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1. Terror in Belgien

Nach den beiden Terroranschlägen am Flughafen und einer U-Bahnstation in Brüssel haben die Behörden europaweit die Sicherheitsmaßnahmen verschärft. Mindestens 34 Menschen waren getötet und über 180 teils schwer verletzt worden. Die Terrormiliz Islamischer Staat bekannte sich zu den Bluttaten. Grund der Attacke sei Belgiens Unterstützung für die internationale Koalition gegen den IS. Auch für die Terrorwelle Ende letzten Jahres in Paris, bei der 130 Menschen ums Leben kamen, erklärte sich der IS als verantwortlich. Belgien gilt als Hochburg islamistischer Extremisten. Vermutlich wurden hier die Anschläge in Frankreich geplant. Der IS droht den gegen sie kämpfenden Nationen mit weiteren Angriffen. Es stünden "dunkle Tage" bevor, hieß es in einer Mitteilung. In Israel reagierten Regierungspolitiker mit Kritik gegen den laschen Umgang Europas mit der Terrorgefahr.

Europe must fight evil

(...) Jews have always been the central and primary target for Islamic terrorism, but it has also always been clear that they are not the ultimate target. The Islamists are fighting Christianity. They want to conquer Europe as they did in the Golden Age. (...) From New York to Paris and now Brussels, there is a clear trend that is forcing the European Union (...) to reexamine its conduct. Defending human rights at this moment requires limiting them for the purpose of saving lives. Europe is knee-deep in agreements

that don't allow it to meaningfully track terrorists. It prevents itself from entering Islamic neighborhoods and from arresting suspects earlier than 5 a.m. There is no administrative detention or time-limited investigation. There is no guarantee that those who were murdered and injured in Brussels on Tuesday would not have been hurt otherwise. But one can say with certainty that they did not have the best protection (...). If Europe does not set out on a defensive war, it will find itself defeated in the evil war launched by its enemies.

Dan Margalit, IHY, 23.03.16

The terror attack in Brussels: Three steps that nobody wants to take

(...) Three possible key lessons have arisen from the joint terror attacks in Belgium. All three of them require a fundamental change in investment, effort, agenda, and — most importantly — in the West's worldview. The first lesson is regarding the worldwide aviation system, which underwent a rare reform after the attacks of September 11: Rigorous security checks before boarding, the prohibition of sharp objects, and the supervision of routes of entry and exit to and from the aircrafts. (...) The second lesson is regarding intelligence. The enemy that European intelligence services are facing is young, talented, crosses borders, uses the local population and knows how to coordinate and organize timed operations in short periods of time, employing encrypted means of communication. Against such an

enemy, the West must fundamentally change the perceptions of intelligence, coordination, manpower, resources and legislation, as well as make compromises on human rights. (...) It means monitoring widespread populations and geographical areas, all the time, at high resolution, even those who do not raise any specific suspicion. (...) The third lesson: Every additional terror attack on European soil brings closer the moment that the West will have to make a call, and do what it most dreads: ground operations against ISIS in Syria and Iraq. (...) Ronen Bergman, JED, 23.03.16

Europe's weakness

(...) Around a million Muslims live in Belgium (...). 75% hold strict Islamist views and two-thirds view Islamic law as more important than national law. (...) The inevitable consequence of all this is that, among European nations, Belgium has produced the largest number of Muslims who have gone to Iraq and Syria to join Islamic State. (...) Many experts describe Belgium as the center of European jihad. (...) There is no chance of a real solution until Europe takes drastic measures to stop the rampant Islamic incitement against Christians and Jews. According to the world view propagated by the inciters, most of Europe is Muslim land that must be freed from the infidels. The mass migration waves Europe has experienced in recent years (...) have only exacerbated the problem. It is estimated that between 2,500 and 5,000 terrorists entered the continent last year. (...) European interests in Sunni Gulf states and Shiite Iran have been contributed to the continent's weak approach to tackling the root of the problem. A continuation of this approach will only lead to additional shocking attacks. Dr. Ephraim Herrera, IHY, 24.03.16

