



Schlaglicht Israel Nr. 10/15 Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen

1.- 24. Mai

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1. Regierungsbildung

Bis zur letzten Stunde vor Ablauf der Frist für die Regierungsbildung dauerten die hartnäckigen Verhandlungen an zwischen Likud-Chef Benjamin Netanyahu und Naftali Bennett, Chef der nationalreligiösen Partei Habayit Hayehudi. Die neue Koalition wird mit nur 61 Parlamentariern eine knappe Mehrheit stellen und ist entsprechend fragil. Mitgliedsparteien sind die beiden ultraorthodoxen Parteien Shas und United Torah Judaism (Vereinigtes Tora-Judentum), die neue Partei Kulanu, Habayit Hayehudi und der Likud.

Israel's ultra-Orthodox have hit the jackpot in coalition deal

Immediately after the March election, when Moshe Kahlon became the prime candidate to become finance minister, it was noted he was inheriting a budget in reasonable shape, and would have to make relatively moderate cuts of 8 billion shekels (\$2.1 billion) to maintain the deficit framework. The situation has been transformed since then. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has lavished additions totaling some 7 billion shekels on his coalition partners, meaning that now some 15 billion shekels must be cut from elsewhere to avoid a large and dangerous budget deficit. This situation emerged because the ultra-Orthodox parties hit the jackpot.

(...) The ultra-Orthodox success creates not just a budgetary problem, but a social and cultural one. (...) with the decision to give more to anyone who spends his day in yeshiva, the desire to work will drop and the attraction of kollel will grow. Canceling criminal sanctions against Haredi youths who evade the draft while secular draft-dodgers are sent to jail is a social injustice that discriminates among young Israeli men. (...) Israel is facing a huge budget deficit that will require deep cuts in various education and welfare budgets, as well as cuts to infrastructure funding and higher taxes. The ones who will bear this burden are those who serve in the army and pay taxes – a public Netanyahu has sacrificed to establish his fourth government.

Editorial, HAA, 05.05.16

Netanyahu's short-term government

(...) It will only be a matter of a few months before they are called back to the polling stations, and until then Netanyahu will have to again produce all his political magic, juggling and acrobatic skills in order to continue to hold on to the title of prime minister. (...) There have been governments in Israel that have had a tiny majority and allowed themselves to make big moves. Menachem Begin's second government, for example, won the confidence of only 61 Knesset members and allowed itself to launch the

first Lebanon War (...) but Netanyahu is not Begin, he is not Sharon, and he is definitely not Yitzhak Rabin. He is Bibi, for good and for bad. (...) It's possible that there is no better method than the primary elections in our democracy, but it's the primary elections which brought us to the current situation. Personally, I know many people who don't regret it – but why should the State of Israel pay the price?
Eitan Haber, JED, 06.05.15

A government in thrall to backbenchers

(...) A government based on 61 Knesset members is not Netanyahu's government. It is Likud MK Oren Hazan's government. When he pleases, he will hold it above the water; when he pleases, he will drown it in the sink. Hazan won't be alone of course. Bezalel Smotrich of the Bayit Yehudi faction will find it difficult to get up and vote if the prime minister's latest speech won't sound Jewish enough to him. And what will the left-wing members of Moshe Kahlon's faction say when they find out what kind of tranquilizer the coalition chairman gave Hazan, or Smotrich, or other lawmakers? When the coalition only has 61 MKs, every slip of the tongue sparks a row, every sigh announces a crisis. (...) Avigdor Lieberman waited patiently until the very last minute, and then delivered his own blow. (...) There is no certainty that the party he established will survive in the opposition, but at least it has a chance: It will be the only party to the right of the new government. (...)
Nahum Barnea, JED, 06.05.15

Netanyahu promised a 'better, more stable government.' And we got this?

