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1. Schlagabtausch auf dem Golan

Bei einem Angriff der israelischen Luftwaffe sind vier mutmaßliche Terroristen getötet worden, die, laut Einschätzung der Armee, im Grenzbereich auf den Golanhöhen einen Sprengsatz anbringen wollten. Der geplante Bombenanschlag war offenbar Reaktion auf den israelischen Beschuss eines Militärlagers in Syrien. Ministerpräsident Benjamin Netanyahu erklärte, dass jeder Versuch eines Angriffs gegen israelische Zivilisten oder Soldaten, mit Entschlossenheit beantwortet werden würde.

Northern gamble

Since Syria became engulfed in a bloody civil war in 2011, a deadly back and forth has been played out between Israel and forces loyal to the Assad regime. (...) it is a dangerous gamble. Israel's ability to influence the internal affairs of Syria, Lebanon, or other countries in the region is extremely limited. Jerusalem has focused, instead, on maintaining basic ground rules and redlines. No transferring of advanced missiles and weapons systems or chemical weapons from Syria to Hezbollah is one (...). Another Israeli objective is to prevent Hezbollah from gaining a foothold in the Syrian parts of the Golan Heights. An Israel Air Force attack in Quneitra on

January 18 that killed the son of Hezbollah's late military leader Imad Moughniyeh and an Iranian general was part of that effort. (...) Israel has permitted itself to launch these strikes based on the assumption that the Assad regime is too embattled to risk escalation. (...) Israel is also betting that Hezbollah will not retaliate. (...) But Israel's strategic assumptions might be (...) getting riskier. (...) the situation could easily deteriorate rapidly. (...) Israel is (...) playing an increasingly dangerous game of ping-pong that could eventually lead to all-out war. The truth is that Hezbollah's bellicose intentions, backed up by concrete actions like the building up of armaments and the encouragement of the Iranians, will eventually lead to a military confrontation with Israel. It is just a matter of time.

Editorial, JPO, 28.04.15

With a score to settle, Hezbollah will not give up

The attempted across Israel's border with Syria on Sunday night would not be the first time that the Lebanon-based Hezbollah organization has tried place explosives beyond the border fence, in Israeli territory. The aim was to place explosives so that the shrapnel would wound IDF patrols on the Israeli side of the border, leaving no Syrian fingerprints that could give Israel grounds to attack Damascus. (...)

The attack was similar to several others on the Lebanon border, with Hezbollah taking advantage of the fact that Israel built the border fence slightly to the west, several feet from the cease-fire line, so that it would be in a better topographical position to block infiltrations and shooting. (...) According to foreign reports, Israel on Friday night attacked an arms shipment headed to Hezbollah, and Hezbollah, which has adapted a new "zero-tolerance" policy, responded immediately. (...) No one, therefore, should be surprised by the attack, and the skill of the IDF combat battalion that tracked the cell and was able to dispatch an IAF jet should be appreciated. (...) Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah will try to find Israel's weak spot, and he will not give up.
Ron Ben-Yishai, JED, 27.04.15

Growing tension in the north

After the airstrikes in Syria in recent days which were attributed to the Israeli Air Force, Hezbollah faces a dilemma. For the first time since the round of escalation that erupted in January after the killing of Jihad Mughniyeh, Hezbollah must decide how to respond to a reported Israel action. (...) it is impossible to ignore the tension which has been slowly growing on Israel's northern front. (...) It appears that some of the weaponry targeted in the recent strikes was meant to replenish Hezbollah's warehouses which have been depleted during the ongoing civil war in Syria, but it is also likely that some of the weaponry was of a strategic nature intended for use in a future conflict with Israel. A Syrian surface-to-surface missile brigade is based in the area which was struck (...) it is quite possible the purpose of the operation was to thwart the transfer of missiles from Syria to Lebanon. (...) Assuming Israel's policy does not change and Hezbollah continues to arm itself and live up to its pledges to respond to Israeli actions, a number of powder kegs will remain on the ground, particularly given the effort Hezbollah is investing in establishing a front against Israel on the Golan Heights. Neither side currently has a clear interest in escalation, but both must be wary of an isolated event or response that could throw the northern front into a dangerous downward spiral.
Yoav Limor, IHY, 26.04.15

