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1. Generalstabschef hält Soldaten zu moralischem Verhalten an

Generalstabschef Gadi Eisenkot hat Israels Soldaten zur Mäßigung aufgerufen. Sollte sich ein 13 Jahre altes Mädchen mit einer Schere oder einem Messer Soldaten nähern, wünsche er nicht, dass ein Soldat das Feuer auf das Mädchen eröffne und das Magazin leere, sagte er vor Gymnasiasten. Eisenkot rief vor allem neue Rekruten dazu auf, der Situation angemessene Methoden anzuwenden. Israels Regierungschef Benjamin Netanyahu gab Eisenkot grundsätzlich Recht, schränkte indes ein, dass man darüber keine Debatte vom Zaun brechen müsse. Im rechtsnationalen Lager erregte Eisenkots Bemerkung Kritik. Stellvertretende Außenministerin Tzipi Hotovely warf dem Generalstabschef vor, das Ansehen Israels zu schädigen und das Leben von Israelis zu riskieren. Der Abgeordnete der Partei Habayit Hayehudi Bezalel Smotrich forderte von Verteidigungsminister Moshe Yaalon, Eisenkot abzumahnern.

Defending Eisenkot

(...) Eisenkot's message to the future soldiers was clear: (...) Even in extreme situations soldiers have a moral obligation to carefully weigh the use of deadly force. (...) He simply was warning the students not to take lightly the value of life, even when the life at stake belongs to one's enemy. (...) We all have a moral conscience and none of us wants to kill unnecessarily or to serve in an army that does.

Lax rules of engagement lead to demoralization and the loss of a sense of purpose. Knowledge that the IDF strives to be the most moral army in the world is a strong motivating factor for soldiers that builds morale. (...) A trigger- happy soldier is dangerous not just to the enemy but to his comrades. Adhering to strict rules regarding when to open fire and when not to saves lives. (...) A chief of staff who demands the highest moral standards of his soldiers and does not hesitate to criticize them when they fail to meet those standards makes a much more positive impression on would-be Israel-bashers. (...) Coping with the present wave of terrorism is not easy. (...Lashing out at Eisenkot, a fine chief of staff who has done more than anyone else to battle terrorists, is not the answer to this frustration.

Editorial, JPO, 21.02.16

Israeli military chief doesn't own the rules of engagement

(...) In contrast to the Israeli approach, in other democratic countries (...) the rules of engagement are not a military matter, but a political one. They are political because they place supreme authority in the hands of soldiers and police to take human life, and they sharpen the dilemma between the protection of the lives of soldiers and police on the one hand, and respect for the lives of civilians and fighters belonging to a minority group. (...) Eisenkot (...) correctly pegged the principles guiding the political culture in Israel, which place the rules for killing in

the hands of the army. (...) In their weakness, which is a weakness of the intellect and not only of authority, the politicians had no choice but to join the chief of staff in a public debate. (...) Transportation Minister Yisrael Katz (...) suggested in his post that Eisenkot's instructions led to hesitation that endangered the lives of Israelis (...). We did not hear from Katz a demand to discuss Eisenkot's remarks in the cabinet. If, according to the chief of staff, only the army is authorized to determine the rules of engagement, one wonders why he does not enforce them and deal severely with those who deviate from them. (...)

Yagil Levy, HAA, 21.02.16

The chief of staff is very wrong

The debate over whether to kill terrorist stabbers or just shoot to subdue them, and in what circumstances a given course of action should be taken, is legitimate. In this context, IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Gadi Eisenkot's expectation that his soldiers refrain from emptying an ammunition clip into a 13-year-old girl armed with a knife or scissors when there "is a barricade between her and the soldiers" is a reasonable one. Subduing her is enough. But Eisenkot erred (...). In any case where lives are in danger, shoot -- and if necessary, shoot to kill. (...) The "if someone comes to kill you ..." rule also has also had a prominent place in the right of soldiers and civilians to defend themselves in the first, second, and now third intifadas. The flagrant dismissal of all that could be seen by our enemies as a mistake of weakness and hesitation. It could also weaken the spirit of the army and sow confusion and hesitation among the soldiers. Eisenkot would do well to fix his mistake and rephrase his expectations. (...) Sometimes it is prudent to deter future terrorists by killing the attacker. Sometimes it's necessary to kill them because a wounded terrorist is still dangerous. (...)