(...) The 61-strong coalition Netanyahu finalized 90 minutes before his time ran out on Wednesday night can be called many things. Narrow, fragile, and right-wing-Orthodox come readily to mind. (...) Given that Netanyahu tore his last coalition apart because of the coup he alleged Tzipi Livni and Yair Lapid were plotting against him (...) it is more than ironic that the latest iteration of the Netanyahu government, desperately cobbled together in the final hours of the last of the 42 days allotted to him, features as its last addition Naftali Bennett's Jewish Home party. For during last summer's war, when the nation's soldiers were risking their lives, when the government was its most closely scrutinized, when unity of purpose was most vital, and when Lapid and Livni were publicly disciplined and loyal, Bennett was a relentless public critic of his own cabinet, demanding harsher action in Gaza, bemoaning the

stewardship of the conflict. Bennett wound up with maximal leverage, which he delightedly utilized to secure every possible concession from the hapless, hamstrung, deadline-dependent Netanyahu. (...) And that in turn means Netanyahu now has the further disagreeable task of pacifying his leading Likud party colleagues, self-perceived senior ministers one and all, for whom there are simply not enough top jobs to go round. Oh, what a recipe for stable government. (...)
David Horovitz, TOI, 07.05.15

Netanyahu needs to broaden his coalition

(...) Netanyahu has finally cobbled together an untenable coalition with only a one-seat majority (...). To survive, it must be broadened. (...) Excoriating Netanyahu for capitulating to unreasonable demands from minority parties that run counter to the will of the people is fine for populist armchair critics. But the responsibility rests with our dysfunctional political system and those voters who supported the small parties. (...) The last-minute appointment of Ayelet Shaked to the Justice Ministry was Bennett's payback for Habayit Hayehudi's shabby treatment. (...) There is considerable disgust with the negative moral implications of appointing Shas leader Aryeh Deri, a convicted felon, as a minister. (...) it still shames us that such a person could be appointed religious services minister as well as economy minister. (...) incoming Finance Minister Moshe Kahlon has plans to introduce reforms to benefit the weaker sectors, especially in the housing arena. However, there is a huge difference between reforming the mobile phone industry -- at which he was undeniably successful -- and revolutionizing a national economy. At the moment, Israel enjoys one of the most stable and enviable economies in the world, but this could change overnight with the implementation of populist policies. (...) With such a razor-thin majority, another major disadvantage of the government is that innovation will be severely limited and constructive policies can be vetoed not merely by the absence of the unanimous support of all the small parties but by any individual government Knesset member. (...) most Israelis hope that (...) the Zionist Union will ultimately become a partner in a national unity government. If it does, one of the government's most urgent tasks will be to bring about highly overdue electoral reforms to prevent a repetition of the current intolerable situation.
Isi Leibler, IHY, 07.05.15

No one deserves the new Netanyahu government

(...) The swearing-in of the new government, the culmination of two months of negotiations, proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that the establishment of Benjamin Netanyahu's fourth government could not have been executed in a more negligent and dishonorable fashion. And this is a prime minister who has the cheek to preach morals to the US president about the manner in which the latter is involved in talks with Iran. Fifty-five days and 30 Knesset seats – and that's all Netanyahu could muster and offer to the people. (...) Netanyahu also handed out ministerial appointments to members of his Likud party seemingly at random; ministries were dismantled for the sole purpose of upgrading dissatisfied ministers; and sections of some ministries were combined with parts of others without any rhyme or reason. (...) There's no point in hanging on to the position of foreign minister; there's no one to hold it for. (...) The fourth Netanyahu government set out on its road on Thursday night – a narrow coalition comprising the Likud, the right and the ultra-Orthodox. (...) Some will say that we got what we deserved. But that's not true. No one deserves this.