A ticking bomb awaits Israel on its northern border

(...) Hezbollah's monstrous weapons arsenal will not be eliminated by surgical strikes once every six months. (...) In recent years, Hezbollah has been emptying out all its Syrian ally's weapons, and (...)

there is no way to uncover every single truck crossing the long border between the countries. The working premise is that Hezbollah is armed from head to toe: From Scud-D missiles which cover every point in the country, through the accurate Fateh-110 missiles with the heavy warheads, the Yakhont anti-ship cruise missiles which reach a range of up to 300 kilometers (...) and can paralyze the Navy's activity and hit strategic points (...), aerial defense systems, and of course a stock of some 130,000 rockets reaching different ranges, with an ability to fire 1,500 rockets a day. If that were not enough, Hezbollah has gotten hold of short-range Burkan rockets from Syria, which can reach up to 7 kilometers but carry warheads of 100 kilograms to half a ton of explosives, and can cause destructive damage. It's true that Hezbollah is up to its neck in the fighting in Syria with 5,000 of its men, in Iraq and in Yemen. Its fighters are being buried secretly, with the death toll nearing 1,000, in addition to thousands of injured. For an organization of 15,000 regular fighters, that's quite a lot. (...) Nonetheless, the challenge posed by Hezbollah is becoming extremely significant, and any attempt to repress it as if it were a Defense Ministry spin is foolish and could even be dangerous. (...) If the past weekend's operation was painful for Hezbollah, we should not rule out the possibility of retaliation, on Syria's part either. (...) there is a ticking bomb waiting for us on the northern border (...). If the defense establishment fails to defuse it, quickly, we are in for a battle which we have never experienced before.

Yossi Yehoshua, JED, 26.04.15

Ticking time bombs: Hezbollah in Gaza and Palestinians in Syria

(...) Hamas's declining power is good news in and of itself, but it is also dangerous, as it creates two ticking time bombs as far as Israel is concerned. First, in Israel's north – in the form of the Palestinian refugee camp of Yarmouk in Syria – and the second in Gaza, where Iran's new Hezbollah-like proxy is setting up shop. (...) In December 2012 (...) Khalad Mashaal, announced that the group was supporting Syrian rebels in their fight to oust President Bashar Assad. (...) At the time, turning their back on their biggest allies seemed like a smart bet and the right thing to do. Assad was losing control over Syria and his fate seemed sealed; and in Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas' sister organization, had taken control. A year later things looked very different: Assad suddenly seemed to have regained the upper hand and the Brotherhood was violently ousted from

power by Egypt's now president and then military chief Fatteh Abed al-Sisi. Hamas suddenly found itself without a patron. (...) The statement by Mashaal was yet another slap in the face to Iran, which has thrown its might behind the rebels. The move further strained ties and buried any chance for reconciliation between Iran and Hamas in the near future, leaving Hamas still hungry for money and arms. (...) Hamas is still the strongest of all terror factions in the Strip, but the current crisis has already begun to take its toll on Gaza's de facto sovereigns. (...) In Rafah in the south, salafists supporting al-Qaeda are helping terrorists cross from Sinai via tunnels. In the north, a group call "Hezbollah in Gaza" has reappeared. The group, Harakat as-Sabeereen Natzran Le-Palastin ("The Patient Ones' Movement for the Liberation of Palestine"), which sometimes goes by the acronym of Hesn ("fortification"). Their flag is almost a mirror image of the Hezbollah banner, with the small addition of a map of greater Palestine. (...) Thus, it seems Iran has already selected its choice to replace Hamas. As much as Hesn grows, the pro-Shiite forces in northern Gaza will grow accordingly. (...) The "Patient Ones" is claiming to be a popular movement, but is still significantly smaller than Hamas. But we would be wise to remember that 30 years ago, Hamas was also a small and almost completely unknown entity. Yaron Friedman, JED, 25.04.15

2. Iranverhandlungen und russische Raketen

Nach dem Anfang April erreichten Grundsatzabkommen gehen die Atomverhandlungen in die Endrunde. Laut Rahmenabkommen muss der Iran in den kommenden zehn Jahren zwei Drittel seiner Kapazitäten zur Uran-Anreicherung stilllegen. Weitere Einzelheiten sollen bis Ende Juni ausgehandelt werden. Die israelische Regierung warnte wiederholt vor dem sich abzeichnenden angeblich schlechten Abkommen. Für Unmut in Jerusalem sorgte zudem der von Moskau angekündigte Verkauf von S-300-Luftabwehrraketen an Teheran, die zum Schutz der Atomanlagen eingesetzt werden könnten.

