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1. Elkin warnt vor Zusammenbruch der PA – weiterhin Gewalttacken in Israel

Die Frage sei nicht, ob die Palästinensische Autonomiebehörde (PA) zusammenbreche, sondern wann dies geschehen werde. Diesen pessimistischen Ausblick umriss Ze'ev Elkin (Likud), Minister für Immigration und Jerusalem-Angelegenheiten, an der Bar-Ilan-Universität. Maximal zwei Jahre räumt Elkin Palästinenserpräsident Mahmud Abbas noch ein. Der PA fehle der Mechanismus für die Wahl eines Nachfolgers. Sollte sich Elkins Vision bewahrheiten, müssten die israelischen Soldaten erneut für Ruhe und Ordnung im gesamten Westjordanland sorgen. Israels Sicherheitsapparat tut sich unterdessen unverändert schwer mit Lösungen zur Eindämmung der aktuellen Gewaltwelle. Je länger die Krise dauert, desto weniger setzen Armee und Geheimdienste allein auf den militärischen Weg. Die Regierung ist aufgefordert, Maßnahmen zur Erleichterung der schwierigen Lebensumstände in den Palästinensergebieten einzuleiten. Außerdem liegt eine neue Friedensinitiative aus Frankreich auf dem Tisch.

Getting ready to occupy the West Bank all over again

If Immigrant Absorption Minister Zeev Elkin's prophecy is accurate and the Palestinian Authority implodes within a year or two (...), Israel will have to reoccupy the territories, appoint military governors and establish a tax collection system, because no Arab or Western state will fund Israel's direct occu-

pation. (...) There's no other scenario because Elkin has determined that no elected Palestinian leaders could replace the current leaders, and the only possible leader, Marwan Barghouti, is in prison. A bitter end is expected – bitter not only for the PA and the Palestinian people, but mainly for Israel. (...) Similar things were heard after Yasser Arafat died in 2004, but wonder of wonders, Abbas arose to take the reins. And even he, who Elkin sees as the last straw of hope, isn't a one-time phenomenon. Elkin, one of the wisest and sharpest cabinet members, has actually tripped over his warnings, for what solution does he offer (...). The absorption minister has no set doctrine on this. (...) Elkin's prescription: Prepare to return to 1967. It looks like this will be his way of celebrating 50 years of occupation. After all, we already know how to occupy them, so what could go wrong?

Zvi Bar'el, HAA, 02.03.16

Groping in the dark

(...) If we closely analyze the attacks of the third intifada, we will see that it's different from its predecessors. The first intifada was an uprising of the people and the level of violence was very low. The second intifada was especially cruel and took the lives of thousands of innocent people. (...) The current intifada is based on a long string of small, primitive attacks: knifings, car-rammings, and here and there an occasional use of firearms. This is producing far fewer casualties than the previous intifadas,

but Israel is having an even harder time preventing these low-intensity attacks. Ostensibly, even though these attacks result in fewer and lighter casual - ties, the effect has been greater. Why (...)? Because of social networking. (...) The attackers are taking advantage of our highly developed connectedness. (...) The IDF, the Shin Bet, the Border Police and the Israel Police are all helpless. They are groping in the dark. Upping our deployments has not been helpful. Existing methods for prevention are no longer effective. They are seeking out the terrorists, but they cannot seem to locate them. (...) Everything has gotten pretty out of control. The Israeli leadership must completely rethink its strategy in its war on terror. (...)

Nachman Shai, JPO, 10.03.16

When disaster meets despair

(...) There are two ways to deal with a wave at sea: either to raise you head above the wave or duck underneath. Those who choose the third way, to turn their backs to the wave – suffer one blow after another. The (...) willingness of young Palestinians to carry out suicide missions has not subsided. (...) Decision-makers are secretly hoping that this threat will fade away on its own. That the Palestinian street grows weary of applauding suicides; that parents intervene; that the youth will catch on to another trend that is less deadly. More than five months have passed, and there is no sign that this hope will indeed come true. (...) The current generation of attackers (...) is disillusioned and aimless. (...) Despair - that is the motive (...). It's important to understand that there is no magic military solution that would return the knives into the kitchen drawers. (...) We need to find ways to wear down the despair, to confuse it. Providing the Palestinians with a better livelihood is a good way: Palestinians who work will steer clear of terrorism like the plague. (...) The Palestinian Authority's security services cooperate with Israel: it's in their best interest. But we have failed to create a similar interest in other PA institutions, primarily in the education system. Incitement at schools and in textbooks has an effect. (...)