Nadav Shragai, IHY, 19.02.16

Israeli military relinquishes the role of 'the world's most moral army'

(...) Public Security Minister Gilad Erdan tried to hide what anyone with eyes could see: firing cartridges into the body of a prone man, already riddled with bullet holes. (...) One can understand that the current strategy of Israel's government is a cruel one (...). The government's clear-cut response is extrajudicial execution, a lowering of standards to a situation in which might makes right -- with no judge or jury and no law, whether military or otherwise. There is only one instruction: kill them all, while the justifi-

cation is that this is the norm in these parts anyway. In their minds, this will scare our enemies to death (...). If this is the strategy, what will become of Israel's official position that the IDF is the most moral army in the world? (...) Erdan speaks to "the people," whose intelligence he derides. He may also be dismissive of their humanity and ability to have a political vision. He speaks to the people partly in order to make them think justice has been served, despite the horrific sights of the execution. (...) The video that documented the murder by a policeman of two female cousins who were waving scissors in the air, and the video shown by Al Jazeera last Friday, documenting the emptying of magazines into the body of an assailant at Damascus Gate, are like some archival images from the future showing the final days of Israeli democracy. (...) when one empties a magazine into the body of a person who's already been taken down -- even if he is a terrorist -- there is no public security. There is no security for anyone, Gilad Erdan.

Tal Niv, HAA, 22.02.16

Don't listen to politicians' nonsense, listen to the IDF chief

(...) What Eisenkot said accurately reflects the IDF's rules of engagement, common sense, and the IDF's values. (...) The attack from the right-wing against the IDF chief derives of their inability to explain to their voters why the wave of violence continues. (...) If there's any chance to lower the flames, it requires political decisions. (...) Israel must dramatically increase the number of work permits(...) it must invest in the West Bank's economy and (...) give this population hope for the future. But their voters would not like any of these moves. So they need an enemy du jour, someone to bear the responsibility over the situation. (...) Their attack against the IDF chief comes due to the lack of any other choice. (...) Eisenkot doesn't need benefactors. His standing is strong. Those who need to hear clear statements are the soldiers and officers stationed at junctions. (...) It's best for Netanyahu to turn to them and say: (...) Listen to the IDF chief.

Nahum Barnea, JED, 21.02.16

2. Sorge vor neuer Eskalation im Gazastreifen

Die politische Führung der Hamas und israelische Armeeangehörige sind sich in einem Punkt einig: Sollte sich die Lebenssituation der Palästinenser im Gazastreifen weiter verschärfen, kann es nicht friedlich bleiben. „Es wird eine Explosion geben“, stellte

Mushir al-Masri, ein Sprecher der Islamisten fest, und Israels Chef des militärischen Geheimdienstes Herzl Halevi gibt ihm Recht. „Die humanitäre Lage im Gazastreifen verschärft sich“, warnte Halevi israelische Parlamentarier. Wenn es zu einer Explosion kommt, werde sie sich „auf Israel entladen“. Auch Verteidigungsminister Moshe Yaalon räumte die Möglichkeit ein, „dass ein weiterer Krieg gegen die Hamas im Gazastreifen notwendig ist“, und treibt nun die Armee dazu an, auf jede Entwicklung vorbereitet zu sein. Militärs und mehrere Regierungspolitiker_innen fassen unterdessen auch friedliche Lösungsmodelle ins Auge. Eine künstliche Insel vor der Küste Gazas könnte eine Verbindung des palästinensischen Küstenstreifens zur Welt sein, findet Verkehrsminister Israel Katz. Israel hält die Grenzen seit der Machtergreifung der Hamas im Sommer 2007 für den Export nahezu komplett gesperrt. Der Import lebensnotwendiger Waren über den Erez Checkpoint wurde im Laufe des letzten Jahres deutlich erleichtert und läuft inzwischen auf Hochtouren. Der Bericht über mehrere Tunnelleinstürze, bei denen insgesamt mindestens sieben Hamas-Milizen getötet wurden, bestätigte jüngst den Verdacht, dass die Islamisten die Grabungen der unterirdischen Wege, durch die Terroristen nach Israel kommen könnten, fortsetzen.

