



**Schlaglicht Israel Nr. 23/15
Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen**

1.-15. Dezember

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1. Kerry warnt Israel vor bi-nationalem Staat

Die kritische Rede von US-Außenminister John Kerry beim Saban-Forum in Washington stieß in Jerusalem auf Unmut. Israel werde kein bi-nationaler Staat werden, wies Regierungschef Benjamin Netanyahu die Warnungen von Kerry vor demografischen Entwicklungen zu Ungunsten des demokratischen und jüdischen Staates zurück, sollte es keinen Frieden geben. Außerdem müsse auch die Gegenseite Bereitschaft zur Zweistaatenlösung signalisieren, so Netanyahu. Kerry warnte zudem vor einem möglichen Kollaps der Palästinensischen Autonomiebehörde, der Israel dazu zwingen würde, erneut für Verwaltung sowie Sicherheit in den Teilen des Westjordanlandes zu sorgen, die bereits autonom sind. Der US-Außenminister bekräftigte die Verpflichtung des Weißen Hauses, sich für die Zweistaatenlösung auch weiterhin starkzumachen, allerdings sei es an den beiden Konfliktparteien, die notwendige Entscheidung dafür zu treffen.

Beyond the politics of the moment

(...) What is left of the Middle East that existed when Obama came to power (...)? Very little. Only one country in the Middle East remains stable -- Israel, thank God. (...) Israel has remained stable precisely because it has not accepted the advice of the White House. (...) The binary thinking to which we have become accustomed -- "two states" or "one state" -- is simplistic and disastrous. (...) The "peace dialogue" of recent decades has created a psychologi-

cal fixation that is hard to free ourselves from, even if it has nothing to do with reality. Kerry is worried about Israel's demographics? We are too. But the Jewish birthrate in Israel is perhaps the only one in the Western world on a continual upward trend. And we expect that a million new Jewish immigrants will arrive in Israel in the coming years. The historical irony is that our enemies are unwittingly aiding this process of the Jewish people's return to Zion. Kerry called on us to "see beyond the politics and the pressures of the moment and to look to the future." Exactly right. That is the essence of the return to Zion -- looking past the politics of the moment.
Dror Eydar, IHY, 07.12.15

The penny finally drops for John Kerry

John Kerry has been spewing out quite a bit of nonsense over the past two years. (...) But his latest statement, for a change, belongs to a different department. (...) Kerry supports the Jewish state, and objects to Israel slipping into becoming a binational state. (...) There is a small Jewish state. There's no need to turn it into a big Arab state. (...)The Jewish settlement is not part of the "peace among nations" project. (...) Israel opposes the Palestinian right of return to areas in the heart of Israel. Quite rightly so. But the supporters of the one-state solution, both on the left and right, actually support the right of return. They insist on mixing the two populations together. (...) we need to remember the kibbutzim. From the moment they were founded to this very day, they

have had no Arab members and have built no new neighborhoods for Arabs. The kibbutzim did not need to protest in order to implement the "Jews only" policy. This is also the situation in Arab villages. There are no Jews there. The "Build Your Own Home" tenders, by law, are only open to existing residents. The courts authorized this limitation. There is not a shred of racism here. (...) The right to self-determination encompasses within it the right of each community to maintain a specific character, a particular way of life, a community culture and its own sovereignty. (...)