Terror in Belgium

(...) French and Belgian intelligence establishments had no idea that this series of attacks was imminent. As a result, they had no way of thwarting it. (...) Large-scale, simultaneous multiple location attacks that involve large amounts of weapons and explosives, require intense planning and deliberation. (...) The main goal of intelligence agencies is to locate the terrorist cell's back office of operators. If the network is not exposed, it will be able to continue preparing another attack the moment the members of one set of suicide bombers blow themselves up. The interrogation of terrorism suspects is therefore the most valuable tool for any intelligence agency and is the best way to extract information regarding

the location and character of terrorist cells and networks. (...) There is no doubt that had one of the terrorist suspects been captured and interrogated earlier, the intelligence agencies might have been able to prevent the latest horrible series of attacks from taking place. (...) Lior Akerman, JPO, 24.03.16

Unwanted lessons

(...) Netanyahu announced, terrorism isn't borne of deprivation, but rather out of frustration. It's due to a murderous ideology. This fight, Netanyahu says, is a fight sweeping the world, and hitting us hard. It's as if the story of the teenager in East Jerusalem, whose family has been living under Israeli occupation for the past five decades, is the same story as the two brothers who committed the Brussels attacks, who were influenced by radical Islam. How is Netanyahu's gloating, (...) any different than the gloating of Erdoğan, who compares terror attacks by ISIS to the Kurdish PKK rebel group? (...) it's the patronizing and arrogant way we deal with global terrorism. It's as if we, with all of our experience, can teach them what terror is. (...) How we were able to defeat terrorism? (...) Sima Kadmon, JED, 25.03.16

After Brussels, will Europe finally crack down on terror Israel-style?

(...) There has been both a bitter and judgmental tone to Israeli media commentary on the attacks. The bitterness stems from the sting of jealousy that each terror attack in Europe unleashes a flood of shock and sympathy around the world, while similar violence in the Middle East and Africa, from stabbings to bombings, are considered so common they often barely register beyond the region. (...) After the most recent Paris attacks, Israelis admired the joie de vivre that drove Europeans to vow that terror wouldn't stop them from living their lives, attending concerts and football games, and gathering in cafes. Israelis have long responded with similar defiance. But they also view it as naive and dangerous that the same Europeans - and more importantly, their leaders - don't seem to understand that in order to do so safely under the threat of ISIS, a measure of privacy and freedom must be sacrificed, and that they can no longer afford to breeze across borders or enter airports without scrutiny, particularly at a time when immigrants from unknown backgrounds have been flooding into Europe. (...) Israelis are willing to make daily - trading total privacy for increased safety. (...) Certainly, nobody in Israel likes

or enjoys it. And there is something refreshing about leaving behind the constant inspection when they escape to vacations in London, Thailand, and even the United States. (...) But underneath that freedom, they also feel a bit nervous in its absence, and more recently, impatient with the reluctance of Europe to recognize that such measures are necessary. (...) Allison Kaplan Sommer, HAA, 22.03.16

2. Soldat erschießt einen am Boden liegenden palästinensischen Attentäter

Die Videoaufnahmen eines Aktivisten von B'Tselem in Hebron, die einen israelischen Soldaten zeigen, wie er einen bereits am Boden liegenden Palästinenser Attentäter in den Kopf schießt, verschärften den inner-israelischen Diskurs über die Maßnahmen der Armee gegen palästinensische Terroristen. Verteidigungsminister Moshe Yaalon beschuldigte den Soldaten, seine Befugnisse überschritten zu haben. Er sei alles andere als ein Held, wie er zum Teil im rechten Parteienspektrum gehandelt wurde, sondern müsse bestraft werden. Naftali Bennett, Chef der Siedlerpartei Habayit Hayehudi, solidarisierte sich mit der Familie des Soldaten. Es sei das Recht der Familie, öffentlich Stellung zu beziehen und angehört zu werden. Eine Obduktion ergab, dass der Palästinenser, der vor dem Zwischenfall Soldaten angegriffen hatte, tatsächlich durch den Kopfschuss starb. Der Soldat ist wegen Totschlag angeklagt.

Undercutting the IDF's image

The chaotic security reality across Judea and Samaria is one controlled by endless shades of gray. (...) Thursday's incident in Hebron, in which an Israeli soldier was filmed shooting a subdued terrorist, (...) is clear-cut, and it raises no doubts or questions. (...) Given the immediate firestorm on social media, it seems the obvious must be reiterated: Shooting a helpless individual is illegal and immoral. Yes, soldiers are expected to spare no effort to neutralize a terrorist, but once he is subdued he must not be harmed. (...) It is sad to see how the headlines produced by this incident are giving the headlines on the Brussels bombings a run for their money. (...) But mostly, it is sad to see how IDF soldiers are being portrayed as murderers, and how this incident plays into the hand of those responsible for the surge in violence. And as if that was not enough, this incident lends organizations like B'Tselem and Breaking the Silence legitimacy. The company commander and other soldiers on patrol failed to react to their comrade's actions, and if not for the

video, we may never have learned of what happened. Those decrying the video's release as "betrayal" or "treason" would be wise to remember it is not the video's publication that is at fault -- it is the nature of the act caught on tape. (...)