It's not the tunnels, Mr. Netanyahu

The tunnel threat has returned to the headlines. A year and a half have passed since Netanyahu announced that he would crush Hamas and land a mortal blow from which it cannot recover for years. (...) But this is not just about the tunnels, Bibi. Its about Hamas. Yes, the Hamas that you promised to collapse immediately when you came into power in 2008. (...) Its probably clear to you, Bibi, that these tunnels, Qassams, Grads and drones emerge from the swamp you failed to dry up. As long as it exists, the mosquitoes of terror will continue to look for ways to sting us, and will collect from us a terrible toll in blood. So why are you not running to topple the Hamas regime today? (...) Ironically, Israel, under your leadership, along with Qatar and her collaborators, are the only countries which consistently support the Hamas government. The clearest expression of this comes in the form of hundreds of trucks that deliver supplies to Gaza every week, allowing Hamas to not only survive but grow stronger. The height of absurdity which you created is the ongoing supply of construction materials, most of which are used for the construction of terrorist tunnels. I hate to say, but in practice, Bibi, you are the

main contractor responsible for this project designed to harm Israeli citizens. (...) Abbas, who is interested in demilitarized Palestinian independence, is more dangerous to you than former Hamas Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh. So you prefer the quiet cooperation with the terrorist Hamas regime and ensure its rule. After all, Hamas will never demand that you to negotiate with it towards a political solution to the Palestinian problem.

Haim Ramon, JED, 20.02.16

No hope for Gazans

(...) the IDF is getting ready for another violent round of conflict in Gaza this summer. (...) it is clear that this near-yearly ritual illustrates the inescapable reality. (...) Hamas is planning to surprise Israel with its firepower, and will hit Israel's civilian population in order to break both the status-quo and the blockade. When the two populations are convinced that a flare up will happen, the leadership will not fail to disappoint. But it seems that the next round being cooked up may surprise the leadership since they will not be in control of the events. (...) There is a high probability that the timing and the intensity of the confrontation will be determined by the Gazan population, which will blow up in Hamas's face, and will spillover onto Israel, the West Bank, and even into Egypt. (...) For the Gazans, there is no sanctuary - they have nowhere to run, and they have no influence over events. They are mad that Hamas has built for themselves what amount to underground cities, while they are left without bomb shelters. (...) 50 percent of the youth in Gaza have said in different surveys that they want to leave Gaza forever. (...) Several people in Gaza have already set themselves on fire in protest. (...) While it is true that the population is religious, traditional, and more willing to accept its fate, the pot is still about to boil over. When the human time-bomb explodes, there will be no warning, and the shrapnel will hit us all. Alex Fishman, JED, 23.02.16

Israel must prevent an explosion in Gaza

Some 1.8 million residents have been imprisoned for a decade in the (...) most crowded regions in the world. (...) The unemployment rate there is over 60 percent, and among young and educated people it is even higher. The Gaza Strip is seemingly under Hamas rule, but in practice Israel, which has imposed a blockade on Gaza, is also responsible for the residents' quality of life and the horrible economic situation there. (...) The Israel Defense Forces (...) propose considering the establishment of a

commercial port in Gaza, among other things, or the construction of the port on an artificial island off the Gaza coast, which will be connected to Gaza by a bridge. The security fears accompanying these ideas, as Defense Minister Moshe Ya'alon presents them too, are not insignificant, mostly because of the danger that the port will serve as a transfer point for weapons and explosives for Hamas. At the same time, the enormous economic benefit of the port embodies a security benefit too, because one can assume that the regime in Gaza will not want to lose this economic asset because of an attack or rocket fire on Israel. (...) when the IDF estimates that without such steps the security threat against Israel will increase significantly, implementation of the IDF's recommendations is already part of the government's obligation to the citizens of Israel.

Editorial, HAA, 25.02.16

Hamas is to blame for Gaza's terrible state, not Israel

(...) the latest UN report, from September 2015, which says that the Strip will not be suitable for human habitation within five years (...) is a realistic prediction. (...) The only relief comes in the form of hundreds of supply trucks that arrive daily from Israel. This is the last barrier that prevents hunger. Don't say it's Israel's fault. Because the day Israel left Gaza was supposed to be a turning point. For the first time in history, the Palestinians got independence and sovereignty over territory. (...) From the moment Hamas took over Gaza in a military coup, it was clear that this would be the result. Anywhere an Islamic organization takes over, the result is destruction and ruin. It has nothing to do with Israel. (...) Hamas has a clear interest that this powder keg, known as the Gaza Strip, explodes. Hamas knows the world will blame Israel. (...) Israel must do everything to give hope to the Strip's inhabitants. Israel needs to turn back to the European Union's proposal: To lift the blockade in exchange for demilitarization. (...) A seaport should be offered. (...) The whole world needs to know that Israel is willing to give Gaza residents a chance for a better life. (...)