Ben-Dror Yemini, JED, 11.12.15

The unknown incentives for Israeli-Palestinian peace

The deep freeze in the peace process between Israel and the Palestinians has led the international community to examine new ways of acting to further clarify the character of a future two-state solution, the benefits that Israel and the Palestinians will receive from such a solution, and the price the two sides will pay if it is not reached. (...) Incentives are a tool with great potential to advance the processes of conflict resolution, but it is a tool that has yet to play a central role in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. (...) Israel is looking at three separate incentives for making peace, presented by key players in the international community: (...) a commitment to American security guarantees (...) a promise for normalization of relations and (...) a promise to upgrade Israel's relations with the European Union to the highest non-member status possible, a "special preferred status," (...). However, these incentives have so far failed to melt the diplomatic ice, mainly due to opposition to and total disregard of this proposal by Israel, and also due to the decentralized manner in which these guarantees were presented by international players at different times. (...) Nevertheless, there is currently an opportunity for a further significant step with regard to these incentives, one which will make it difficult for Israelis to remain indifferent. Inspired by the negotiations conducted with Iran, the international community is now trying to establish a new mechanism that will accompany and promote the peace process. This involves a refreshing of the Quartet (UN, U.S., EU and Russia) and the establishment of an international support group that will also include Arab countries. (...) This kind of package will be hard to ignore.

Nimrod Goren, HAA, 13.12.15

The solution is slipping away

(...) while there are those who insist on blaming the Israeli government for the diplomatic standstill between the Palestinians and Israel, while pointing to the settlements and other issues, an increasing number of people in Washington are beginning to understand that the real obstacle is Palestinian refusal to commit to or even discuss necessary compromises on matters such as the "right of return," borders, Jerusalem, and recognition of Israel as the Jewish national home. (...) The majority of Israeli citizens and leaders are open to the establishment of a separate Palestinian entity, dependent on an amenable regional and local climate -- and in the same breath most Israelis also don't want a binational state -- but (...) it would need to be demilitarized and forbidden from forging military alliances with hostile enemy states, such that it would be unable to pose a future threat to Israel and its citizens. It appears that U.S. President Barack Obama, more than his secretary of state, has started getting used to the idea that resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict won't be part of his diplomatic legacy. (...) The question we must ask, (...) is whether the special bond shared by America and Israel, and the mutual obligations of both sides toward the other, should be dependent on contentious matters and developments, such as the urgency or lack thereof of establishing a Palestinian state, particularly due to the likelihood that the ISIS flag will indeed be hoisted over it.

Zalman Shoval, IHY, 14.12.15

Israel is already a binational state, and has been for a long time

(...) The one-state solution is the darkest of demons, which will lead to the mother of all disasters: the return of Palestinian refugees. Intifadas, wars, terror, tyranny, civil war and Armageddon pale before the terror that the idea of a binational democracy strikes in the Israeli heart. Return is the absolute apocalypse. That's how it is when the members of the neighboring nation are regarded as nonhuman. (...) As a result, a binational state is seen as an invitation to suicide. (...) This Israel will never freely accept the Palestinians as citizens with equal rights. (...) For more than 48 years now, Israel is already a binational state. There's no other way to describe it: a state that governs two nations is binational. Nor is there any indication that this situation is about to change. (...) the disaster is already here and it's not the end of the world. (...) For most of its history, then, Israel has been a binational state. The terrible

demon is the reality. (...) Proponents of the single-state solution are trying to put forward a crazy proposition: the establishment of a just regime, an egalitarian democracy for everyone, not only the Jews. (...) The road is long and hard, but the debate must begin to shift now, at least for the few who want to live in a more just state. They must stop proclaiming "two states" and "Jewish state," and begin talking reality. And the reality is that the binational state has been here for a long time. The task now is to make it just(...).

Gideon Levy, HAA, 13.12.15

2. Skandale in der Knesset

Israels Parlament macht eine schwierige Phase immer neuer Skandale durch. Nachdem sich erst im Sommer die Verdachtsmomente gegen den Likud-Politiker und stellvertretenden Parlamentspräsidenten Oren Hazan verdichteten, der als Zuhälter agiert und harte Drogen konsumiert haben soll, geriet nun auch der nationalreligiöse Abgeordnete Yinon Magal (HaBayit HaYehudi) unter den Beschuss früherer Kolleginnen. Magal trat infolge der Vorwürfe, mehrere Frauen sexuell belästigt zu haben, aus der Knesset zurück.

