among Israel's Arab citizens in the run-up to the election influences the overall picture and creates a counterweight to Bennett and Baruch Marzel. It's hard to change the views of those of little faith, who think deterministically and ignore the sparks of change. (...) In this election, it seems Israeli voters also want a different agenda. They want solutions to the housing crisis and the collapse of the middle class. Moreover, they want hope instead of an ongoing campaign of intimidation. Perhaps this will lead to a different government. We must believe it, and work to make it happen.

Uzi Baram, HAA, 10.03.15

Include Israeli Arabs in the coalition

(...) From the establishment of Israel in 1948 through Rabin's return to the prime minister's office in 1992, no one sought the opinion of Israel's 20 percent Arab citizens concerning matters large or small: how to develop the economy; whether and when to go to war; how to structure relations between religion and state; what should be taught in schools, and so forth. Even when it came to matters relating specifically to Israeli Arabs and their communities, opinions were still ignored and decisions were made by the Jewish political sovereign, as if Arabs were subjects rather than equal citizens. Exclusion of Arabs in governing became routine, the default setting of Israeli politics, even if it was never explicitly declared as a policy. (...) The political culture of Israel's Jewish majority discounts what Arabs

have to say about national issues (...). Then, in 1992, Rabin returned to office along with a "subversive" idea: that a citizen is a citizen, without conditions. He established a de facto political partnership with the Arab political parties. Although those parties were not formally included as part of the governing coalition, they supported it from the other side of the aisle. (...) As things look, the Arab voice in the Knesset could be strengthened significantly in the upcoming election. (...) Israel's Arab citizens are ready and willing to play a meaningful role in helping shape the country's future. (...)

Amnon Beerli-Sulitzeanu, TOI, 13.03.15

2. Netanyahus Rede vor dem US-Kongress

Ungeachtet der scharfen Kritik gegen die Rede von Ministerpräsident Benjamin Netanyahu, reiste er nach Washington und warnte die mehrheitlich republikanischen Politiker im US-Kongress vor dem „schlechten Abkommen“ über das iranische Atomprogramm. Netanyahu erntete in Israel Anerkennung für seinen professionellen Auftritt als Redner. Die rechten Fraktionen werteten die Rede als entscheidend für Israels Sicherheit. Das Zionistische Lager und Meretz warfen Netanyahu vor, einen Keil zwischen Washington und Jerusalem zu schlagen und damit die Beziehungen zu dem für Israels Sicherheit so wichtigen Verbündeten zu gefährden.

Netanyahu in Congress

(...) As one in attendance who heard from numerous senators and congressmen afterward, Netanyahu's March 3 speech before the US Congress was a success. (...) The prime minister's argument that Iran having the knowledge to make a nuclear bomb is not that significant if the relevant infrastructure is taken away, comparing it to knowing how to fly but not having an airplane, will resonate with Americans. (...) Further, how can you reduce sanctions on a regime spreading terrorism and expanding its influence around the world? A country whose constitution calls for jihad is not one that will ever be anything but an enemy. These arguments needed to be delivered to Congress and will further help push the administration to get a better deal. (...) Questions have also been raised about the political nature of the prime minister speaking to Congress two weeks before the Israeli elections. The fact of the matter is that the date of the speech would have been around the same irrespective of the elections, simply because of the urgent need to rally Israel's supporters in the US. (...) Yes, it is very possible that the

speech will help the prime minister at home. (...) America is a nation founded upon principles of freedom of speech because only with freedom of speech can the right decisions be made. Whereas procedure is important, having all the facts and making the right decision is more important. (...)

Farley Weiss, JPO, 09.03.15

US must come to its senses

(...) As Iran has already taken over four of the Arab world's capitals, and its network of terrorist proxies is present on Israel's borders, Netanyahu warned that allowing Iran to become a nuclear threshold state would not prevent nuclear proliferation but rather spark an unprecedented nuclear arms race in the region, affording even the likes of Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah the ability to destroy Israel at the push of a button. Netanyahu's warnings were also a message from Arab leaders forsaken by the U.S., as Iran will train its arsenal of ballistic and nuclear missiles not only on Israel, but on the Sunni Arab world as well. The leaders of Saudi Arabia and other Persian Gulf states have beseeched Washington to avoid a deal that would allow Iran to maintain the nuclear ability it already has, as it is clear, even now, that the Islamic republic would take advantage of the West's lax supervision to conceive a nuclear bomb in one of its secret facilities, en route to its declared pursuit of world domination. (...) Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, however, has declared that Tehran "will not give in to the West's excessive and unreasonable demands." Perhaps this will make the Obama administration come to its senses.