Sima Kadmon, JED, 16.05.15

A costly coalition

(...) To entice Bayit Yehudi, Shas and United Torah Judaism to join his new government, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu handed them "coalition money" totaling NIS 420 million of taxpayer money. Netanyahu gave 21 Knesset members in those parties NIS 20m. each to spend as they choose, without having to explain the goals or the needs behind their distributing these funds. The exorbitant cost of this coalition doesn't end there. In fact, cobbling together this narrow coalition of 61 MKs is costing us more than the three previous governments combined. (...) The high cost of the coalition is, in and of itself, problematic. But reading over the fine print and recognizing the deliberate lack of oversight and transparency is even more troubling. (...) (...) The second cost is the lack of oversight and transparency that inevitably leads to corruption, thereby contributing to the ongoing lack of trust which citizens display toward their elected officials. Finally, the money earmarked to support those who are young and capable of working results in the neglect of Holocaust survivors, the elderly, the failing health system as well as other pressing moral and value-centered

needs, thus, ultimately, costing us our national soul. This is truly a costly coalition.

Dov Lipman, JPO, 21.05.15

2. Äthiopische Proteste

Während einer Demonstration jüdischer Einwanderer aus Äthiopien kam es zu schweren Auseinandersetzungen mit der Polizei und zu zahlreichen Verletzten. Auslöser der Proteste war die Veröffentlichung eines Videos, das den aus Äthiopien eingewanderten uniformierten Soldaten Damas Pakada zeigt, wie er von zwei Polizisten sehr grob behandelt wird. Die beiden Polizisten rechtfertigten sich später mit der Aussage, sie hätten Pakada für einen afrikanischen Flüchtling gehalten, der sich illegal in Israel aufhält.

Ethiopian Israeli protest turned violent - but it's still justified

(...) The use of violence is to be condemned. But the grounds for the protest are justified; no group in society need accept discrimination by the authorities. The immediate cause of the latest demonstrations may be police brutality, but the protest is broader, reflecting a lack of hope for any change, particularly among younger people who were born and educated in Israel and have personally experienced the degree to which Israeli society is unwilling to accept them. (...) Six months ago the government issued new policy guidelines that were formulated in consultation with academics, Ethiopian-Israeli activists, the heads of relevant nongovernmental organizations and representatives from 12 government ministries. (...) The committee (...) recommended increasing the number of teachers of Ethiopian origin and reevaluating the efficacy of the ministry's programs to help children from the community. It is regrettable that this opportunity was not used in order to give the parents of these children the freedom to choose between enrolling their children in state religious schools and nonreligious schools. (...) The recommendations for a new approach are a step in the right direction, but implementation is still a long way off. (...)

Editorial, HAA, 04.05.15

All Ethiopians want is to be treated like real Israelis

(...) The violence and racism against us are not just the police's problem; they are first and foremost your problem. (...) you have never seen us as equal people (...) you treat us with disrespect – not as human

beings, but as babies. It's true that we seem non-harmful, but we're not useful either. In your eyes, I am basically your Ethiopian darling: I am seen as "cute" so as not to undermine your supreme status as "the real Israelis," the handsome sabras. (...) Now all our pain is rising. Those young suppressed people, who took in the arrogance and haughtiness displayed by some of you, have turned into lions that are roaring and fighting for their rights – those same rights which we deserve as citizens of the state who serve in the army and carry the burden like everyone else. I don't know a single young member of the Ethiopian community who is asking for more than he deserves. What do we want? What everyone wants – to be treated like human beings. (...)
Danny Adeno Abebe, JED, 03.05.15

Ethiopian rage

(...) Pakada's loyalty to the state did not protect him from unprovoked, outrageous police wrath. (...) Pakada was not the first Israeli Ethiopian to have been beaten by police. (...) Clearly, Israel is not a "rainbow society" that celebrates its differences. What was once referred to as the secular, Ashkenazi elite continues to harbor condescending, even disparaging, opinions about Sephardim and haredim. Tensions exist between Sephardim and immigrants from the former Soviet Union. Nearly every Israeli Jewish group makes nasty generalizations about Israeli Arabs. And Ethiopians also suffer from Israeli society's tribalism. (...) nothing can excuse egregious police brutality, which, by the way, is also vented against other groups within Israeli society, from haredim and Arabs to left-wing activists. But at least part of the problem facing Ethiopians in Israel is the inescapable difficulty of making the transition from sub-Saharan Africa to an advanced Western country. Hopefully, much of what we are witnessing is growing pains.
Editorial, JPO, 03.05.15