Russia-Iran deal: More than just missiles

(...) Russia's deal with Iran to sell them the advanced S-300 anti-aircraft missiles, described in headlines as a result of the progress made between Iran and world powers over the former's nuclear

program, is a serious cause for concern. The deal not only destabilizes the region, as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told Russian President Vladimir Putin, but could also signal the return of the Middle East as political sparring arena between the U.S. and Russia. (...) The anti-air missiles to Iran (...) are a sign of global friction spanning multiple regions, such as the Ukrainian conflict. (...) The former Soviet Union's support for the Arab world, including the Palestinians, was a result of not only geopolitical considerations but local contempt for Zionism (...). Happily for us, this is not the case for post-Soviet Russia's relations with Israel today. On the contrary, Israel has a positive and cooperative relationship with Russia in numerous fields (...). But diplomacy can sometimes take unexpected turns, and a clash between the U.S. and Russia in a region rife with conflicting interests could certainly create an unpleasant dynamic for us. (...) Iran is using the U.S.-Russia rivalry to get benefits from both sides: On hand it has the missile deal with Russia, which is going through despite the sanctions still being in place, and putting the U.S.'s trumpeted achievements in the negotiations to shame; on the hand, an apparent thawing of relations with the U.S., including a promise to lift American sanctions. (...)

Zalman Shoval, IHY, 19.04.15

Putin throws a spanner in the works

(...) President Putin of Russia has reversed the 2010 decision on the part of Russia to not sell the S-300 anti-aircraft missile system to Iran. He also revived a barter deal with Iran of Russian agricultural equipment for Iranian oil. These decisions, designed to spit in the face of the United States (...). The Russian decision substantially increases the general uncertainty of the entire situation surrounding Iran's nuclear plans and progress, and what to do about them. (...) An attack on the nuclear facilities is unlikely because Israel does not have sufficiently powerful bunker-buster bombs and the US, which has them, will not use them. (...) Strengthening of the sanctions regime would be out of the question. The sanctions regime is finished. (...) This leaves only one real alternative; to live with an Iran capable of producing nuclear weapons or even producing one or two (...) and using the ensuing period of years before it achieves the ability to miniaturize nuclear weapons and provide them to its terrorist proxies. (...)

Norman Bailey, GLO, 19.04.15

Israel saving its anger for White House, not Kremlin

(...) Benjamin Netanyahu's telephone conversation with Putin on Tuesday was the highest Israeli effort to inquire about the Russian president's actual intentions when he lifted the ban on the sale of S-300 missiles to Iran. But the Russians don't answer with "yes" and "no" or make clear commitments, and usually only say that they are taking the reservations into account. That may be the reason why the Israeli response to the Kremlin's announcement was not unusually harsh: State officials in Jerusalem must have realized that Putin decided to lift the ban on the deal signed with the Iranians in 2007, but that so far the parties have not begun negotiating a different deal, and that it's unclear when such a deal will be signed and which missile models will be included in it. In general, Israel has apparently realized that the Russian announcement is more of a declarative move carrying a heavy political weight rather than a practical move in the foreseeable future. (...) Why fight with two world powers simultaneously if you can fight with just one? Especially if the Russians are doing half of our job for us and making it difficult for Obama to get the Congress' approval for an agreement with Tehran. (...) In this battle, Obama's Republican rivals have even heavier ammunition: The document signed by Iran and the world powers, which has yet to be published. The big question is who is telling the truth: The Iranians, who claim that according to the document all the sanctions will be lifted a moment after it is signed, or the American administration, which says that it will be a gradual process. (...)