Ben-Dror Yemini, JED, 26.02.16

Israel must make Gaza a priority in any diplomatic efforts with Palestinians

(...) the essence of the opportunity (...) depends both on Hamas' desire to break the blockade around Gaza and Israel's desire to achieve a long-term cease-fire and ultimate demilitarization of the Strip. (...) there is no need to deal now with all the details

of security arrangements in the seaport and the airport to be opened only in about four years from now. At the present stage it's enough if the parties reach an agreement that by the time the ports are ready to begin operation, security arrangements will be completed, and if there is no agreement, their operation will be postponed. (...) Gaza first. We have to take the bull by the horns and not be deterred by the hot potato called the Gaza Strip. We have to try to reach an agreement there, of all places, and not leave the Strip behind. The success of such a move, even if partial, is likely to convince Israeli citizens, as well as the Palestinians, that it is possible to reach broader agreements in Judea and Samaria. (...)

Omer Bar-Lev, HAA, 24.02.16

3. Streit um Casinos in Eilat

Regierungschef Benjamin Netanyahu und Tourismusminister Yariv Levin wollen grundsätzlich grünes Licht für Casinos in Eilat geben. Erklärtes Ziel dabei ist, den seit Jahren rückgängigen Besucherzahlen in der Stadt entgegenzuwirken. Der Plan stößt bei den orthodoxen sowie bei den national-religiösen Koalitionspartnern auf Ablehnung. Abgesehen von der staatlichen Lotterie, ist das Glücksspiel in Israel bislang verboten. Ab Mitte der 90er Jahre durften Israelis die an der Stadteinfahrt von Jericho errichtete Spielbank besuchen. Diese wurde allerdings nach Beginn der zweiten Intifada im Herbst 2000 geschlossen. In einer Studie des Forschungs- und Informationszentrums der Knesset heißt es, dass das Glücksspiel stets mit Gewalt, Drogensucht, organisierter Kriminalität und Korruption einherginge.

A casino would merely sell illusions to Israel's needy

Plans to build a casino have risen and fallen from the public agenda for decades now. It's no coincidence that they're always for poorer towns with employment problems: Mitzpeh Ramon, Beit She'an and Eilat. The (...) money trail is clear: from the gamblers, usually members of the lower classes, to the pockets of a very wealthy promoter. If this were a deal between equals there would be nothing improper about it (...). Beyond this, there is (...) widespread gray-market lending, the generation of income for organized crime (...), prostitution and drugs. First and foremost, there are the problems of addiction familiar at every gambling facility around the world. All this makes the idea appear more

harmful than beneficial. (...) If the government considers education, art and culture top interests, it must change its priorities and simply invest more in these areas directly. A casino will not develop human capital but only the capital of those who make a living selling illusions to the needy.

Editorial, HAA, 19.02.16

A casino in Eilat: a better bet than Lotto

(...) The unbearable easiness of online betting casinos give those who oppose the casino plan an ostrich-like aspect of those who would chop down telegram poles to stop messages during the WhatsApp era. The opponents of casinos say that gambling is fun to those who know how to set limits, but what about those whose temptation is uncontrollable? Research shows that gamblers are for the most part poor people, who lose their money for a negligible chance to win. That can be easily countered by saying that the security and regulation of all the casinos in the world are at a level comparable to that of a small nuclear plant and that it is possible to prevent such tragedies with simple technical measures, such as issuing betting permits only for those who possess proven incomes or limiting the amount of money allotted each evening for betting. Moreover, in Israel there are currently plenty of legal and illegal gambling venues. (...) alarming are the Toto (...) and Lotto booths, where many poor people spend their meager salaries (...). If the building of a casino in Eilat is properly done, expect the south to bloom economically (...). The problem is that in Israel nothing is ever done properly, and so it's likely that we're in for another criminal fiasco. But that is linked to the country's citizens, who are well known gambling addicts, who vote for, time and time again, the same lame horse.