Nahum Barnea, JED, 13.03.16

Yes, shoot

To paraphrase Zeev Jabotinsky, we should decide that when faced with Palestinian terrorism, the protocol is "Yes, shoot." (...) Don't shoot someone who is already on the ground, or anyone who has thrown down their weapon and put up their hands, but until they're wounded and subdued and cuffed, shoot

repeatedly. (...) No one should say that killing the terrorists doesn't achieve anything (...). Ya'alon is right when he argues that work permits for Palestinians who aren't participating in the intifada must not come under the gun (...). Punish them, and the Israelis who employ them. As part of this stage of battling terrorism, we must refurbish the security barrier, which has proved itself in the past, and complete it in the southern region. The success on the Egyptian border is proof that investing in a security fence achieves its goal. (...) Ultimately, Israel is handling this intifada reasonably well(...). It cannot be stopped by power alone, only by creating results that will frustrate the Palestinian side as well.

Dan Margalit, IHY, 09.13.16

2017, a 50th anniversary that could spark a real intifada

(...) While 2016 seems a wasted year in terms of the peace process, 2017 may be the year things flare up. (...) June 2017 marks the 50th anniversary of the start of the occupation. (...) The result of the 1967 war – the domination of another people – must be undone. This is a chance to mobilize all peace advocates in Israel and abroad, Jews and non-Jews, people who support a Jewish democratic state within the 1967 borders and see the occupation as a sure recipe for turning Israel into a binational, non-democratic state. This is the aim of the group Save Israel, Stop the Occupation, SISO, which has been established to organize events on the injustices of the occupation, culminating in 50th-anniversary events. (...) Another factor will be the new U.S. president. (...) history teaches that even a president with a limited understanding of the Middle East, like Jimmy Carter in 1977, achieved a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel within two years. (...) the two-state ideal is still around and viable. It depends on leaders on both sides making it work. (...) if these ideas aren't realized, the despair, frustration and disappointment of the younger Palestinian generation – directed at the occupation and Palestinian leaders who can't deliver the goods – will lead to an intifada. The reasons have long been there, but the spark hasn't arrived. (...)

Elie Podeh, HAA, 06.03.16

The Palestinian War of Independence

(...) Do Palestinian teens really need "inciting" broadcasts? No. Because they aren't animals in cages, but human beings hungering for their freedom. There's no difference between blood and blood. There's no difference between bereavement

and bereavement. (...) Death has surrounded us: a journalist detained without trial who is dying on hunger strike as our journalists remain silent; the deaths of innocents, Jewish and Arab; funerals that receive pathologically extensive media coverage; executions that are reported apathetically; and too few people refusing army service. No wonder the Internet is filled with right-wing cheers, without shame, for the deaths of the "evil ones" (...), and from the center, relief. What do you do with this callowness? You scorn it. (...) You turn your backs on the politics occasionally in order to remain living human beings. Yitzhak Laor, HAA, 02.03.16

Palestinian education

(...) Yossi Kuperwasser, former head of the research division at Military Intelligence, (...) who is now the director of the Project on Regional Middle East Developments at the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, pointed to incitement by top PA leaders, including President Mahmoud Abbas, as the main cause of violence in recent months. (...) Young Palestinians who graduate from official PA schools are never taught what the Nazi regime did to the Jewish people. (...) They cannot understand what motivated so many Jews to leave Europe and immigrate to Israel before, during and after the war. Textbooks that teach about Islam glorify "shahids" or those who give their lives in service to Islam, including in holy war. School children are taught that all of the sins of the shahid are forgiven, and that he or she reaches the top level of heaven. (...) Additionally, official PA textbooks regularly ignore the existence of the State of Israel. (...) Both the Palestinian leadership and its official school system are sending out the same messages: The State of Israel lacks all legitimacy and the Jewish people are colonialists with no ties to this land. Using violence and even giving one's life to fight against Israeli "occupiers" is a religious duty that is rewarded in the afterlife. These messages are hardly conducive to peace and reconciliation. (...) There will be no resolution to the conflict until this changes.