Alex Fishman, JED, 16.04.15

A Pyrrhic victory

(...) Increasing evidence of the dangerous slew of concessions to Iran is emerging -- a continuous insult to the intelligence of the American people. This Munich-like apotheosis of appeasement has been spun by the administration as a major diplomatic victory for the United States. (...) It can be called a narrow victory because Obama, Kerry and their spokespeople made a full press effort on Capitol Hill and elsewhere to kill the bill. (...) The Obama administration's fact sheet states that the 19,000 centrifuges Iran currently has will be reduced to 6,104. Keep in mind that when we first started negotiating with Iran, our opening position was zero centrifuges and theirs was approximately 6,000. I fail to see how this is, in any way, a diplomatic victory, when through the process of negotiations, we simply ar-

rived at their starting point. (...) The U.S. claims that inspectors from the U.N. nuclear monitoring agency will have unlimited access to "snap inspections" of the entire supply chain, to uranium mines, centrifuges and any suspicious site. (...) Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said that military sites are off limits to inspections. (...) I mourn for the America I always believed in, a moral beacon to the world and the barometer of the forces of truth versus falsehood, and good versus evil. (...)

Sarah N. Stern, IHY, 24.04.15

3. Gedenktage

Ministerpräsident Benjamin Netanyahu nahm den Holocaustgedenktag zum Anlass, erneut vor einer Atommacht Iran zu warnen. Der sich abzeichnende Kompromiss mit Teheran sei Beweis dafür, dass die Welt die Lektion der Shoah nicht gelernt habe. Am 22. April beging Israel den Gedenktag für die gefallenen Soldaten und Terroropfer. Seit dem Beginn des zionistischen Projekts im Jahre 1860 hat die jüdische Bevölkerung 23.276 Todesopfer zu beklagen. 107 davon sind alleine im Jahr 2014 hinzugekommen. Präsident Rivlin sagte in seiner Ansprache bei der Eröffnung der Gedenkfeierlichkeiten: „Es ist die Verantwortung des Staates Israel und seiner Bürger, alles in ihrer Macht stehende zu tun, um den nächsten Krieg zu verhindern. Gleichzeitig müssen wir unseren Feinden klar machen, dass wenn wir wieder in den Krieg ziehen müssten, wir dieser Herausforderung gewachsen sein werden.“ Am 23. April feierte Israel den 67. Unabhängigkeitstag.

The tradition of remembering

The only family that Israelis don't want to see grow – the family of the bereaved – has added over 116 names since last Independence Day: 67 who fell in Operation Protective Edge and the rest killed in terrorist attacks or accidents. (...) Some mean or insensitive people want to lessen the sense of mourning, particularly the shared, national aspect of it. Other well-meaning people are proposing different ways of commemorating the fallen. But they are wrong, too. The ways in which we remember those dearest to us (...) were decided and imprinted on our national consciousness after the War of Independence in 1948. They must remain that way -- even if they aren't modern, even if they employ old-fashioned equipment. (...) This doesn't come from conservatism, but from the facts that year after year teach us that the chain remains unbroken from gen-

eration to generation. (...) Gathering behind those who went first and never came back is not a desire for victimization, but rather willingness to identify with the apex of commitment to society, the renunciation of selfishness and self-realization for a loftier purpose, because there is no other choice. (...) Dan Margalit, IHY, 19.04.15

Never take the emotion out of the Holocaust

(...) With every passing day the number of survivors living among us decreases. Our responsibility is to find the best way to ensure that their story is passed on from generation to generation, not as a piece of abstract history but as part of the story of our people. (...) Education around the Holocaust should never be dispassionate, it should never be disconnected from feeling. (...) It was Einstein who said, "The only source of knowledge is experience" and Kant who is famously paraphrased as saying, "Experience without theory is blind, but theory without experience is mere intellectual play." Our in-depth studies show that the best way to truly reach people and expose them to the realities of the Holocaust is via a combination of personal experience, preparation prior to the trip and the testimonies of the survivors themselves, who accompany the participants on their journey. (...) The marching on Yom HaShoah from Auschwitz to Birkenau with more than 10,000 Jews and non-Jews alike from around the globe leaves an indelible impression on each participant. The very fact that our ancestors walked this same path embraces the true meaning of memory. (...) Our goal is not education merely for the sake of education; it is education for the sake of memory and of action, education for the past and the future.

Phyllis Greenberg Heideman, TOI, 16.04.15

The enemies of commemoration

As always, the days between Holocaust Remembrance Day and Memorial Day for Israel's Fallen Soldiers are another opportunity to censure the memory. (...) The simple truth is that the Education Ministry wanted to adopt an educational initiative of Yad Vashem, whose main goal, among preschoolers, is to nurture respect for the other and the different. (...) The marches of the living are treated similarly. The enemies of the memory continue to claim that these marches encourage nationalism, because one student said that Kahane was right. The majority of participants actually reached an opposite insight. (...) Memorial Day for Israel's Fallen Soldiers receives a similar welcome. In Israel, it should be

noted, death is not a cause for celebration. No one gets caught in illusions about 72 virgins. Families don't set up a tent and hand out candy for their son becoming a shahid. The direction is completely different: In their death they willed us life. (...)