Yonatan Yavin, JED, 21.02.16

Why casino gambling is a bad bet for Israel

(...) on the surface, the economic case for casinos is good. Gambling (...) is a big business. (...) For Eilat, there would not only be the winnings the casinos take in, it would mean more people staying at hotels, dining out, shopping and maybe even taking the time to visit the rest of the country. That spells more business, jobs and, for the government, tax revenues. (...) But (...) it's not as if Israel is desperate to create jobs. The economy is generating them at a remarkable pace and unemployment is at its lowest in decades. Tourism is in the doldrums, but that's not because Israel doesn't offer enough attractions but because of war, terrorism and high prices. Casinos

don't solve any of those problems. (...) casino gambling tends to bring with it petty crime and organized crime; also, it encourages gambling addiction (...) and with it, a host of social ills like personal bankruptcies, divorces and the like. (...) You could argue that casino gambling is just another form of entertainment, no different than a night at the opera or tickets to a demolition derby. But the case for that is pretty dubious: Almost no one would pay for the right to play a round of poker or watch a slot machine spin for hours. People pay because they fantasize – or worse, are addicted to the idea – they'll make lots back. (...) In short, casino gambling is at its core a sleazy business. (...) Israel isn't desperate enough economically to pay the price. We can afford in this case to do the right thing.

David Rosenberg, HAA, 24.02.16

4. Medienquerschnitt

Netanyahu in Berlin

Israeli 'Conflict Management' Is a Hit in Germany

(...) Even Europe has finally been convinced that there's no partner, i.e. it bought Israel's perfect bluff. The bluff enables Israel to portray itself as the one who accepts the two-states-for-two-peoples formula, and is only waiting for that other people's formation as such. (...) why shouldn't Germany adopt the Israeli opposition's line on the Palestinians? For years the left-wing opposition has been acting before the world as the shadow government of the right wing's democratic dictatorship, playing as though it's a government of the brave sons of the legitimate, pre-revolution rulers who were exiled to their own land. (...) Germany thinks the opposition represents the sane Israel, so it's adopting Herzog's "strategic analysis" and the rhetoric of delay. So Labor's (and the Zionist Union's) phony diplomatic merchandise finds its way to Europe and is imported back as the genuine, historic article – a tectonic shift, no less, in the European approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. (...) The Zionist Union chairman's nonsense circled the world and returned as a booster rocket for the prime minister. All that remains is to deal with the French enfant terrible. (...)

Carolina Landsmann, HAA, 19.02.16

Verkehrsunfälle

We must stop killing ourselves

(...) This week's tragic bus accident on Highway 1 which took the lives of six young people cannot pass from the public's consciousness without a demand for significant change in Israel. (...) In 2002, 548 people were killed on Israel's roads and the government decided to address the problem. Budgets were allocated to strengthening the traffic police force and the following decade showed a 47 percent reduction in traffic-related fatalities. By 2012 the number – albeit still far too high – was reduced to 290 deaths per year. (...) The success was tangible and driving safety was heading in the right direction. But quite shockingly, things have now changed. The current budget designates a mere NIS 32m. for traffic police – a 70% reduction! (...) We are a country which knows how to react in times of crisis or need. (...) Why aren't these issues being addressed? Why have the budgets for this cause decreased instead of increased? (...) Something must be done. We suffer enough from external enemies who seek to kill us. We must put an end to the even greater loss of life and suffering which comes from our killing ourselves.

Dov Lipman, JPO, 17.02.16

Umstrittene Rechtsreform zur Suspendierung von Abgeordneten

The end of democracy?

(...) The current firestorm in the Jewish state is related to its Arab minority, which is carefully protected in the Declaration of Independence. (...) But the recent deviation of three Arab Knesset members -- who visited the families of terrorists who had been killed, took part in a moment of silence in the terrorists' memory (...) made many people angry (...). And from here, the path was forged toward suggesting that the prime minister amend the Basic Laws, allowing the removal of Knesset members from office with a 90-vote majority: It is becoming easier to understand the Knesset. (...) In Britain, a parliament member can be suspended with a simple majority vote if he or she has violated the ethics code or committed contempt of Parliament, and there are many such examples. The proposed amendment in Israel refers to crimes such as supporting terrorism, racist incitement and incitement against the existence of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state. (...) with the political situation in Israel, achieving a majority of 90 MKs is a near-

impossible mission. (...) There is no anticipated danger to democracy, and certainly not an end to it either. What Western countries are allowed to do under more lax conditions, Israel should be able to do under stringent ones.