Editorial, JPO, 03.03.16

The business end of Palestinian despair

(...) the unrest that some have called a Third Intifada has in fact decreased in scale and relative lethality since its peak last fall. (...) Israeli intelligence studies indicate that there is no one profile to these attackers (...). Yet the youth-dominated nature of the violence shouldn't come as a surprise, if only by sheer force of numerical weight. The Palestinian

Territories are in the midst of a youth bulge that even in Middle Eastern terms is severe. Approximately (...) 70 percent of the population (...) are under the age of 30. (...) feelings of economic despair are a recurring theme in most analyses of the ongoing unrest (...) What is needed, you hear often from Israeli security professionals, is to effect a "change in atmosphere" inside Palestinian society. Such a change, however, is difficult given the lack of a political horizon but even more immediate, the fact that young Palestinians are entering an economy that has effectively stalled. (...) Illustratively, the slight decrease in unemployment rates in the West Bank in the first half of last year are attributed to Israel significantly increasing the number of work permits issued to Palestinians (...). In demographic and economic terms, the Palestinians are already perched on the edge of the precipice. It's at least part of the reason for the violence of recent months, which itself is probably a foreshadowing of a bigger future eruption. Major political decisions, even if ultimately short of a political settlement, are likely required if the youth of Palestine don't take both Israel and the PA over the edge along with them.

Neri Zilber, TOI, 03.03.16

ENCOUNTERING PEACE: Palestinian turmoil and Israeli interests

(...) The Palestinian street in the West Bank is simmering with anger and frustration. (...) There are internal conflicts between the Prime Minister Rami Hamdallah who is supporting the teachers and Finance Minister Shukri Bishara who is apparently in open opposition to the prime minister. (...) The PA government is in conflict internally. Abbas's position is threatened internally within Fatah and from the street. (...) The internal Palestinian realities have to be of concern to Israel. (...) The urgent need for an Israeli initiative toward ending Israel's control over the Palestinian people goes beyond the existential requisite for Israel's survival as the democratic nation-state of the Jewish people. (...) Our prime minister surely cannot believe that the Palestinians will ever acquiesce to their current status and drop their demands for freedom and independence. He can't possibly imagine that the Palestinians will demand the right to be Israeli citizens and drop their demand for statehood. (...) The almost 50-year binational reality must come to an end. The people of Israel have a right to know where its leader intends to lead. The policy of wait and see while doing nothing positive has an immediate negative impact on our neighbors next door. (...)

Gershon Baskin, JPO, 02.03.16

The strategy for erasing the 1967 line

(...) In their refusal to distinguish between 1948 and 1967, the nouveau settlers apply the following logic: There's no difference from the standpoint of legitimacy between what was conquered in each of those two wars; anyone who accepts the legitimacy of Israeli sovereignty over the territory captured in 1948 must accept the legitimacy of an Israeli annexation of the territory captured in 1967.

Carolina Landsmann, HAA, 06.03.16

No Netanyahu, not every attempt at diplomacy is a threat to Israel

(...) International recognition of an independent Palestinian state is the core principle of the two-state solution, to which Netanyahu committed himself (...). During the failed negotiations (...), the prime minister did not propose a shred of compromise that could have led to the end of the occupation and a permanent arrangement. (...) To this day, Israel has never responded to the Arab League peace proposals of March 2002. (...) Israel's opposition to an attempt to advance a diplomatic solution has led to frustration, accompanied by violent responses of despair. Instead of finding ways to scuttle every effort that might lead to a solution, France should be congratulated on its initiative in the hope that other countries, especially the United States, join it. Recognition of a Palestinian state that will live in peace alongside the State of Israel is not a threat to Israel. It is a welcome contribution to its peace, security and morality.