Dr. Reuven Berko, IHY, 04.03.15

Netanyahu's top priority is elections, not Iran

(...) Netanyahu was at his best: Clear, eloquent, self-confident, speaking American like no other Israeli politician can. (...) Two weeks before the elections, Netanyahu created a golden opportunity for himself to impress the voters in Israel, and utilized it to the fullest. In Washington, things look different. (...) Netanyahu's decision to address the Congress was allegedly aimed at laying the foundations for a Congress move on the Iranian issue. (...) Israel needs the support of a large number of Democratic members of the House. Netanyahu's speech Tuesday did not recruit the Democrats, but rather alienated them. (...) Netanyahu's top priority on Tuesday was not the Iranian centrifuges, but rather the polls in Israel. (...) Netanyahu's speech, which created quite a lot of excitement in Israel, was broadcast in

America only on the cable networks, and disappeared from the headlines within an hour. It also disappeared from the Congress members' agenda. (...) Snow is still covering the edges of Washington's pavements. The winter is refusing to end. The impression left by Netanyahu's speech, it seems, will dissipate far faster than the snow.

Nahum Barnea, JED, 04.03.15

Netanyahu's colossal failure as prime minister

(...) Netanyahu is wrong and he is misleading the public. Instead of taking action acting against Iran and looking for ways to delay Iran's race to become a country with nuclear weapons, he's declared war on America. Now, (...) with the talks already at such an advanced stage, the chances of preventing an agreement have gone (...). Iranian President Hassan Rouhani and his foreign minister, Mohammad Zarif, have successfully driven a wedge between the US and Israel. (...) Tehran is laughing, while Jerusalem laments the gradual demise of a strategic alliance. (...) When it comes to the bottom line (...) things are clearer, and Netanyahu's trip to Washington and address to Congress will be an illustration of his two colossal failures as prime minister – turning Iran into a nuclear threshold state under the umbrella of international legitimacy, and the destruction of the extensive fabric of relations so critical to our security with the US administration. It's enough to quote the words voiced on Sunday by Dianne Feinstein, former chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and an individual who has made a significant contribution to Israel's security on issues of vital importance: "No, (Netanyahu) doesn't speak for me on this," she said. "I think it's a rather arrogant statement." The conclusion to be drawn is that Netanyahu is in Washington less so as a prime minister concerned for the security of his citizens and more so as a pyromaniac.

Shimon Shiffer, JED, 03.03.15

Holocaust comparisons in Iran debate stir emotions but mislead

(...) Netanyahu and his allies compare Iran to Nazi Germany and those who want to reach an agreement with Iran to control and contain its nuclear activities to appeasers who tried to buy off Adolf Hitler with concession after concession. (...) the prospect of Iran with a nuclear bomb is terrifying. We are right to fear such a regime. But we do not serve our own interests best by basing our policies and our strategy on our emotions. (...) There is a logical inconsistency in the Nazi parallel. (...) Yes, Israel faces

real security challenges and threats but we have come a long way since 1938 or even 1968 and we should acknowledge that. Making Israel seem so puny and vulnerable against the potential Iranian threat in some ways negates the achievement of building the State of Israel and developing its military capability.(...) Iran too is hardly Nazi Germany on the eve of World War II when it was by far the dominant military power in Europe, if not the world. It is far from being Israel's equal in military capability. (...) The Holocaust comparison also does an injustice to the Holocaust itself. (...)The Iranian threat should be taken extremely seriously. But it doesn't serve us to label it or other dangerous threats we encounter another Holocaust. (...)

Alan Elsner, TOI, 02.03.15

Israel and the U.S.: The manufactured crisis

(...)The crisis between the United States and Israel has been manufactured by the Obama administration. Building a crisis up or down is well within the administration's power, and it has chosen to build it up. Why? Three reasons: to damage and defeat Netanyahu (whom Obama has always disliked simply because he is on the Right while Obama is on the Left) in his election campaign, to prevent Israel from affecting the Iran policy debate in the United States, and worst of all to diminish Israel's popularity in the United States and especially among Democrats.(...)

Elliott Abrams, IHY, 01.03.15

3. Dokument über geheime Friedensverhandlungen enthüllt

Einem in Jedioth Achronoth veröffentlichten geheimen Dokument zufolge fanden bis zum August 2013 Verhandlungen auf höchster Ebene über ein Grundsatzpapier zur dauerhaften Lösung des Konflikts zwischen Israel und den Palästinensern statt. Das Papier sollte als Basis für weitere Verhandlungen dienen. Gemäß dem Dokument zeigte Netanyahu Bereitschaft, die Waffenstillstandsgrenze von 1967 als Verhandlungsgrundlage zu akzeptieren, wie es die Palästinenser seit langem fordern, einschließlich eine Verkehrsverbindung zwischen dem Westjordanland und dem Gazastreifen sowie eine Grenze zwischen Jordanien und Palästina. Öffentlich stritt Netanyahu die Informationen ab.