Israel must integrate Ethiopians

(...) Ingathering of the exiles was and remains part of Israel's identity. (...) On one hand, the Ethiopian youth have climbed high in Israeli society. They have yet to reach the top of the ladder, but they are on their way up -- in the school system, in the military, and in the sciences. On the other hand, traditional frameworks have been destroyed and the rule of the community's religious leaders has been whittled away. These changes bring fear, desperation and frustration, just as they do with the first generations of immigrants everywhere in the world, along

with violence, drinking and drug use. Israeli institutions have taken assiduous care of the Ethiopian sector, but with too few resources. We can see neglect and trigger-happy policing -- not the trigger of a gun, but the use of police nightsticks. The police can explain but not justify that sometimes Ethiopian Israelis are mistaken for illegal African migrants. But infiltrators should not be beaten either, unless it is necessary. (...)
Dan Margalit, IHY, 01.05.15

3. 50 Jahre deutsch-israelische Beziehungen

Am 12. Mai jährte sich die Aufnahme der diplomatischen Beziehungen zwischen Israel und Deutschland zum 50. Mal. Genau zwei Jahrzehnte nach dem Ende des Zweiten Weltkrieges und der Ermordung von sechs Millionen Juden durch Nazi-Deutschland unterzeichneten Bundeskanzler Konrad Adenauer und Israels Regierungschef David Ben-Gurion das in Israel umstrittene Abkommen. Aus Anlass der Jubiläumsfeiern reiste Israels Staatspräsident Reuven Rivlin Mitte Mai nach Berlin.

Ben-Gurion was right to legitimize the 'other Germany'

In May 1966, the former chancellor of West Germany, Konrad Adenauer, a 91-year-old statesman, visited the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Several dozen students went out to protest the visit; I was one of them. In retrospect, it was an unnecessary show of protest, no longer at the right time. The most popular car in Israel at the time was Volkswagen, the most popular trip to Europe was going shopping in Cologne, and the Israeli media lamented the wave of young people looking for their fortune in divided Berlin. (...) the establishment of diplomatic relations would not have been executed if it were not for the unequivocal ethical statement made by David Ben-Gurion, the first prime minister of the Jewish state: There is a different Germany. Ben-Gurion (...) predicted that the Germans would establish a new national democratic community on the ruins of the Third Reich, free of the Nazi insanity which wreaked havoc on the entire world in general and on the Jewish people in particular. (...) The other Germany is now a solid geopolitical fact. Even the unification of its two parts didn't awaken the old predatory German nationalism, as many people had feared. Israeli historian Tom Segev wrote in his book "The Seventh Million" about the Jewish-German reconciliation that it is doubtful

whether bridges were ever built so quickly over such a deep abyss. Nonetheless, the Jews' willingness to forgive the new German generation without forgetting the crimes of the old generation became institutionalized only after the Germans had taken full responsibility and full blame for the Holocaust in the past few decades. Without blurring, without evading, without stuttering. If stuttering begins, the forgiveness will end.

Sever Plocker, JED, 18.05.15

Germany can keep its 'friendly advice' to itself

"Lasting security for a Jewish and democratic Israel will not be possible without a viable and democratic Palestinian state," German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier said in a speech to Israel's citizens in honor of the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Israel and Germany. Unfortunately, this sentence points to arrogance – once again, a German thinks he knows better than the Jews what is good for them – but also to a blatant intervention in our national affairs. (...) Does the German foreign minister know that the border is supposed to pass two kilometers away from the Knesset, which will be threatened by snipers? That Abbas plans to bring hundreds of thousands and maybe even millions from Syria, Iraq and Lebanon into that territory? It's "the return," and these are the most dangerous terrorists, and their missiles will reach Ben-Gurion Airport, Tel Aviv, Haifa and Jerusalem. Will Mr. Steinmeier come to save us then? Did he work to save the hundreds of thousands of dead people in Syria, Iraq, Libya, Yemen and Egypt? (...) Israel's tiny size is the most dangerous of all these cases. Would he agree to divide Berlin with the Islamic State according to the quarters' demography? (...) When Germany talks about the Jewish state, it has no right to criticize, reprimand, or offer advice, but only to show some modesty. (...)