Yoav Limor, IHY, 25.03.16

The Israeli military's values are in urgent need of thorough revamping

With every passing day, it becomes apparent how right Chief of Staff Gadi Eisenkot was to clarify the rules of engagement and the exercise of power, which must take into consideration a given event's context and circumstances. At the same time, politicians and agitators are escalating their acrimonious rhetoric against the IDF and its commander-in-chief. The (...) radical right has launched an aggressive counter campaign, in a bid to reshape the event. The vitriolic campaign attempts to bend the rule of law and the rules of engagement, which, as a video clip of the incident clearly shows, were blatantly violated. (...) According to Bennett, then, the shooting may not have been about self-defense only, but may even have been a potential act of heroism. (...) Bennett and his faction colleague Bezalel Smotrich, who declared that the terrorist in any case "deserved to die," (...) see it as an opportunity for political leverage. They know what their followers want and make sure to feed them. (...) The Palestinian's murder is the alarming proof, although not the only or first one, that the IDF's values, which have a considerable effect on the state's values, are in urgent need of thorough revamping. Most importantly, they must not remain in the hands of blood peddlers.

Editorial, HAA, 27.03.16

Reality check: Hebron killing was not a one-off event

(...) One would have to be both deaf and blind not have noticed an atmosphere in Israel in which the killing of Palestinian terrorists, after they have been subdued, is regarded with a shrug of the shoulders. (...) The noted anti-terrorism expert Sephardi Chief Rabbi Yitzhak Yosef told his followers in weekly Torah lesson: "If a terrorist is advancing with a knife, it's a mitzva to kill him. One shouldn't be afraid that someone will petition the High Court of Justice or some chief of staff will come and say something different." (...) Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Moshe Ya'alon (...) have failed to ensure that the mood in Israel remains calm and rational in the face of this current wave of Palestinian terrorism. In fact, in their hounding of human

rights groups such as B'tselem, one of whose activists filmed the killing in Hebron, or Breaking the Silence, which highlights IDF abuses in the territories, they are helping create today's Orwellian environment in which Jews are good, Arabs are bad, and those who seek to empathize with the Other are nothing more than traitors. This government thrives on the creation of external enemies in order to unify the country, because it has no vision to offer of a better future. Real leadership would explain that (...) there can be a diplomatic solution. Our current government, however, prefers a permanent state of apocalypse now, and in such a state, no one has the right to be surprised when incidents such as those in Hebron happen.

Jeff Barak, JPO, 27.03.16

Controversy surrounding Hebron shooting is hypocrisy indeed

Yisrael Beiteinu leader Avidgor Lieberman is right when he says the "onslaught" directed at the Kfir Brigade soldier who executed Abdel Fattah al-Sharif in Hebron last Thursday after Sharif had already been subdued is hypocrisy. (...) It's clear, after all, that it is only because a camera documented a soldier shooting a "neutralized" Palestinian in the head that the people at the top rushed to disassociate themselves from the act. (...) Most of those who have carried out the approximately 105 incidents of stabbing, attempted stabbing or knife-wielding since October 3 have been killed by soldiers, policemen and security guards. In all the cases that were not filmed by Palestinians, did the soldiers, police and security guards really act appropriately and had no choice but to kill? In other words, that the hand of God has decided that only what runs counter to the spirit of the IDF is what will be filmed? (...) One may conclude that the only time there was a failure (...) is when B'Tselem has had filmed evidence. When B'Tselem does not have such evidence, the soldiers are the Righteous Among the Nations.