'Concession document' is a beacon in the dark

(...) The document presented by Nahum Barnea is a paper which can be accepted by more than half of the Israeli people, based on surveys conducted here in the past few years which looked into the public's views on a future agreement with the Palestinians. (...) So why shouldn't the members of Meretz start dancing in light of these revelations? And why shouldn't Tzipi Livni (...) be the first to congratulate the prime minister? (...) Two states for two people. It's called a compromise, and not a single peace agreement in the world has been achieved in a different manner, not even after a decades-long war. Moreover, wherever there was no compromise, one of two things happened: A continuation of the battles or a bad withdrawal. So there you have it. This document, which is still a draft, which may not mature into the actual thing tomorrow or even the day after tomorrow, this document is the beacon. (...)

Ariana Ringel Hoffman, JED, 09.03.15

Secret document reveals Netanyahu's lack of credibility

(...) Netanyahu could have said (...): We made the Palestinians generous, far-reaching offers, and they turned them down. The Palestinians have proved that they are not a partner. Instead, Netanyahu is saying: It's not me. I'm not responsible. A prime minister should be expected to give a slightly more levelheaded, slightly more reliable response. (...) When the talks matured into a series of agreements on some of the core issues, Abbas clarified that he was not obligated by what was agreed upon with Hussein Agha. (...) Netanyahu, through Molcho, agreed to considerable concessions, while Abbas agreed to nothing. (...) Was Netanyahu planning to reach an agreement based on these principles? I don't think so. His intention was to prove to the Americans that he is bold and pragmatic, and then somehow bury the paperwork. That's Netanyahu's big problem when it comes to foreign relations, including the relations with America: There is no credibility. (...) The Netanyahu camp has another weighty argument: It's only a draft, only negotiations, not a signed document. (...) This is not the way to run a diplomatic move. This is not the way to deal with a key problem in a state's life.

Nahum Barnea, JED, 09.03.15

Trial balloons and formal proposals

(...) When examining the fundamentals of the art of diplomacy, keep in mind that a central, sometimes even crucial, part of it is anchored in suggestion -- gestures and processes that are light years away

from being official proposals or declared, binding stances. In many cases, these are overtures and trial balloons with the principal goal of testing the range of concessions the other side is prepared to make as well as understanding its character. In other cases, they are nothing more than a psychological tool meant, above all, to break the ice, initiate dialogue, and inspire calm between opponents. (...) A prime example of the dynamics of such a process is the Israeli initiative in the Syrian arena launched by then-Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in August 1993. (...) According to the document, nicknamed "the deposit," the package deal was supposed to include full normalization of relations between Israel and Syria and comprehensive security arrangements. (...) three years after the "deposit" package was presented (...), it evaporated into thin air. (...) Ultimately, the recent "concessions document" drama, which was really more of a melodrama, should be viewed in the same way that we look at these preliminary, nonbinding discussions -- as nothing more than a testing of the waters.

Prof. Abraham Ben-Zvi, IHY, 10.03.15

4. Medienquerschnitt

Jerusalem Rathaus bestraft Palästinenser

Israel's new policy of hounding Jerusalem Arab suspects: a mockery of the law

The Jerusalem municipality, the police, the Shin Bet security service and other agencies are working together to penalize suspected participants in violent demonstrations in the capital. (...) The goal is to discover how the people on the list can be "punished" in ways other than criminal charges. (...) the municipality has (...) handed down demolition orders, seized property and bank accounts, and launched legal proceedings. The litany of legal and moral problems stemming from this procedure is intolerably long: selective enforcement, violation of the principle of equality before the law, impairment of the public's faith in the rule of law and law-enforcement agencies, abuse of municipal powers, collective punishment of the suspects' families, as well as damage to the principle of innocent until proven guilty and the suspects' right to privacy. (...)

Editorial, HAA, 11.03.15

Zur Ermordung des russischen Oppositionspolitikers Nestsov

Nemtsov's murder

(...) It almost doesn't matter who actually shot Nemtsov. The bottom line is that during Vladimir Putin's 15 years in power, an inordinate number of his opponents have met mysterious and violent deaths, all of which remain unsolved. The democracy-deficient giant that Russia always was and still continues to be invariably gives rise to exotic conspiracy theories aplenty – the more far-fetched, the greater their hold on the public's imagination. (...) Each killing put Putin under severe suspicion, and each time Putin hotly denied any culpability. (...) even if Putin didn't personally order Nemtsov shot, he and his entourage helped create the atmosphere that invited the assassination. The nature of the Russian regime isn't without significance to our region as a whole and to Israel in particular. Putin's Russia appears to be quite fearless of the current American leadership. Hence, while it ostensibly belongs to the international coalition negotiating a deal with Iran, Russia also supplied Iran with nuclear reactors and know-how, violated the sanctions against it and supports Iranian collusion in Syria with embattled Damascus dictator Bashar Assad. (...) Despite his disapproving words pouring scorn on Putin, US President Barack Obama appears not to be doing much to stop Russia. Putin is confident enough not to give a damn, neither abroad and certainly not at home, where it is plainly dangerous to oppose him. One by one, his key critics meet an untimely end in obscure circumstances, regardless of who exactly gave the specific orders and who pulled the trigger.