Guy Bechor, JED, 15.05.15

My grandfather's home

Covering President Reuven Rivlin's state visit to Germany gave me a rare opportunity to find the home in Berlin where my late grandfather Ernest, who managed to leave Germany before the Holocaust befell the Jewish people, lived. (...) I admired Grandpa Ernest, who (...) spoke little about his years in Berlin before the war (...). Dad told me that a household servant who had been with the family for many years threatened Grandpa, saying she would turn him over to the Gestapo if he didn't give her a number of valuable items. (...) After some

checking and investigation, with the help of my father, I found Grandpa's house. It's a real compound - - extensive grounds surround the impressive home, which has been divided into four apartments. (...) The visit to Grandpa's home brought me full circle. I felt that he was looking down on me with his kind eyes, proud that I, as the representative of the most widely-read newspaper in Israel, symbolized the Yalon family's own private victory over the Nazi scourge that forced it to abandon its home and its life in Germany.

Yori Yalon, IHY, 13.05.15

4. Medienquerschnitt

Papst Franziskus erkennt Staat Palästina an

As I see it: The Vatican channels war against Israel

(...) The Vatican this week agreed a treaty with the Palestinians, to cover its interests in the West Bank, east Jerusalem and Gaza, which referred to its treaty partners as the "state of Palestine." A Vatican spokesman said: "Yes, it's a recognition that the state exists." (...) recognizing it in a legal document and announcing that it had brokered a treaty with the state of Palestine is a deliberately loaded move. (...) It is a lie first of all because there is no state of Palestine. (...) Recognition of a Palestine state is a ploy to bounce it into virtual existence by getting the world to agree it exists. (...) the Vatican has lined up behind those who disdain international law. (...) Why has he done this? One answer is realpolitik. It is hardly a coincidence that the treaty was finalized shortly before this Sunday's ceremony in Rome, due to be attended by Mahmoud Abbas, to canonize two Palestinian nuns. (...) In other words, recognition is an act of appeasement and moral cowardice. (...) Jesus was a Jew. If he were alive today, the world's elites would be clamoring for him to be thrown out of Judea as a settler. And Jorge Mario Bergoglio, aka Pope Francis, would be amongst them.

Melanie Phillips, JPO, 14.05.15

The naïve pope and his 'angel of peace' from Ramallah

I admit I had to read the report several times before realizing that it wasn't a joke but a serious report from Rome. Pope Francis had indeed referred to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas on Saturday as "an angel of peace." The conclusion from this statement is that His Holiness is either a very naïve

person or hasn't the slightest idea about what has been happening in the Middle East for almost 70 years. (...) Just like his predecessor, Yasser Arafat, Abbas knew how to repeatedly evade any attempt to hold serious discussions about the PA's future alongside Israel. He doesn't even want to be the president of an existing and sovereign state. (...) He doesn't have to take care of the economy or finances of a real state. Many countries across the universe have recognized the PA as if it were a state, including the Vatican – which is an ephemeral entity itself – in recent days. If Francis really understood some of what is happening in our region, he could have, for example, asked the "angel of peace" from Ramallah why is it that over the years almost all the Christians have escaped-emigrated from the territories controlled by the Palestinians, while in Israel hundreds of thousands of Christians live peacefully and enjoy full freedom of religion. (...)