Editorial, HAA, 14.03.16

2. Schwierige Koexistenz von Juden und Arabern

Das Verhältnis von Juden und Arabern im Staat Israel ist einer Serie von Belastungsproben ausgesetzt, allen voran das umstrittene „Suspendierungsrecht“, das inoffiziell auf die arabisch-israelischen Politiker abzielt und ermöglichen würde, mit einer Abstimmung von mindestens 90 Stimmen in der Knesset Parlamentarier ihres Amtes zu entheben. Dazu kommt das Umfrageergebnis des Pew-Forschungsinstituts in Washington mit der Enthüllung, dass annähernd die Hälfte aller jüdischen Israelis für die Aussiedlung der Araber aus dem Land eintritt. Nicht unbedingt günstig für die Versöhnung der beiden Völker ist umgekehrt die offene Distanzierung mehrerer arabischer Abgeordneter

von der Entscheidung des Golf-Kooperationsrates, die libanesisch-islamistische Hisbollah künftig als terroristische Organisation einzustufen.

The goal: A Knesset without Arabs

In Israel's otherwise shaky democracy, the fundamental right to vote and to be elected has until now enjoyed an exalted status. (...) How can the justices, who aren't elected (...) allow themselves to overrule legislative decisions that were made democratically by the people's elected representatives? The "Suspension Law" that the Knesset Constitution Committee gave preliminary approval to on Monday crosses a red line with regard to the status of the right to vote and to be elected. For the first time, Knesset members are granting themselves the right to oust one of their colleagues, at the end of a process in which they themselves judge whether his ideology is to their liking or not. (...) The bill emits a McCarthyite stench. Its sponsors' goals are clear and well known: to harass Arab Knesset members, who serve as a bridge between the Arab community and state agencies. (...) The law might (...) spur the Arab community to refrain entirely from participating in the elections, thereby destroying another fundamental element of Israel's representational democracy. (...) A democratic system of government doesn't collapse overnight. It is eroded from within by a series of steps that destroy its fundamental principles, until a critical mass has accumulated. The "Suspension Law" constitutes a direct blow to these principles. (...)

Editorial, HAA, 02.03.16

Suspending democracy

The MK Suspension Bill (...) is just the latest in a series of proposed laws that threaten to erode Israeli democracy. (...) While we abhor the abuse of the Knesset plenum and the abuse of parliamentary immunity, anti-democratic legislation is not the way forward. (...) The suspension law would allow for the removal of elected representatives of the public (...) should their opinions and actions not curry favor with the majority. That is not the nature of democracy. (...) Furthermore, a law that today passes aimed at one section of the public, tomorrow could be used against others. (...) Israel must protect itself from those who take advantage of its democracy to destroy it, as Netanyahu said in defending the bill, but it has sufficient means at its disposal to do so without sacrificing democracy on the way.

Editorial, JPO, 05.02.16

No method to the madness

Knesset members representing the Arab parties Hadash and Balad (...) denounced the decision by the Gulf Cooperation Council (...) to designate Hezbollah as a terrorist organization (...). The Gulf states' decision, the Arab MKs declared, undermines "the national security of the Arab nation." This doctrine is at the core of the philosophy carved by Balad founder Azmi Bishara (...), who fled Israel to Qatar after being accused of spying for Hezbollah during the 2006 Second Lebanon War. (...) The MKs who lambasted the Gulf states are the same ones who recently visited terrorists' families and observed a moment of silence in honor of the "shahids." (...) The question remains: What do the atheists, communists and Christians of Balad and Hadash have to do with Hezbollah? (...) Many minorities in the Middle East believe (...) that the Arab nation can unite around a nationalistic concept devoid of religious roots. (...). Absurdly, Balad and Hadash MKs support Iran and Hezbollah (...) and undermine the Saudi financial aid to the Palestinians. (...) The madness of Balad and Hadash MKs' support of Hezbollah transcends the Shiite terrorist group's missile fire at the Arabs living in the Galilee, and the fact that should Hezbollah ever target the ammonia processing facility at Haifa Bay, thousands of Israeli Arabs living in the area will be killed as well. Every reasonable person understands that Hadash and Balad MKs are apparently willing to give their lives to ensure that Israel will cease to exist. They certainly are not acting in the Palestinian people's best interest.