Amira Hass, HAA, 28.03.16

A bullet in the IDF's rules of engagement

(...) What happened on Thursday in Hebron (...) appears to have more in common with the Bus 300 affair — when living terrorists were killed by Shin Bet officers shortly after an attack — than with confirming the kill. The public outcry (...) is not merely solidarity with a soldier who lost his wits and whose innocence or guilt must yet be investigated in a court of law. (...) It is also part of a rising ideological wave within Israel that seeks to change the army's Rules

of Engagement. (...) This is the animating force of the far-right. This is what the hilltop youth believe: that the mealy-mouthed doctrines of democracy are irrelevant; that enemies are to be treated in the manner of Joshua and Saul. For now, it's a fringe group. But the fact that a reserves major has garnered more than 50,000 signatures on a petition that calls for the arrested soldier to be "raised up and praised" for his actions (...), shows that more is at play than this soldier's future. The army's morality, so brazenly battered from the outside, is now under assault from within. (...)

Mitch Ginsburg, TOI, 28.03.16

We owe him our integrity

(...) Before we even had a chance to blink and to understand what we were seeing in the footage of the prone terrorist being shot in Hebron, we had already convicted the Kfir Brigade soldier who shot him with murder and with violating the IDF's values. (...) Who among us knows what went through the soldier's head after he saw the neutralized terrorist move all of a sudden? (...) The speed at which the images were spread and fingers pointed in response is not only unfair, it also allows those who plot against us to undermine the justice of our path and our right to defend ourselves. (...) Those who were quick to justify and to shirk responsibility would have done right to leave the investigation of the incident to the soldier's direct commanders, to allow them to review the situation and to decide what the soldier's punishment should be -- without straying from the mission or from the purity of arms. These soldiers and commanders defend us with their lives. They should have the right and duty to review the incident and apply lessons learned as early as tomorrow morning. (...) If we don't know how to defend our soldiers even when they make mistakes and deserve punishment, there will be no one to defend us, no one to jump into action when danger lurks.

Zvika Fogel, IHY, 28.03.16

The 'traitors' who filmed our 'heroic' soldier executing a wounded Palestinian terrorist

There is no mystery about the incident in which an Israel Defense Forces soldier killed a wounded terrorist. What's to investigate? The soldier (...) simply thought the Arab should die. Submissive, bound, with a knife or without — his fate to die was sealed. But that soldier has nothing to worry about. A well-oiled machine, constantly fed by a large number of people who think, like the Sephardic chief rabbi, that non-Jews have no place in the State of

Israel, has come out in his defense. (...) He is defended by those who hate the justice system, first and foremost the justice minister who, instead of supporting the system under her aegis, attacks and humiliates it. (...) In the current atmosphere in Israel of victimhood and self-pity, I venture a guess that if a public opinion survey were conducted now including a question as to whether one supports the killing of Arabs because they are Arabs, at least about a third would answer in the affirmative. After all, the way he is depicted, his religion and the hatred ascribed to an Arab makes him someone who should be killed. (...) Israel's citizens are showing obvious signs of racism. (...) Will racism bring down the little solidarity that characterized Israeli society? It seems that it will. Because 20 years ago a soldier who shook the hand of the infamous Kahanist Baruch Marzel would have been perceived as a strange and dubious character. Today boundaries that we naturally assumed to be permanent have been crossed. (...) This country was not established as the state of rabble-rousing rabbis. We came here to build a home whose Jewish walls rest on foundations of democracy and longing for peace.

Uzi Baram, HAA, 29.03.16

Media Comment: B'Tselem's track record

No one – neither we, the public nor the politicians – knows what really happened in Hebron (...). But we do know one indisputable fact, that the B'Tselem NGO once again succeeded, with the collaboration of the media, to give Israel a black eye. It presented the world with a damning video clip filmed by Emad Abu-Shamsiyah in which one sees the terrorist lying on the ground, seemingly alive and powerless; after the passing of an ambulance, one sees a red spot under his head. (...) THE REAL ethical problem is Israel's media collusion with B'Tselem's proven unreliable source material. (...) The unrestrained and unverified propagation of B'tselem material raises a fundamental issue of how the media should report or broadcast information that emanates from interested parties – especially ideologically driven political groups. (...) Most of the mainstream media (...) lends full credence to B'tselem by including in their website article a link to its video footage but not to other clips that have surfaced showing different angles and a different version of events, even if none show the full story. (...) the redeeming factor is that the Israeli public does not "buy" B'Tselem's narrative. Polls show that more than 80% of Israelis approved of the soldier's actions. B'Tselem will probably gain increased dona-

tions for portraying Israel as if guilty of a "war crime." This would be the most cynical part of this story, that the only profiteer from the demise of the terrorist is the "human rights" organization B'Tselem. Yisrael Medad, Eli Pollak, JPO, 30.13.16