Noah Klieger, JED, 17.05.15

Linke Hoffnung auf Europa

Only the people of Europe can save Israel

(...) If a Palestinian state is not created, what will become of Israel? (...) Time is running out. (...) The Palestinians (...) have given up. They make do with petitions to the International Criminal Court in The Hague and soccer's world governing body, FIFA. The public in Europe, on the other hand, is a partner. Whereas here we are a negligible minority, in Europe we constitute a majority of 80 percent or more. Therefore, we have a chance of convincing European governments to reflect their own public's opinions and to spearhead a resolution at the UN Security Council calling for recognition of a Palestinian state, and accepting it as a full-fledged UN member. Only this will force Israel to end the occupation. Is this a democratic move on our part? Yes it is, since a binational state will be nondemocratic. The only way to guarantee Israeli democracy is by establishing a Palestinian state. The only way to achieve this is by appealing to Europe. When Europeans see left-wing Israeli leaders pull back or refuse to cooperate with them against Israel's government, it weakens their resolve. When the left insists that this is an internal Israeli issue, Europe is less determined. There is no other way – we need help.

Rogel Alpher, HAA, 17.05.15

Polizeichef für Legalisierung von Marihuana

Israel's police chief is right: Leave the pot smokers alone

Police Commissioner Yohanan Danino's call last week for the police to ease their stance on soft drugs is a good one. (...) During his term the police have taken a strong position against ordinary people whose only sin was smoking a joint or possessing a small amount of marijuana for personal use. (...) Danino, during whose term the police suffered endless sex and corruption scandals, apparently understood (...) but also judges, Knesset members, public defenders and other senior law enforcement officials. Smoking soft drugs is not a crime but rather a recreational norm in large parts of society. All is well as long as people don't smoke while engaging in other activities such as driving — and of course smoking should be done in moderation. (...) The police's task is not to protect conservative values but to protect citizens and society. (...) Leave the pot smokers alone and go after the real criminals.

Editorial, HAA, 17.05.15

Kritische Soldaten-Aussagen zum Krieg

A manipulation of human rights

The report released by Breaking the Silence is already making waves around the world. Isn't it simply wonderful to preach human rights? It's a position in high demand. The thing is, we're dealing here with another piece of major deception, another link in the chain of effort to turn Israel into a living monster, and more help for the BDS campaign. Why deception? First, when Israel is accused of harming civilians, or when people talk about proportionality, one has to ask: What are the proportions? It turns out there aren't any – and not by chance either. Because every comparative review definitively shows that Israel causes less civilian casualties than those witnessed on other similar battlefields. (...) Some of the claims may be true. There are anomalies – in every army in the world and on every battlefield. But when these deviations from the norm are put on display, without any background context, without proof, without a comparative picture, without presenting the fact that a Hamas-issued document ordered the organization's fighters to take cover among the civilian population, hide in population centers, the report released by Breaking the Silence is not merely deception; it's manipulation too. (...)

Ben-Dror Yemini, JED, 09.05.15

Getrennte Busse für Israelis und Palästinenser

Segregated buses are only the tip of the occupation's iceberg

The fact that a plan to segregate Jews and Palestinians on buses in the territories has now been frozen admittedly brings a sigh of relief. But it's impossible to conclude from this that Israeli policies in the territories are free of moral shame and disgrace.(...) Segregation on buses has great symbolic power: It recalls the trauma of racism against blacks in the United States and South Africa. (...) A move so blatantly racist would have sparked harsh criticism of Israel's policy of occupation, and the world would have understood this decision in the only way it could be understood – that Israel had decided to institute an apartheid regime in the territories. But despite the fact that this insane decision has been iced, it's clear that segregated buses are just the tip of the iceberg. Beneath this visible tip lies an established policy of separation, anchored in the very foundations of Israel's rule over the territories. This rule stipulates freedom of movement for Jews but restrictions for Palestinians; permits for houses only in specific communities, rather than an egalitarian permit system based on just and fair criteria; eligibility for social benefits and welfare services for one side only; dispossession of the other side from its lands; and of course, different legal systems for people who live in the same territory, including different court systems, different punishments and more. (...) Such injustices would not be viewed with understanding if they were directed at Jews anywhere in the world. (...)