Ben-Dror Yemini, JED, 20.04.15

A dozen reasons why Israel should do away with Holocaust Remembrance Day

Holocaust Remembrance Day should be canceled, because the few who do have someone to remember will not forget those who died, and those who do not cannot truly remember. (...) it is an unnecessary opportunity for an unapologetic peek at the pornography of death. Anyone who feels compelled to look at pictures of executions or a final glimpse of victims before they die are invited to watch the colorful videos of Islamic State. (...) a large proportion of the victims of the Holocaust were ultra-Orthodox Jews, and their followers in Israel and abroad do not accept the day as a fitting date to mark the destruction. (...) Jews say Kaddish and study Mishna. (...) I hide my face in shame when I see young Israelis walking around in Poland wrapped in Israeli flags, like fans of Beitar Jerusalem in the streets of the capital after their soccer team has beat Bnei Sakhnin. (...) we must not ground our existence here solely on our being perpetually persecuted. If we do not distinguish ourselves culturally and religiously, it would be better for us to assimilate among the nations. (...) it would be better to study the era of the Holocaust in a rational manner, above all, and to take from it the universal lessons as well: The danger of turning into beasts also looms over members of the chosen people.

Ariel Rubinstein, HAA, 16.04.15

Why should we, Palestinians, learn about the Holocaust?

I learned about Holocaust for the first time when I was about six years old. (...) I remember having mixed feelings about that. For me, the Jews were the ones who arrested my grandfather. (...) I hated the soldiers I saw at the checkpoints and loved my father's Jewish friends and the Jewish people I met Jerusalem. (...) In the 12th grade there were lessons about World War II, but still no mention of the Holocaust. In fact, there is no "Holocaust" in Palestinian history books. I'm currently a law student at a Palestinian university, and still, the word "Holocaust" isn't mentioned anywhere. (...) Holocaust education isn't only a Jewish issue, it is an issue for humanity. It is being taught at most of the schools and univer-

sities in the world, but not in the place where it should be taught first. Holocaust education is the single best way to increase empathy between Palestinians and Israelis. (...) Knowledge is empathy!
Ahmed Maswadeh, JPO, 25.04.15

I have a dream of Israelis and Palestinians celebrating side by side

(...) I have a vision of the people of our country from the river to the sea celebrating two Independence Days simultaneously, that of Israel and that of Palestine. A real Independence Day for two peoples: no military parades, no speech by the Chief of Staff, no hatred, threats or condemnation. A public holiday in which there are processions of joy and love, with brightly-colored flowers, sparkling costumes, music and poetry that refresh both body and mind.

I have a vision of a Jerusalem where there are two processions at the same time and on the same day: one from the Western Wall plaza towards the Knesset, and the other from the plaza of the Palestinian Legislative Council in Jerusalem's Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood towards the Al-Aqsa plaza. (...) The Israeli president and the president of the State of Palestine advance towards one another while marching music plays in the background and each carries an ancient sword. They both meet in the middle. (...) This moment signals the beginning of joint Independence Day celebrations in both languages. In today's discourse, this vision would appear to be nothing more than a naive dream. (...) But the naiveté and purity of my dream are a million times better than the language of hotheads who bear only hatred and hostility. The leaders who rule over us today (...) know very well that at the end of the day there is no alternative but to stop the war and hostilities and turn to a solution that will bring peace to both peoples. (...) What do we bequeath our children and grandchildren? More wars? Occupation? (...) What values do we leave them? (...) Our moral duty and conscience require us to move towards a new era. (...) Jewish citizens celebrate their independence, as is their right. But they must know that this independence lacks something as long as the Palestinian people do not also enjoy their own independence. The Palestinian people were unable up until now to achieve independence, so much so that the Nakba ("Day of Catastrophe") still weighs upon them. But to treat the Israeli independence as a Nakba – "their independence is our Nakba", as the slogan goes – means drowning in that same swamp of the past. (...) The decision to remember the Nakba in Israel according to the He-

brew calendar is a malicious provocation. We have to separate the two events so as to turn a new page in the relations between the two nations and pave the path towards the future.