A lesson to all politicians: Skeletons in your closet will eventually come out

(...) Yinon Magal (...) should be given credit for not dragging the affair and for making the decision as soon as possible. He could have remained a Knesset member, but he knew very well - and if he didn't know, there were those who made it clear to him - that his standing in the Bayit Yehudi party was like that of a dead man walking. (...) it doesn't matter if complaints are filed or not, and if the affair remains in the moral domain and isn't moved to the criminal domain. Facebook may have convicted Magal, but the Bayit Yehudi party determined his fate: There is no room for Magal in the conservative party which sanctifies family values. (...) The Magal affair gives Bennett's rivals, particularly within his party, good reasons to question his discretion. (...) there is (...) a moral to this story: If you are a young person considering a public career, you should act every day of your life as if you are about to be summoned to the Turkel Committee on senior government appointments the next day. And if you are a person who has already done a few things in his life and suddenly decides to become a public figure, think twice. You should take a good look at your past. Don't say, "That wasn't serious," "that one wouldn't dare" and

"that won't come out." It will come out. Everything comes out.

Sima Kadmon, JED, 01.12.15

Not what they used to be

(...) Once upon a time, young Israelis held their lawmakers in such high regard they would collect their autographs. But today's lawmakers are a far cry from their awe-inspiring predecessors. (...) Magal's decision to resign his Knesset seat over allegations of sexual harassment indicates he still has some ethics, and he should be credited for that. The same cannot be said of Hazan. (...) Law professor Aviad Hacoheh suggested introducing a new procedure that would allow Knesset members to expel a disgraced MK from their midst with a special majority vote of 90 or 100 MKs, providing the Supreme Court backs the move. (...) This would not be an easy suggestion to implement, as it could be easily exploited by conspiring individuals and political con artists. It would also gnaw at the protection MKs have in their parliamentary immunity. But it may be the only way the majority in the Knesset can rid itself of those who are unworthy of a seat. (...) While it is unclear whether this can be done, it is clear that the problem has to be dealt with, and now -- before the next scandal erupts.

Dan Margalit, IHY, 01.12.15

Fighting for the Knesset's honor

Winston Churchill once said, "Democracy is the worst form of government, except for all the others." I tend to agree. Democracy has its fair share of drawbacks, but it is the best system of government possible. (...) In contrast to the position expressed by the majority of the public, which sees the benefit of voting in the elections, most Israelis do not think MKs are doing their job. (...) there is no way to ignore the disturbing erosion in the public's faith in the Knesset. This is a cause for concern for many, myself included, and I feel it is time to mount a substantial containment effort. The continued erosion of the Knesset's standing in the public's eye spells the deterioration of the link between the public and its elected officials, to the point where it poses a danger to our democracy's stability, as it undermines the principles of government in Israel. The Knesset is the beating heart of Israeli democracy. It is its faithful reflection, and its public value is priceless. (...) This year marks the 50th anniversary for the Knesset's move to its current location in Givat Ram, in Jerusalem. The Knesset is the ideological, democratic, and Israeli home of each and every one of the citizens,

without exception. That is where its strength lies -- where our strength lies. We must guard it and keep it safe.

Yuli Edelstein, IHY, 15.12.15

3. Yossi Sarid gestorben

Der israelische Politiker und Kolumnist Yossi Sarid starb Anfang Dezember an den Folgen eines Herzinfarktes. Der Sohn eines Holocaustüberlebenden wurde 75 Jahre alt. Über 30 Jahre lang saß Sarid für verschiedene Linksparteien in der Knesset. In der Koalition unter dem Sozialdemokraten Yitzhak Rabin übte er zunächst das Amt des Umweltministers aus, und später unter Ehud Barak war er für kurze Zeit Erziehungs- und Kulturminister. Bis zu seinem plötzlichen Tod galt Sarid als einer der schärfsten Kritiker der Regierung Benjamin Netanyahus und als Wortführer der israelischen Friedensbewegung. Er machte sich gegen die Besatzung und gegen Menschenrechtsverletzungen stark. Selbst seine politischen Gegner schätzten ihn für seinen scharfen Verstand, seine Integrität und für seine geschliffene hebräische Sprache.