Reuven Berko, IHY, 09.03.16

Two blows against Arab-Jewish reconciliation in Israel

It was a bad week for relations between Jews and Arabs in Israel. (...) One blow was the announcement that (...) Balad and Hadash – the Nasserists and the communists – condemned the decision (...) to list Hezbollah as a terrorist organization. (...) If Hezbollah is not a terrorist organization, then who is? A declaration by Israeli Arab political parties denying that Hezbollah is a terrorist organization is not only a blatant negation of the truth but is also an expression of support for an organization dedicated to Israel's destruction. (...) It will take time to recover from this blow to the process of reconciliation between Jews and Arabs in Israel, which has been making progress in recent years. (...) The second blow (...) came from an unexpected source – the Pew Research Center's recent poll of Israel's citi-

zens. According to this poll, published last week, 48 percent of Israel's Jewish citizens said that they agreed with the statement that "Arabs should be expelled from Israel." (...) The poorly formulated question addressed an issue that is not currently debated in Israel, with no political party advocating the expulsion of Israel's Arab citizens. It is difficult to fathom just what was in people's minds when this question was thrown at them. (...) It is not difficult to imagine the reaction of Israel's Arab citizens when reading the Pew poll results. How can you integrate into a society if half of its members would like to see you expelled from the country? It will take a lot of time and much explaining to overcome the reaction to this misleading poll.

Moshe Arens, HAA, 13.03.16

Things have only gotten worse since Pew concluded their troubling survey of Israel

(...) Four out of every five Jews favors discriminating in favor of Jews. (...) Given this, it's no wonder that suspicions between the two peoples run so deep. The only thing they both agree on – in identical proportions, 40 percent each – is that their leaders aren't worthy of their trust. Mutual fear and loathing are tainting the country and bringing forth an evil miasma of racism. This is fertile ground for violence and for abandoning dreams of coexistence, reconciliation and peace. (...) Religious radicalization on both sides is pushing secular Jews out of their former positions of power. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu depends on religious, ultra-Orthodox and right-wing nationalist voters. With his sharp political senses, he knew just how to pluck the strings of anxiety and racism in order to win the last election with the help of inflammatory statements like "Arabs are going to the polls in droves." (...) If these rifts aren't healed, the fabric of shared life in Israel is liable to be damaged irreversibly. (...)

Editorial, HAA, 11.03.16

3. Wahlkampf in USA

Mit Aufmerksamkeit verfolgt die israelische Führung die Vorwahlen der beiden Parteien in den USA. Regierungschef Benjamin Netanyahu vermeidet es indes, den amerikanischen Wahlkampf zu kommentieren. Der Likud-Politiker zieht damit offenbar die Konsequenzen aus seinem Verhalten vor vier Jahren, als er sich offen für den Spitzenkandidaten der Republikaner Mitt Romney positionierte. Für das Verhältnis mit Barack Obama, der für die Demokraten in die Wahlen ging und diese schließlich für sich

entschied, war Netanyahus offen bekundete Sympathie für den Gegner nicht zuträglich.

Israel should stay out of the U.S. election

(...) the political party behind a U.S. president does not predetermine his relationship with Israel. Israelis and the Israeli government need to forget about political labels. They should instead think clearly and dispassionately about what is essential for Israel in its relationship with the United States and just as clearly what is not. (...) Two foundational pillars of the bilateral relationship: the U.S. commitment to maintain Israel's Qualitative Military Edge and its commitment to prevent nuclear proliferation in the Middle East. (...) Israelis should take comfort in the high likelihood that the next president of the United States will look on Israel as a close ally sharing a common destiny with the United States. (...) There will be dissident voices on campuses calling for an end to the occupation. (...) Support for Israel in the United States is and needs to remain bipartisan. Israelis should trust the Americans to get this one right: whoever is elected will undoubtedly support the two essential pillars of the bilateral relationship. And the government of Israel should stay out of the American political fracas, and not repeat the mistake it made in 2012 with its support for Romney, then running against an incumbent president. (...)

Alfred Moses, HAA, 03.03.16

These crazy primaries

(...) Super Saturday (...) taught us three important things: First, Cruz, not Rubio, is seen today as the alternative to Trump, even if the Florida primaries haven't been held yet. (...) Second, the race is far from over. The number of delegates and the gap between Trump and Cruz only proves how far we are from the 1,237 delegates required to win. (...) Third, over in the Democratic camp, Bernie Sanders won two states on Saturday, while Hillary Clinton only took Louisiana -- which shows just how little excitement she generates among Democratic voters. It's quite possible we've only been fed the appetizer until now. Imagine if Hillary Clinton is slapped with an indictment in June (...) and the Republicans then manufacture a different candidate and we find ourselves with two completely new nominees. These primaries have been crazy. (...)