Dr. Gabi Avital, IHY, 18.02.16

Hungerstreikender Häftling in Lebensgefahr

Don't negotiate with hunger strikers

(...) Enemies of Israel's defense system are launching a double attack on it: one is the hostile Swedish school of thought; and the other is political pressure on Israel to back off in light of a Palestinian prisoner's hunger strike. (...) Israel has found itself in political, moral, and public relations trouble because of the lack of clear rules. Hunger strikes have become a common phenomenon. (...) Any hunger strike will be cause to examine the justice of the administrative detention, which is always a problematic move. Security officials will explain to hunger strikers the damage they are doing to their health, which could be permanent, but will not force them to eat. During this time, no negotiations will be held. The opposite - negotiations can be conducted only at a time when the prisoner is not hunger striking. When doctors determine that the hunger striker is on the verge of a life-threatening collapse, they will force-feed him or her. This is the wisest, most Jewish and humane interpretation of the sanctity of life, and it's more important than any political struggle or demonstration.

Dan Margalit, IHY, 21.02.16

Wirtschaftskooperation statt Frieden

Cooperation Option

Political leaders not suspected of extreme opinions on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict have given up hope of reaching a negotiated peace deal – at least in the near future. (...) Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas would never agree to compromises on issues such as the “right of return” for Palestinian refugees or allowing settlement blocs such as Ma’aleh Adumim to remain a part of the State of Israel. He would never agree to Israeli control over the Jordan Valley or to sharing Jerusalem as a joint Israeli-Palestinian capital. (...) Palestinian political leadership is hopelessly split between Ramallah and Gaza City. (...) Still, there might be a way to move forward. (...) There are a number of fields in which cooperation and dialogue could benefit both sides. And it appears steps have already

been taken. (...) Some of the initiatives include inviting Palestinian doctors to train in Israeli hospitals (...); allowing Palestinian construction companies and contractors to operate in Israel, expanding access to the Israeli market from the current situation in which only Palestinian day laborers are allowed into Israel to work for Israeli companies. (...) initiatives like the ones being advanced by Kahlon are the only way to achieve economic stability for Palestinians. Perhaps improvement in Palestinians' socioeconomic conditions will lead, eventually, to a more conducive environment for dialogue and negotiations. (...) Israel needs to turn to practical initiatives that improve Palestinians' lives and fosters an atmosphere of trust and cooperation.
Editorial, JPO, 22.02.16

US-Militärhilfe an Israel

Realistic defence aid

(...) the U.S.'s commitment to Israel's defense and security has never been questioned, nor is it questioned now. If the American strategic outlook has changed over global geopolitical developments, then it is doubly true of Israel, which must contend with a post-Iran deal reality, the unpredictable turmoil in Syria (...). Israel believes the situation mandates increased American defense aid (...) to acquire advanced attack aircraft, missile defense systems, cyber equipment and technology, and (...) advanced countermeasures to fight the tunnel threat, as well as the means to counter threats posed by Iran's aggressive regional policies and the loopholes in its deal with the West. One can only hope that Israel and the U.S. will make the necessary effort to conclude negotiations before the current administration's term ends. (...)

Zalman Shoval, IHY, 16.02.16

Slashed US funding for missile defense systems threatens Israel's security

(...) The timing of the US cuts is regrettable as the capability of missiles developed by both Iran and North Korea is advancing and their production numbers are increasing. (...) Funding for the cooperative Israeli program will be slashed by 60% while funding for the highly effective Iron Dome system faces a 25% cut. (...) The Iron Dome now has a 95% hit rate and the Defense Ministry believes that can increase to 100%. This saves lives (...). What was once dismissed as fantasy has become reality. The men and women behind these programs have done what was once thought to be impossible: they can now con-

sistently hit a bullet with another bullet. (...) Netanyahu is hoping for a commitment of \$40 billion over 10 years. That's about \$10b. more than over the previous decade. Hopefully some of that money will offset the drop in the 2017 US military budget that would have gone to missile defense. (...) Investment and the advancement of anti-missile technology make both civilians and soldiers safer and saves the Israeli and American governments money now and in the long run. (...) Israel, with American help, has proven the investment in missile defense pays off. (...)