Editorial, HAA, 20.05.15

Protest unter palästinensischer Flagge

Flags in the square

The Joint (Arab) List recently organized a demonstration in Rabin Square in Tel Aviv. There's nothing wrong with that. (...) This time, Palestinian flags were raised. In this protest, Israelis, who were voicing their demands from the Israeli government as citizens, weren't waving the flag of the country on which they were making these demands. They were waving the Palestinian flag. (...) The statement made by the Palestinian flag was much more emphatic than anything that was said at the demonstration. (...) it no longer mattered what was said – the message was clear. (...) It isn't the well-off Arab members of Knesset who are bearing the brunt of the cost. Their constituents, most of whom just want

a normal life, are paying the price for their leaders' unconditional identification with the enemies of Israel, for their sparring among themselves for the title of most extreme, most hostile to the country that pays their salary. When other Israeli citizens see them waving Palestinian flags, many say to themselves: That's what you want? That's your flag? Fine, we're willing to help. Stay where you are and we'll move the border. If your loyalty is to that flag, if you have pinned your fondest hopes on it, then be our guest. Those of you who live near the Green Line can follow your heart and be annexed to the Palestinians. That way you'll be able to wave the flag with good reason. (...) But the Israeli identity card, the one issued by the Zionists with the blue and white flag, is too precious to them. They want to have their cake and eat it too. There are three things here: the Palestinian flag, the Israeli standard of living, and self-respect. It's not possible to have more than two of them at the same time.

Gilad Sharon, JPO, 08.05.15

Camerons Wahlsieg und Israel

What does Cameron's re-election mean for Israel?

(...) For all the talk that David Cameron is Britain's most pro-Israel leader ever, the fact is that it has been quite a while since the U.K. was any kind of serious player in Israel-Palestine. (...) Cameron has never led any drastic measures on Israel, whether for or against. At the United Nations in November 2012, Britain chose to abstain on the vote on Palestinian statehood, and this government is certainly not expected to support any unilateral recognition of Palestine in the future. At December's Security Council vote on a Palestinian resolution setting out a two-year deadline for a peace deal, Britain abstained once again. As for the labelling of settlement goods, Britain has supported this longstanding EU policy but been happy for other member states to take the lead. (...) the only segment of the population that seemed to care about the Jewishness of Labour leader Ed Miliband was the Jewish community. (...) A lack of outside engagement, when Israel is forming its most right-wing and rejectionist government ever, is far from positive. If Netanyahu seems immune from downright pressure from the White House, what difference is any genteel influence from our island nation going to have on a bullish Jerusalem? The answer is none. (...)

Daniella Peled, HAA, 12.05.15

Warnung an neue Justizministerin

Protect the independence of the courts

(...) Shaked is crafty. She swears by the rule of law, but her remarks indicate that she seeks to balance it out, or in essence prevent it from interfering with the government's actions. (...) the High Court's role is to scrutinize the government to prevent malice, tyranny and bias. That is why legally dubious decisions made by the government are given to judicial approval. That is how a democracy should, and does work. (...) should Shaked seek to make an actual change and assign the selection of judges to a larger number of politicians than currently accepted, or prohibit the High Court from overturning (...) irrational laws, the bitter war once waged between former Supreme Court presidents Aharon Barak and Dorit Beinisch, and Shaked's mentor Daniel Friedmann, will be reignited. (...) It would be best for her if that war did not erupt. (...)

Dan Margalit, IHY, 19.05.15

HAA = Haaretz

JED = JediothAhronoth / Ynetnews

JPO = Jerusalem Post

IHY = Israel HaYom

TOI = Times of Israel

GLO = Globes

Veröffentlicht im: Mai 2015

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