Boaz Bismuth, IHY, 07.03.16

US presidential campaign takes dangerous turn

For the first time in many decades, mob violence has broken out during the pre-nomination primary

period in the US. (...) It is hard to exaggerate how serious this phenomenon is. (...) The violent events (...) were incited by Republican candidate Donald Trump himself. (...) What was already a weird electoral season has now turned into an actively dangerous one. (...) There has been a good deal written recently claiming that Israel can no longer count on the support of the US and should prepare to go it alone or with new friends. The fact is that rhetoric aside, during the Obama years defense and intelligence cooperation has continued and in some cases actually strengthened between the two allies. The continuation of this cooperation is of great importance to Israel, and it should be emphasized that it has greatly benefited the US as well. What of the various candidates and their positions vis-a-vis Israel? On the Republican side Senators Rubio and Cruz and Ohio Governor Kasich are all staunchly pro-Israel, as is VP Biden. Lukewarm are Sanders, Clinton and Trump. Given the financial situation of national insolvency and the consequent pressures on the budget, lukewarm will likely not be good enough to ensure continuation of US defense cooperation with Israel. Thus, the most likely candidates now would be highly problematical from the standpoint of Israel's interests. (...)

Norman Bailey, GLO, 13.03.16

US elections: Who is best for Israel, America and the world?

(...) If there were no Israel, America would need to create one to gain the intelligence and security advantages that its only reliable friend in the region brings to the table. (...) Young people who think out of the box (...) are afraid to post challenging articles in fear of being "unfriended." Just ask pro-Israel kids on today's college campus. (...) This year I am being asked much more often than other years which candidate is not only best for America, but also best for the US-Israel relationship. (...) Trump's populist bullying, viciously demeaning anyone who opposes him, is feeding on the fears and despair of Americans, and is a very troubling sign of the state of our republic. (...) other than saying vaguely that he will be Israel's best friend (...), he has shown a lack of understanding of the region. There is little doubt that at least on Israel, Marco Rubio, Ted Cruz and John Kasich have much deeper knowledge of the facts, and perception of Israel as an ally. (...) Senator Cruz, who is no liberal, worked across the aisle with Democrat Kristin Gillibrand, condemning the labeling of Israeli goods from over the Green Line as a "de facto" boycott of Israel (...). Senator Rubio has led

on a number of important issues to strengthen the US-Israel relationship. (...) it's important to have someone leading America and the free world who respects American exceptionalism with humility, and who will try to balance American strength, American interests and pragmatism for the greater good. (...)
Eric R. Mandel, JPO, 08.03.16

4. Medienquerschnitt

GAS

The old Jewish joke that explains Israel's dangerous dithering on natural gas

(...) The ball is in the court of the High Court of Justice, which must rule soon on the legality of the agreement. (...) Of the myriad arguments against the deal, the court eliminated all but one: the clause guaranteeing regulatory stability. In a normal country, such a clause would be unnecessary, because when the government promises to execute an agreement, it's executed. (...) In our case, it's the government itself that created the instability (...). It unilaterally raised the tax rate on the gas (...). It restricted exports to just 40 percent of reserves. Then it came up with the gas deal, which forces Delek to sell its share in the Tamar and Karish-Tanin fields. All these changes (...) undermined the confidence of the investors and the banks (...) That is the origin of Noble Energy's demand that a regulatory stability clause be added to the agreement, barring the government from altering its regulations for the next 10 years. (...) The High Court is urging the government to consider enacting a personalized, undemocratic "Noble Energy Law," and the opposition is supporting it enthusiastically. Its assessment is that the narrow governing coalition won't manage to pass the law, and then the entire deal will collapse and the gas in Leviathan will remain buried under the sea. If so, the monopoly will be restored to its original power, new investors won't come, our budding ties with Turkey, Greece and Cyprus will wither and instead of collecting enormous tax revenues, we'll pay billions in compensation in international arbitration proceedings. In other words, we'll both lose money and fail to achieve energy independence, and the whole situation will be much worse. But as far as the deal's opponents are concerned, the worse it gets, the better it is. (...)