Editorial, JPO, 09.03.15

Palästinenser zu internen Veränderungen aufgerufen

What Palestinians need to do to fulfil their quest for statehood

(...) Even though the weaker of the two parties in the highly asymmetrical balance of power between the occupier and the occupied, the Palestinians still do have a shot at cracking the marginalization nut if they start from where it matters the most, namely, with Gaza. (...) This reintegration requires taking serious steps towards beginning to manage Palestinian pluralism effectively, with respect to the requirements of both national governance and international engagement. This, in turn, requires the immediate convening and activation of the Unified Leadership Framework (ULF). (...) The government, which is to be empowered to the fullest extent af-

forded by the Basic Law and the participation and backing of all factions, should be primarily charged with the multi-year dual task of reconstructing Gaza and reunifying Palestinian institutions and legal frameworks across the West Bank and Gaza. (...) The ULF would then task the PLO with communicating that commitment to Israel and the international community on behalf of all factions, while working on securing agreement. (...) Taken together, and with a firm commitment to holding free, fair, and inclusive elections no later than six months before the end of the aforementioned time period, these measures would represent a highly determined act of Palestinian self-empowerment (...) With such attributes, the State of Palestine cannot but be seen as an integral part of the longer-term response to the disenfranchisement-and-despair-driven ideology of "rejectionism" that has been the lifeline of extremism and violence in the region for much of this century.

Salam Fayyad, TOI, 09.03.15

Gush Etzion war jüdisch

The truth about Gush Etzion

Jewish settlement in hills of what is today known as Gush Etzion between Hebron and Jerusalem began with Abraham some 4,000 years ago and has continued since without interruption. (...) Thus, any claim that the current Jewish residents of Gush Etzion have seized lands here is false, even defamatory. The return of the Jews to Gush Etzion in the past century began with the purchase of lands for cash and arose in an atmosphere of neighborliness and peace. (...) In all of the Gush Etzion Regional Council there is not a single Jewish resident knowingly in possession of lands belonging to an Arab. Today's residents of Gush Etzion will continue to rebuild their mountain home while joining in the call for good relations and cooperation with all the residents of this region, Jew and Palestinian alike.

Davidi Perel, JPO, 01.03.15

Gegen die Abschiebung von afrikanischen Flüchtlingen

When asylum-seekers are deported to the torture chamber

(...) A new report by human rights groups includes testimony of asylum-seekers who have been jailed and tortured on their return to Sudan in the framework of "voluntary departure," (...) the asylum-seekers decided to leave after finding themselves

torn between two terrible choices – one, detention at the Holot or Saharonim facilities without trial for prolonged periods, or two, a life of persecution in their fractured homelands or in countries to which they come without rights or refugee status. (...) Israel is sending people barred from deportation to other countries where they have no status or rights, and thus is shirking its moral and legal obligations under international law and the refugee convention to which it is party. (...) The State of Israel is committing a crime against these people, breaking international laws and moral principles. (...)
Editorial, HAA, 10.03.14

Idee zur Wasserverbindung Eilat und Ashkelon

An Israeli Suez Canal

(...) Israel is working with China to build a railway from Eilat to the Mediterranean; it's intended to serve as an overland alternative to the Suez Canal. Ships will arrive on one end and unload; the cargo will be rolled to the other end and loaded onto another boat to continue its trip around the world. It certainly makes sense for Israel to have a parallel to the Suez canal: needless to say, as the Red Sea approaches the Med, it breaks into two prongs. The Suez is at one tip, Eilat is at the other. What Israel ought to do is dig its own canal, from Eilat to Ashkelon. This would be very complicated, very difficult, and very, very expensive. It would take a long time. But it is doable, and the upside would be tremendous. (...) Last year, about 20,000 ships passed through the Suez Canal, producing a total of \$5.5 billion in revenue for Egypt. (...) A trans-Israel canal (...) would pay for itself in 10 years. (...) The canal could even help refill the Dead Sea. (...) Israel's economy, its roles in the energy market, in world trade, in globalizing technology are expanding every day. It's time for Israel to make itself a two-ocean nation.

Joshua Gelernter, JPO, 07.03.15

HAA = Haaretz

JED = Jedioth Achronoth / Ynetnews

JPO = Jerusalem Post

IHY = Israel HaYom

TOI = Times of Israel

GLO = Globes

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