Jason Gewirtz, JED, 24.02.16

Dilemma der arabischen Israelis

I am a Palestinian citizen of Israel, and I'm not an enemy of the state

(...) I consider myself to be Palestinian in my rights and obligations. (...) My recognition of, and pride in my roots does not pose a threat to Israel's security (...). We won't shy away from our origins, and we have no need to hide them. (...) I fulfil all my obligations to the country to my personal moral limits (...). I have no need to prove to you that I'm a good Arab. (...) I shouldn't need to suck up to the government in order to climb the career ladder or beg to receive my equal rights as a citizen. (...) Let me showcase some of the hypocritical ways Israel deals with Jews and Arabs. (...) We all remember the Jewish terrorist who stabbed and killed Shira Banki, a Jewish teenager, at the Jerusalem pride parade – and yet not one bullet was fired; the terrorist was subdued and prosecuted according to the full force of the law. Meanwhile, it's enough for an Arab to put a hand in his pocket or pull up his trousers at a checkpoint for him to become a tragic news article. (...) for all the Palestinians that were shot and killed (...), wasn't there any chance they too could be subdued and prosecuted? (...) No Jew's home has been torn down because they killed an Arab. The government acts towards Jewish citizens according to the fundamental principle of preserving their rights to their property. But when the government is dealing with an Arab killer it enforces Mandate-era emergency regulations and tears down their house, knowing that this is contradictory to international laws (...) Collective penalties and likewise all measures of intimidation and terror are prohibited. (...) It is indeed time for the prime minister and his ministers to remember that this country is a state of law – laws that protect and not only attack – for Arabs as well. (...)

Rita Khoury, 22.02.16

Bürgerkrieg in Syrien und die Folgen für Israel

The Syrian threat to Israel

(...) Syria is the single most dangerous threat to the State of Israel, more so even than Iran for the time being. (...) State actors with significant ground forces in Syria include the Alawite army of Bashar Assad, Iran and Russia. In the wings, engaging in cross-border shelling and bombing, is Turkey. (...) Hezbollah, Russia and Iran support Assad. Turkey, the Saudis, the Gulf States and the US and its allies support the secular/Jihadist groups in opposition to Assad and Islamic State. Al Nusra sustains itself, along with many of the other the non-state actors, by engaging in shifting alliances with armed criminal syndicates involved in illegal oil trading, drug trafficking, smuggling of arms and other products and people, especially "refugees". (...) It is, indeed, a witches' brew, and may get even more complicated if Turkey and/or Saudi Arabia become directly involved on the ground. So far, the Israeli government has very wisely stayed out of the Syrian conflict (...). This will not last forever. (...) The decision was recently made to build a security fence around the entire northern border (...). This project must be pursued with all possible speed. (...)

Norman Bailey, GLO, 22.02.16

Barkai versus Ziffer

Jewish grief, Arab grief

(...) A few weeks ago I made a comment, a legitimate journalistic one in my view (...). Why should we hold on to bodies of Palestinians, how is that different than the refusal of Palestinians to return the bodies of our soldiers for burial? (...) I was forced to pay a professional price, with the duration of my morning program on Army Radio being halved, but I won't dwell on that. (...) Ziffer's acrobatics (...) were sui generis. On one hand he writes (...) that my statement was "idiotic," expressing a "primitive mindset." On the other hand he claimed that I was proof (!) that the critical Western way of thinking was superior to the Mizrahi-Arab one. I loved that one. (...) There is no yardstick with which one can measure the intensity of grief. Attempts at "justification," on our side and theirs, lead grieving families to different modes of coping. Jewish blood is dearer to me than Arab blood. (...) And yet, a grieving Palestinian mother (...) mourns her loss with the same intensity, sometimes in a manner that drives us nuts.

(...) I made one mistake, which I regret. With grieving families, one should remain silent and respectful. I shouldn't have put Simcha Goldin, the father of slain soldier Hadar Goldin, on the air. To simplify the argument between Ziffer and me, he and his ilk wish to penalize Palestinians. I, and people like me, want to humanize them. In this duel, Ziffer is the big winner.

Razi Barkai, HAA, 29.02.16

HAA = Haaretz

JED = JediothAhronoth / Ynetnews

JPO = Jerusalem Post

IHY = Israel HaYom

TOI = Times of Israel

GLO = Globes

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