Nehemia Shtrasler, HAA, 04.03.16

Iranische Wahl

Iran's internal strife

(...) The results of last week's elections represent a major victory for the reformists, both in the Majlis and the Council of Experts, although it is unclear whether they will have a majority. Rouhani's election in 2013 and the subsequent removal of sanctions within the framework of the nuclear deal, which raised the hopes of many Iranians for a better economy, undoubtedly contributed to this victory. The reformists' victory teaches us that the majority of the Iranian public supports Rouhani's policies, including the nuclear deal and increased openness toward the West. The internal struggle, however, will not end here. The radical camp has considerable sway and holds important positions of power. It is backed by Khamenei and will wage a bitter fight to preserve its political and economic might. The picture is even more complex because in the coming years Khamenei is expected to leave the stage. The battle over his succession could be vicious, perhaps even violent.

Dr. Ephraim Kam , IHY, 01.03.16

BDS

Lapid and Lieberman put on a show

(...) I do not understand why the fight against the BDS movement requires people like Lapid and Lieberman to send out messages of gloom and subservience. Lieberman served as foreign minister from 2009 to 2015 (...). I do not remember even one achievement of his in the international arena during his time as foreign minister. (...) Lapid has turned out to be one of Israel's opportunistic politicians. The secular Lapid is now trying to portray himself as an authentic representative of the national religious and ultra-Orthodox sectors. (...) In reality, Israel's international standing is strong and firm. In the eyes of many around the world, Israel is a leading military power in the fight against Islamic terrorism and a center of cutting-edge technological developments. (...) Yes, Israel has problems at the United Nations. But when was that ever not the case? The U.S. Congress and most Americans support Israel. (...) there is no reason to bow our heads and exaggerate the situation. We will defeat the BDS movement with courage and wisdom -- not opportunism and depression.

Dr. Haim Shine, IHY, 01.03.16

BDS und SodaStream

SodaStream: Case study in Middle East insanity

(...) SodaStream (...) operated in the Mishor Adumim area of what the press calls the West Bank (...), 10 minutes from Jerusalem but easily accessible for many Palestinian workers. The company employed close to 600 such workers, who were paid wages significantly higher than their brethren working in Palestinian-owned businesses (...), and who had better physical working conditions as well. (...) in late 2014 and early 2015 the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement began digging its rotting teeth into SodaStream. The movement cared little about what might happen to all the people working in the plant. Its greater goal of hurting Israel was important enough to justify making the employees financial martyrs for the cause. (...) 500 Palestinian workers lost their jobs (...). Now Israel comes along and for security reasons, or so we are told, refuses to renew the entry permits of the 75 Palestinians who were willing to travel 2.5 hours each way every day to work in the new SodaStream plant. (...) But for some anti-Israel activists even this is not enough. Having put almost 600 Palestinians out of work, Ramah Kudaimi of the US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation needs a new cause. And what is it? Well, the new factory is close to Rahat, a new planned township for the Beduin population of Israel, designed to make it possible for local Beduin to have 21st century facilities so that they can live better lives. According to Kudaimi, SodaStream will remain a target of boycott efforts because the new factory is close to Rahat, "thus still implicating the company in Israel's displacement policies." (...) Sherwin Pomerantz, JPO, 05.03.16

Kein Straferlass für Ex-Präsident

Katsav does not deserve parole

(...) if everyone is to be treated equally under the law, then clearly Katsav is not entitled to early parole after having failed to express remorse and having refused rehabilitation, which are the preconditions for the early release of any sex offender in Israel. (...) This mini-scandal, which is only in its early stages, is worthy of further examination: Every offender whose crime involves moral turpitude and who will not take responsibility for his actions or express remorse, will not be able to enjoy a reduced sentence. He has been given a sentence, and if he doesn't want to admit wrongdoing, then he will serve the entire term and be released when it is complete.

Not a day sooner. A reduced sentence is a reward, and it must not be given to any robber or thief or violent spouse or white collar criminal who refuses to acknowledge the severity of his or her crimes. Rather than granting sex offenders such as Katsav and his ilk a reduced sentence, the right thing to do would be to deny reduced sentences from all criminals who are too stubborn to admit their transgressions.

Dan Margalit, IHY, 14.03.16

HAA = Haaretz

JED = JediothAhronoth / Ynetnews

JPO = Jerusalem Post

IHY = Israel HaYom

TOI = Times of Israel

GLO = Globes

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