Yossi Sarid: Israel's fearless politician

(...) Jossi Sarid was a fearless politician. (...) He was cruel to the strong, including himself, and soft as butter towards the weak. The more lost, desperate the cause, the more it attracted Sarid with magic ropes. He was a team player, both in the Labor Party and in Meretz, but he was first of all a soloist. And he spoke well and wrote well, two qualities which today's public discourse is missing so much. In accurate Hebrew, so rich in its sources, brilliant, profound. He said what he meant: That was why even people who disagreed with him could like him. (...) He didn't built his power on the acceptable give-and-take of politics. (...) He didn't care about power for the sake of power. He didn't owe anyone anything. (...) Sarid's ability to turn a political event into a story, into a drama with a lesson at its side, was unusual. His wit was impressive, his cruelty was fascinating. (...) Sarid wasn't a pacifist. His starting point was the State of Israel, its existential threats, the concern for its future. The vision was pragmatic, close to reality, non-messianic, free of romance. From this aspect, at least, he was and remained throughout his career within the central stream of the Labor Movement. (...) His voice, loud and clear and uncompromising, held up a cruel mirror to Israelis' face. He will be greatly missed.

Nahum Barnea, JED, 06.12.15

Israel will miss Yossi Sarid, a devoted Zionist patriot

(...) Sarid was a principled and courageous man, determined and humble, yet one who recognized his own worth. He wanted a just society that for its own good must free itself of the burden of ruling another people. (...) Sarid played an important role in the relative success of the 1992–95 Rabin government in putting Israel on the path toward peace with Jordan, Syria and the Palestinians without conceding security assets. It was a time of economic growth, of improvement in Israel's international status and in the attitude to Israel's Arab citizens. As environment minister he introduced a range of laws and worked to promote awareness. As education minister under Ehud Barak, he instilled the principles of pluralism and coexistence by including the works of Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish in the curriculum. A prolific writer, his regular Friday opinion pieces in Haaretz were notable for their stinging content and for their rich language. Sarid was a devoted Zionist patriot of Israel. He never recoiled from his enemies' frustration and loathing: "I made a name for myself in my different positions as someone who is determined to go against the wind when it's bad, to swim against the stream if it's dirty, and is prepared to pay the price for his determination." His unique voice, now stilled, will be missed.

Editorial, HAA, 06.12.15

The media and Yossi Sarid

The late Yossi Sarid was a media icon (...). From the reporters to the analysts and the editors who assured his media presence, he was a source of self-confidence. (...) Sarid could be (...) sarcastic and denigrating, in his criticism of allies as well as of rivals and opponents. He was invariably forgiven for outrageous opinions. Self-censorship was the rule. (...) In the eyes of the media, Sarid was right even when he was wrong. (...) The loyalty that Sarid commanded served him well. His often extreme views succeeded in gaining a media platform that magnified them. Israel lost a personality who wielded great influence on its society, as a government minister and journalist. Sarid was unparalleled, and maybe this is the most damning accusation against Israel's right wing.

Yisrael Medad, Eli Pollak, JPO, 09.12.15

Saying goodbye to Sarid

(...) even his political enemies – and they were many – admitted that Sarid was a hardworking parliamentarian and such a talented orator that some-

times the cafeteria would empty for his plenum speeches, which MKs did not want to miss. (...) In both his writings as an author and columnist and in his Knesset speeches, he frequently quoted the Bible and Jewish sources, which he considered a cultural rather than religious legacy. (...) His entrance into politics was almost a coincidence. (...) He entered the Knesset in 1973, one of the youngest MKs along with the Likud's Ehud Olmert. (...). Sarid learned to live with the claims that he was a publicity seeker and saw the press largely as a means to an end. (...) His tone became more strident and his anti-ultra-Orthodox slant grew ever more prominent as his political fortunes failed. (...)