There is no such thing as a moral military

The IDF wants to be the most moral military in the world, the most virtuous it can be, but it can't, even if all the soldiers and commanders were angels. (...) In the military one kills and sometimes one is even killed. Everything connected to shootings and death is immoral. (...) It seems that the politicians who were combat commanders have forgotten their lessons. (...) In the military one is confronted with man's ultimate test- life or death. Enemy soldiers and terrorists are trying to kill you. You're trying to kill them. Where is the morality? The soldier who shot the terrorist who was lying on the road in Hebron a few days ago was not the first who acted immorally towards enemy terrorists. (...) The courts will determine his sentence. But when he is sentenced, and he will probably receive a severe punishment, it's important to remember that the spirit of the IDF - the IDF's values - is nothing but a piece of paper. In reality a military that has been operating for almost 50 years in the alleys of Hebron, Jenin, Nablus, Ramallah and Qalqiliya loses its ethical principles. Therefore, the IDF can't be - and probably never will be - the most moral military in the world. A moral military simply doesn't exist.

Eitan Haber, JED, 31.03.16

3. Oberster Gerichtshof kippt Gasabkommen

Israels Oberster Gerichtshof hat das umstrittene Gasabkommen zwischen der israelischen Regierung und einem amerikanisch-israelischen Konsortium bestehend aus dem US-amerikanischen Energieriesen Noble Energy und der israelischen Delek-Gruppe in Teilen für rechtswidrig erklärt. Der im Dezember unterzeichnete Vertrag habe aufgrund der „inakzeptablen Stabilitätsklausel“ keinen Bestand. Laut dem von der Regierung vorgelegten Vertrag wäre das Konsortium über einen Zeitraum von zehn Jahren vor allen regulativen Änderungen ausgenommen gewesen. Das Gericht setzte das Abkommen für ein Jahr aus, um der Regierung Zeit für eine Anpassung zu geben. Regierungschef Benjamin Netanyahu war persönlich vor Gericht erschienen, um das Abkommen zu verteidigen und dessen Gutheißung durch das Gericht zu erzielen, auch um Verzögerungen der Gasgewinnung zu

vermeiden. Vor der Küste Israels werden in den beiden Gasfeldern Leviathan und Tamar mehr als 535 Milliarden Kubikmeter Erdgas vermutet.

Israel's cash stays underwater

(...) The High Court of Justice dealt a crushing blow to Israel's economy when it struck down the natural gas regulatory framework. Forgoing development of Israel's natural gas fields will come with a heavy price (...). But the most damaging aspect of this decision is the fact that it will scare off many potential investors. (...) Now the money will stay beneath the ocean floor, and we will have to wait for many more years before it ends up in the state coffers. (...) But the High Court of Justice just dealt this interest a disproportionate blow. (...) Although the court did not deliberate on the framework's economic aspects, the decision will nevertheless inflict major damage on Israel's economy, taking it back a generation. (...) This is absurd, and sad. And it comes with a heavy price, too heavy. (...) Why should Israel hold elections (...) if at the end of the day the High Court strikes everything down? Couldn't the judges have sent us a telegram ahead of time and spared us all the effort? (...) The feeling is that the court ruled against the public's interest, against the choice made by the people through a democratic process. (...) Everyone is for the rule of all, we are always for it. But there is a country to manage, and it must be done responsibly.

Hezi Sternlicht, IHY, 28.03.16

Leviathan needs a market more than stability

(...) Israel was and remains dependent on foreign companies to develop its gas reservoirs. (...) the government will have to compromise with these companies, because otherwise, the gas will remain under the sea. Noble Energy, or any other company in its place, will demand a risk premium from the state in return for the capital it is jeopardizing by developing the gas reservoirs in the regulation-struck local market and the gas-saturated global market. Any postponement or regulatory twist will only make the risk premium larger. (...) Netanyahu and his ministers are thoroughly fed up with the unending and thankless task of getting the gas plan through the obstacles, and the thought of going back to the drawing board, or, Heaven forbid, the Knesset, gives them serious indigestion. (...) As always, Delek is searching for a creative solution to the new crisis that has arisen. In the past, Noble Energy's Israeli partner demonstrated impressive ability to persuade the US company not to walk away from

the deal, and to return to the negotiating table with the Israeli officials whom Noble Energy regards as insufferable. (...) it would be ironic if the gas plan is not carried out merely because of Noble Energy's obstinacy. (...) Noble Energy says it is determined to fight the good fight for its rights here and now. Noble Energy is a company with self-respect. (...) It is the largest investor in the Israeli economy, and it is not here to make a quick killing and get out; it wants to develop an important industry out of nothing in order to make as big a profit as possible. (...)