Nazir Mgally, JED, 23.04.15

4. Medienquerschnitt

Koalitionsverhandlungen

An open letter to Naftali Bennet

Dear Naftali, (...) don't give in just to sit in the next government. (...) How can you, representing religious Zionism, possibly allow control over religious services to return to the hands of the ultra-Orthodox Shas party? (...) Are you going to join a coalition which plans to rescind a government decision to make conversion more accessible, especially for the hundreds of thousands of non-Jewish Russian immigrants who moved to Israel under the Law of Return? What happened to your concern for the entire nation? (...) Are you really going to sit in a government that plans to shift funding back to rabbinic seminaries instead of employment training? Which will restore significant funding to ultra-Orthodox schools that don't teach Basic English and math? (...) I know Ayelet Shaked is an important person in your party, and an impressive leader. But will you really support undoing a law to reduce the number of ministers — which you voted for! — simply to offer her a ministry? There comes a time when leaders have to stand for something. Naftali, (...) what do you stand for? (...)

Dov Lipman, TOI, 27.04.15

Geheimverhandlungen mit der Hamas

Israel's secret cooperation with Hamas

It turns out that for several weeks now, official representatives of the Israeli government, members of the defense establishment, have been holding a real dialogue with Hamas – partly direct, partly indirect – in a bid to reach a long-term calm between the sides. (...) they are talking about rebuilding the Strip, a possibility of creating water and electricity infrastructures, and even an independent seaport which will serve Gaza is no longer considered a bad word. (...) Defense establishment officials believe that the absence of a dialogue that will help ease the living conditions in Gaza will lead an armed conflict in the summer, and Operation Protective Edge will be perceived as a colossal failure. (...) The PA is fuming with anger. The media in Ramallah are accusing

Israel of helping Hamas in Gaza establish itself as a rival leadership. There is some truth in that. The PA is failing to take control over the Strip's reconstruction, and Israel has no time to wait. (...) The dialogue between Israel and Hamas created motivation in the organization to prevent a deterioration on the Gaza border. (...) It will be no surprise if the next rocket from Gaza is launched by someone opposing the Israeli-Hamas dialogue. It might even be someone close to the PA.

Alex Fishman, JED, 26.04.15

Nepal und Leihmütter

Surrogacy challenge

The heartrending tragedy caused by the Nepalese earthquake last Saturday has turned the spotlight indirectly on a very Israeli predicament. It's a legal difficulty that keeps sending numerous Israelis to seek viable recourse in far-off Kathmandu for lack of other likely alternatives. The problem – encountered chiefly but not exclusively by gay men – is the inability to bring children into the world via surrogate mothers here. (...) while Israel excels at the science, its legal and religious establishments have failed to catch up with changes that can no longer be swept under the national rug. (...) The right to parenthood should be self-evident, regardless of one's sexual orientation, inclinations or lifestyle. The desire of Israeli men to father their own biological children shouldn't be predicated on anyone's say-so. It certainly shouldn't be obstructed by questionable, arbitrary rulings. (...) Israel is a country in which immigration visas are granted even to non-Jewish grandchildren of a Jewish grandparent and to the grandchildren's own non-Jewish descendants, all on the strength of even a tenuous genealogical tie. Is it reasonable that the right to fatherhood of native Israelis be obstructed? (...) Anyone is free personally to evaluate the issue from a religious perspective. But the state must be guided by nothing but the precept of equality under the law. (...)

Editorial, JPO, 27.04.15

Palästinensische Abgeordnete in Haft

Israel must free Palestinian MP Khalida Jarrar

For a month now, Palestinian parliament member Khalida Jarrar has been held in an Israeli prison after being arrested. (...) She was charged in an Israeli military court with 12 security offenses, including membership in the Popular Front for the

Liberation of Palestine and incitement to abduct an Israeli soldier as a bargaining chip (...), it is difficult to escape the conclusion that Jarrar's arrest was political in nature, meant as payback for her public activities regarding the ICC. The fact that she was charged with crimes only after the international protest reinforces this suspicion. (...) She is a nonviolent and determined activist who is working to liberate her people from the occupation. (...) Jarrar's administrative detention should be canceled immediately, and her trial should continue only if there is concrete evidence that she has committed genuine security offenses. She deserves freedom, not incarceration, while this judgment is being made.