Liat Collins, JPO, 10.12.15

4. Medienquerschnitt

Neue Enthüllungen zum Terroranschlag 1972 in München

Before ISIS, there was Black September

(...) a documentary titled "Munich 1972 & Beyond" -- in which two of the victims' widows are interviewed; Ilana Romano, the wife of weightlifter Yossef Romano, and Ankie Spitzer, the widow of fencing coach Andre Spitzer. The women's testimonies are horrific, revealing previously unpublished and repugnant details of torture the terrorists inflicted on their victims, and illustrate the extent to which cruelty knows no bounds when it comes to terrorists. (...) the importance of the testimony provided by the two widows, who have lived with this terrible knowledge since September 1992, is that it reveals the malice of terrorists long before the jihadists from al-Qaida and Islamic State began appalling the world. "Abu Daoud," the leader of Black September and the planner of the Munich attack, wrote in his autobiography that Mahmoud Abbas, the current president of the Palestinian Authority, was one of the few with prior knowledge of the attack and helped fund it. (...) The memory of the murdered Israeli Olympians will never be erased. The torture they endured before their deaths only serves to justify the Israeli government's decision to eliminate them. (...)

Boaz Bismuth, IHY, 02.12.15

Streit um die Organisation "Breaking the Silence"

Support us against the lies

(...) it is surprising when organizations like Breaking the Silence besmirch Israeli soldiers, claiming that we committed war crimes while we were really giving everything we had to defend the citizens of Israel, and while Hamas was systematically violating humanitarian law. What's even more surprising is that a well-respected academic institution like Ben-Gurion University would allow -- as it did about a week ago -- a representative from Breaking the Silence to lecture in a politics and governance classroom. (...) As a civilian and combat reservist who loves the country in which I live, I am concerned about the fact that Israeli organizations are calling for IDF soldiers to be put on trial for supposed criminal and unethical behavior. I call on Defense Minister Moshe Ya'alon to protect his brothers-in-arms from these organizations that eat away at Israeli democracy. We will continue to report for duty every time we are called up, and we will continue to act in accordance with the moral and ethical standards of the IDF, which we have been trained to follow and upon which we rely.

Nevo Katz, IHY, 08.12.15

Breaking the silence? No, distorting reality

(...) Breaking the Silence turned into an organization operating against the Israel I believe in. It began with anonymous testimonies published abroad without providing a name, an address and a response from the IDF. Then came photo exhibitions and weird partnerships with obviously anti-Israel organizations, and finally superficial interviews around the world about war crimes committed by the IDF as a matter of routine. Not everything they said was a lie and not every event is fabricated. (...) Democracy is built on checks and balances: Freedom of the individual versus security-related needs, human rights versus a state's right to defend itself, healthy nationalism versus democracy. (...) Breaking the Silence isn't publishing anonymous testimonies about individual cases, but a false testimony about an unbalanced army, an unbalanced state, good people who have turned into monsters. (...) Breaking the Silence people have no problem operating freely in the Israel, although they are lying. But they should have a problem getting state subsidization and meeting with IDF soldiers and high school students. (...)