Amiram Barkat, GLO, 29.03.16

Drilling for hard truths in the stalled gas deal

(...) The Start-Up Nation looks today a bit more like a banana republic, and we're all to blame. The main culprits are all of us, the customers of the Israel Electric Company, who carelessly enjoy cheap and historically dirty power, without demanding any political accountability for the unsustainable NIS 70 billion debt of the utility and the anti-renewable energy policies of the government. Our silence has literally been bought by subsidized power, so there is little accountability for the power we consume or bestow. (...) The switch from burning coal to burning gas is certainly an improvement in terms of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, so environmentalists shouldn't party too hard at the court decision. But if the government was truly concerned about reducing emissions rather than appeasing tycoons and their friends, the Energy Ministry would cancel plans for another fossil fuel burning plant at Ashkelon, ban the use of coal and heavy fuel, and stop the drilling for oil on the Golan. (...) And the Knesset, whose roof is famously decked with a great solar installation, would pass legislation banning the building of any additional power plants that burn fossil fuels, paving the way for solar, wind, biogas, waves and more. None of these were done in the past years because decision makers and bureaucrats were intoxicated from the gas. (...) The prime minister would be wise to resist bamboozling a technical fix to the gas deal through the Knesset and Cabinet and instead use this opportunity to have Israel's energy policy finally shine. (...)

Yosef I. Abramowitz, JPO, 28.03.16

4. Medienquerschnitt

Fünf Jahre Bürgerkrieg in Syrien

Five years of disaster in Syria

(...) These five years have brought an amazing humanitarian disaster: perhaps 350,000 dead, half the population driven from their homes, 4 million refugees. The impact has been enormous: from destabilizing the politics and economics of Jordan and Lebanon, to increasing the Iranian role in the Arab Middle East greatly, to bringing Russia back into the region, to the destabilization of the European Union through massive refugee flows. (...) When we look back on the years under President Barack Obama, despite his boasts and self-satisfaction in his lengthy interview with The Atlantic, these deaths, the enormous humanitarian toll, and the disastrous impact on Europe will be a very large part of the Obama legacy. Like most leaders, he has gone to the Holocaust Museum to intone "never again," but unlike most he has actually presided over a period when violence grew into genocide, when killings of civilians slowly crept up toward 400,000, and when millions were driven from their country. (...) Remembrance without resolve, awareness without action. Those words and the realities they describe should indeed haunt the reputation of the Obama administration and those who formed its policy for the last five years in Syria.

Elliott Abrams, IHY, 16.03.16

5 years into the war in Syria: the effect on Israel

(...) In the past Israel had intervened in Arabs' civil wars. In 1970 Israel deterred Syria from continuing its invasion of Jordan, which allowed the Hashemite kingdom to overcome its rebels, i.e. the PLO. In the civil war in Syria, Israel avoided assisting Assad against the insurgents. Israel also did not try to prevent Assad's enemies from penetrating into Syria, not that Israel could have done much in this field. (...) THE MOST positive change in Israel's favor is that Syria's military ability has diminished drastically since 2011, following the civil war. Syria's military had hundreds of thousands of troops, but has much less today. Assad's units had massive firepower, including hundreds of long-range surface-to-surface missiles that could have hit Israel's major cities. Those missiles were fired, but against Assad's enemies inside Syria. Assad also had to give up most of his chemical weapons stockpile. (...) Armed outfits in Syria could try to infiltrate and/or shoot rockets and mortar shells at Israel. The Golan Heights, the sce-

ne in recent years of several incidents, might turn to be more and more dangerous for the 20,000 Israelis living there. It would not be as risky as a full-scale war between Israel and Syria, such as the one of 1973, which has fortunately not happened since. (...) All in all Israel could implement dual containment of both Assad and Syrian armed groups while staying as much as possible out of the war in Syria. (...) However, Israel might be dragged into that war against its will, particularly if there is a wave of deadly assaults on the Golan Heights.