Editorial, HAA, 26.04.15

Ex-Präsident kündigt Job bei der Bank

Mr. Peres, here's what the fuss is all about

Dear President Peres, (...) You did something right, very right, in canceling the contract (...). Thank you Mr. President! But there is still something wrong with this picture, something that urgently needs to be fixed. (...) Shari Arison, who would have been your new employer, is owner of Bank Hapoalim, the largest Israeli bank, and also Shikun veBinui, one of Israel's biggest construction and infrastructure companies. (...) By hiring yourself out — for a hefty sum — to one of Israel's leading oligarchic institutions, you were about to become a poster-boy for Hon-Shilton. (...) When a country confers its greatest honor on a person — and in your case it was an honor well deserved — that honor is a badge and a responsibility you wear forever. No one thinks of you as a private citizen. (...) Mr. President, we need your judgment *unimpaired*. There is a battle shaping up for the soul of Israel, for the nature of its democracy, a battle to create a more equitable society in which the tremendous human and natural resources of our nation will be put to the service of all its citizens. It's a battle whose first skirmish occurred three years ago, when hundreds of thousands took to the streets during the summer of social protests. We need you on the right side of that battle, on the right side of history. (...) Don't say you don't understand what the fuss was about. Focus the same brain cells you use for understanding nanotechnology on another important challenge: creating a truly fair and egalitarian society in Israel.

Micha Odenheimer, TOI, 26.04.15

Abwesenheitsrecht auch in Jerusalem

Israel's Low Court of Justice helps perpetuate the occupation

(...) We can now no longer talk loftily about “the beacon of justice” or the “guardian of influence.” (...) Following last week’s rulings, no doubts remain: We’ve got apartheid and military tyranny in our backyard without any legal safeguards — and now also without any disguises. We’re about to get our most nationalist government — and there is no one to stop its laws. Behold the most recent rulings by the fortress of Israeli justice. The so-called Anti-Boycott Law was approved in principle, as was the prohibition against Palestinian security prisoners studying behind bars. And for dessert, the state can continue confiscating Palestinian assets in Jerusalem simply because the owners are in the West Bank. We’re talking about heinous injustice, utter inequality before the law and glaring nationalism. (...) it’s now prohibited to fight the occupation using the most legitimate means — a boycott. (...) These justices of law also signed the ruling barring Palestinian convicts from studying in prison. Serial killers can study there, but not security prisoners, some of whom are political prisoners. (...) The justices, it has been reported, fear that Likud MK Yariv Levin, Mr. Anti-Democracy, will be appointed justice minister. Don’t worry, your honors. When it comes to the occupation, there is no difference between them. When it comes to the occupation, there have never been judges in Jerusalem — not high and certainly not of justice.

Gideon Levy, HAA, 19.04.15

Luftverschmutzung in Haifa

Improve Haifa's air quality with thoughtful response based on scientific groundwork

A Health Ministry document that points to a causal connection between incidence of cancer and air pollution in the Haifa Bay area has sparked fear and anger among area residents. (...) the effort to improve air quality (...) requires a systemic response based on good judgment and appropriate scientific groundwork. (...) It is essential to ensure that additional industrial activity in this area won’t turn Haifa into a repository for carcinogenic materials, and in any case, stringent conditions for preventing air pollution must be set and applied to any such plan. The Environmental Protection Ministry has the necessary legal tool to reduce air pollution in the form of the Clean Air Law. But its implementation depends

largely on the amount of money and staff the government allocates for this purpose. Funding for this issue has been slashed in recent years. (...) Another important step is to obtain an updated picture of the extent of illness in the Haifa Bay area and its connection to pollution. This question should be answered by an epidemiological survey being jointly conducted by local health professionals and the Health Ministry, which was recently begun and will take five years. (...) All these steps, which require restoring a suitable level of funding to the Environmental Protection Ministry, are also essential to help Haifa and the north to flourish. Otherwise, the city will continue to be shrouded in fear of dangerous pollution.

Editorial, HAA, 21.04.15

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Dr. Werner Puschra,

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Redaktion:

Susanne Knaul

Judith Stelmach

Homepage: www.fes.org.il

Email: fes@fes.org.il