Yoaz Hendel, JED, 15.12.15

Steigende Armut

The high price of ignoring poverty

(...) The fact that nearly one-quarter of Israel's population is poor, and that Israel has the dubious honor of coming in next to last in poverty rates among the OECD countries (...) testifies to a dismal failure by the government and leaders of Israel. Israel's intense poverty is almost ignored because it exists on the social margins, far from the center of attention, and affects mainly the ultra-Orthodox and Arab sectors. For all practical purposes, it may be said that this is the poverty report of the Arabs and the Ultra-Orthodox. (...) The current situation requires a new strategy and economic investment on several levels simultaneously. (...) It would not be easy for the state treasury to pay the cost of such a program for a decade, which would be as much as NIS 65 billion — roughly NIS 6.5 billion per year. But the benefit that would come from economic growth and the development of peripheral areas, together with a higher level of social cohesion in the State of Israel, would bring just as much benefit to the State of Israel as it would cost. The tools are available, the studies have been done, and the statistics hang like a millstone around the neck of Israeli society. Now the prime minister, the finance minister and the welfare minister must fulfill their obligation to carry out this vital, fundamental task. Without it, the deterioration will continue, leading in the long term to destructive consequences for Israeli society. Sami Miaari, TOI, 15.12.15

Jüdische Terroristen verhaftet

A major Shin Bet achievement

(...) The raids and arrests carried out over the past few days were most likely the last steps in the investigation, undertaken only after sufficient evidence had been secured. (...) The suspects' defense attorneys (...) have already begun trying to undermine the validity of the search, seizure and arrest procedures exercised as part of the investigation. The main line of defense will most likely be the claim that the evidence was illegally obtained, but regardless of the nature of the suspicions, the lawyers have one thing right -- law enforcement and the judiciary must ensure the suspects' right to due process. The investigation may still be ongoing, but the Shin Bet can already note a significant achievement: The intense work done over the last few months -- the sweeps, administrative arrests and injunctions -- has all but stopped the wave of Jewish terrorism in its

tracks. It does, however, remain to be seen whether the effect of this achievement are long- or short-lived.

Yoav Limor, IHY, 04.12.15

Fanatismus im Kinderzimmer

Incitement: From dolls to knives

Some 4,000 (...) masked dolls, wearing keffiyehs, holding stones in their hands and bearing the inscription "our Jerusalem" were on their way to Palestinian toddlers who don't yet know what hate is. It appears that we have grown accustomed to incitement against Jews in the Palestinian Authority, but at such a young age? Where can we possibly go from there? (...) Twenty-five Palestinian schools are named after terrorists. (...) If you open the textbooks, you will not find Israel on the maps at these schools. As far as they're concerned, Israel simply does not exist. (...) Intifada dolls for young children are the next step in hateful Palestinian propaganda, designed to brainwash kids before they can form their own mature opinions. (...) It's not clear to me how it is possible to bring a pure, innocent child into the world and to raise him from infancy to hate and to murder. How can you teach a child to admire murderers with blood on their hands? (...)

Lital Shemesh, IHY, 10.12.15

Palästinensische Politikerin verurteilt

What does jailing a Palestinian politician say about Israeli democracy?

Khalida Jarrar is a political prisoner (...) sentenced (...) to 15 months in prison for membership in an illegal organization and incitement (...). Jarrar's trial once again proved the intolerable contradiction between the rule of law and the principles of justice, on one hand, and the military justice system on the other. The latter has no relationship to the former. (...) This is not how the legal system of a properly run state conducts itself. Even the fact that Jarrar is a legislator, a member of parliament, an elected representative of her people – a post that ought to grant her immunity from political charges – didn't give her a moment's protection. Israel treated her brutally, just as it treats every Palestinian it deems suspect. (...) The fact that Jarrar was thrown into prison because of her political activity on behalf of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine is first and foremost an indictment of the State of Israel, which puts politicians on trial because of their legitimate opposition to the occupation and even

sentences them to jail. (...) the black flag that flies over the shameful imprisonment of a Palestinian member of parliament will continue to fly over the State of Israel, tarnishing her jailers and, above all, those who are responsible for them.

Editorial, HAA, 09.12.15

HAA = Haaretz

JED = JediothAhronoth / Ynetnews

JPO = Jerusalem Post

IHY = Israel HaYom

TOI = Times of Israel

GLO = Globes

Veröffentlicht im: Dezember 2015

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