Ehud Eilam, JPO, 19.03.16

Korruptionsvorwürfe gegen Deri und Herzog

A long road ahead

The corruption cases involving Shas leader Aryeh Deri and Zionist Union leader Isaac Herzog are of different natures. (...) But there are some parallels between the two cases. (...) the allegations are not new. (...) It is always interesting to see how such cases affect public opinion. It does not matter how the information was brought to light or whether it is true or not. Even if investigators find that there is basis for the allegations, it is not certain the information will be solid enough to present in court. In the near future, Herzog's status as the head of the opposition and Deri's status as Shas leader will not be affected (...). But the investigations will affect influence the internal machinations within the Labor Party and Shas. This is particularly true for Labor as Herzog's alleged violations of campaign financing laws took place during the party's 2013 primaries, when Herzog ousted Shelly Yachimovich as party chief. While in recent times it seems Herzog and Yachimovich have abided to a truce, the investigation against Herzog could renew the flow of bad blood between them. The weakening of Herzog and Deri will benefit Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who is leading a narrow 61-MK coalition that contains several chronic rebels within Likud. There is nothing like a criminal investigation against a political rival to bolster one's own power. (...)

Dan Margalit, IHY, 31.03.16

Katsav erbat vorzeitige Haftentlassung

Releasing a remorseless rapist

Moshe Katsav expressed no remorse. (...) Not because he didn't commit the acts for which he was convicted, but because he convinced himself he didn't commit them. (...) Denial mechanisms are stronger than any memory. (...) Regret, therefore, is

not on the agenda. What is on the agenda is the shortening of his sentence due to his good behavior, because his release does not endanger the public and because of his likelihood for rehabilitation. (...) As attest the various parties that carried out physical examinations to determine the potential level of danger that he poses, it's very low. (...) For the victims, women's groups and female members of Knesset, Katsav's early release is scandalous. Katsav is a symbol, and reducing his sentence—especially these days, when more and more senior figures are exposed and suspected or accused of sexual harassment in the army, the police and in politics— doesn't send a good message. (...) Rivlin is a popular president. He is loved by everyone, and, if I may guess, mostly by women. (...) It seems that if there is some kind public consensus, it's women against Katsav's release. (...) What I can completely identify with is the victims' fear that as soon as Katsav leaves prison, they will have to see and hear him in every possible media: press conferences, personal interviews, panels, and who knows, maybe he'll become one day a commentator on a current affairs program. (...) This requires a mature and responsible joint decision from all the media that this man will be completely excluded. (...) We can easily save the victims frustration by simply not cooperating with him. It seems to me that this way, we'll squeeze out Katsav's punishment until the end.
Sima Kadmon, JED, 27.03.16

Ex-Mossadchef Meir Dagan erlag Krebskrankheit

The quintessential Israeli

(...) Meir Dagan was no James Bond, nor was he a one-man war machine. He was far simpler, and therein lies his greatness. Dagan was the quintessential Israeli: one whose family suffered greatly during the Holocaust and had embraced revival; a brave, creative, and slightly mischievous man; a loyal warrior of Israel; an intellectual who loved people; and an individual who was never afraid to admit his mistakes. His strength stemmed from his convictions (...) in search of a better future for his children and grandchildren. (...) It is doubtful whether the past generation has seen a more influential Mossad director. It was the role of a lifetime, and he made the most of it, enjoying almost every step of the way. (...) Dagan's greatest success was probably the fact that under his command, the Mossad regained and cemented its status in the global intelligence community, striking fear in the hearts of Israel's enemies. He himself was revered by his

agents, and his name alone was enough to inspire awe.(...) While Dagan got along famously with former Prime Ministers Ariel Sharon and Ehud Olmert, he would often lock horns with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, mostly over the Iranian threat. True to himself, Dagan never sugarcoated anything and bluntly spoke his mind, all the while making clear that regardless of his opinions, he would always follow his orders. Dagan continued to pursue his truth after he retired, and he ruffled many feathers in the process. (...)

Yoav Limor, IHY, 18.03.16

HAA = Haaretz

JED = JediothAhronoth / Ynetnews

JPO = Jerusalem Post

IHY = Israel HaYom

TOI = Times of Israel

GLO = Globes

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Verantwortlich:

Dr. Werner Puschra,

Leiter der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Israel

Redaktion:

Susanne Knaul

Judith Stelmach

Homepage: www.fes.org.il

Email: fes@fes.org.il