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1. Attentat in Orlando

Die Schüsse im Homosexuellenclub von Orlando lassen Erinnerungen erwachen an das Attentat Ende letzten Jahres im Pariser Bataclan. Ahnungslos drängeln sich die Menschen vor einer Bühne, als die ersten Schüsse fallen, die sie als Teil der Show missinterpretieren, bevor sie sich der Gefahr bewusst werden. Zunächst unklar blieb, ob Omar Mateen, der Mann, der 49 Menschen in der „Pulse“-Bar erschoss, homophob war oder radikaler Muslim oder beides. Der 29jährige Attentäter war US-Staatsbürger mit afghanischen Wurzeln, zum zweiten Mal verheiratet und Vater eines kleinen Jungen. Er selbst erklärte noch kurz vor den Todesschüssen, er sei inspiriert von den Attentätern von Boston und dem Islamischen Staat treu verbunden. Ermittlungen des FBI zufolge handelte der Mann auf eigene Initiative. Mateen drang mit einem Sturmgewehr und einer Pistole bewaffnet in den Club ein, schoss in die Menge und nahm dann Geiseln. Die Schießerei in Orlando ist der blutigste Anschlag in den USA seit dem 11. September 2001. Bei einem Treffen mit Botschaftern der Nato-Mitgliedsstaaten erklärte Israels Regierungschef Benjamin Netanyahu in Jerusalem, dass die Anschläge in Orlando und Tel Aviv Resultat „des gleichen Übels“ seien.

Between the Bataclan and Pulse: The unique suffering of Orlando massacre's victims

It wouldn't have been any less bad if Omar Mateen had perpetrated the massacre at a "normal" club

rather than a gay club, as did his terrorist colleagues who slaughtered innocent revelers at the Bataclan in Paris. (...) from the perspective of the Islamic State (...), Paris with its cultural and entertainment institutions is as filthy as Orlando with its amusement parks and LGBT life. (...) Many people visiting LGBT venues like Pulse see them as a kind of refuge, a safe space. They go there to be who they are, free of the constant pressure (...), like every other free person. Many of the murdered and wounded at this club had already fallen victim to violence, persecution and humiliation. (...) For the victims, the murder rampage in this cheerful, sun-soaked city is a double blow (...). The LGBT community's impressive successes, the major public events and the enormous changes in the lives of many of its members are real and important, but this is the half full part of the glass. The other half is filled with violence, discrimination and fear. (...) Openness, tolerance and equal rights are a civilized society's best answer to terror and murder. (...)

Nitzan Horowitz, HAA, 13.06.16

Islam's challenge

(...) too much death and suffering are caused by those who claim to be acting in the name of Islam. (...) From Syria and Iraq to Nigeria, Sudan, Afghanistan and Pakistan, a great number of fatalities in armed conflicts around the world are in wars involving Muslims. The most numerous victims of Muslim violence – including executions and lynchings – are

Muslim. (...) it is so crucial that moderate, peaceful Muslims speak out against the violence being carried out in the name of Islam. (...) Islam is not the only monotheistic faith that contains violent messages. Judaism has many of its own, such as the concept of a holy war that justifies genocide (...) or harsh retribution for religious sins. But due to the circumstances of Judaism's development in exile, many of its more militaristic or violent texts were spiritualized. (...) Similarly, Islam must undergo change (...). Islam cannot exclusively be blamed for the horrific act of pointless violence perpetrated in Orlando (...). But this doesn't exempt religious leaders of all faiths from taking an unequivocal stand against violence in the name of religion. (...)
Editorial, JPO, 13.06.16

The fear that remains

(...) If we continue to turn a blind eye, incidents such as this will continue to occur. The fear is part of our daily struggle, and the tragedy in Orlando reopens the wounds that have not yet healed from the murder of Shira Banki at last year's Gay Pride Parade in Jerusalem. (...) Just two weeks ago, an Israeli was arrested for inciting violence against the Jerusalem's gay community, and now we hear the police has investigated "suspicious" citizens in an attempt to find out if they are planning to attend the various Pride events. We cannot remain calm. We no longer feel safe when we walk down the street. When an attack such as yesterday's takes place, we, the victims of trauma, relive our experiences from last year, along with all the others we must endure throughout the year. (...) I cannot understand why people should be scared to live as they choose just because other people don't understand or approve of their lifestyle. (...) An attack such as the one in Orlando, like many other incidents around the world and here in Israel, is often accompanied by a great deal of ignorance and stigmata that exist in the general population, and not just among the murderers and those who incite to violence. (...) It is time for all of us to do some soul searching, to see what can be done to prevent the next hate crime. (...)
Sarah Kala-Meir, IHY, 14.06.16

Prioritising victims at times of terror

(...) Every victim in that club was a victim of a homophobic murder. Simple. (...) When victims are victims for simply because they were born differently to others, even the slightest obfuscation over premeditated motives must be rejected. (...) if we only commit to hollow gestures of sympathy, we betray

the values of our faith. I fear that if we do not adequately face up to the enormity of what has happened to LGBT people this week, we render ourselves hypocrites when we next demand that Jewish victims are treated first and foremost as Jewish victims. To allow such a situation would be intolerable, we must not allow it to come to pass.
Jay Stoll, TOI, 13.06.16

Horror revisits America

(...) Another Islamist terrorist attack in Barack Obama's America -- the same America that decided to wipe the term "Islamist terrorism" from its lexicon. (...) The 29-year-old Mateen (...) held an American passport and worked as a security guard for a company that provides services to the federal government, but on judgment day he was first and foremost a jihadist, a murderer, terrorist; and only then, if at all -- an American. Something has gone wrong with the American dream. In America today there are those (...) who dream the jihadist dream. (...) The world was stunned by Sunday's horrific attack, which this time targeted the gay community. But is anyone upset over homosexuals being brutally executed on a daily basis by Islamic State in Iraq and Syria? When they are thrown off of buildings, or burned alive? (...) for the jihadists everyone -- conservatives and liberals alike -- are in the same boat. (...) The role of moderate Islam must be to denounce such attacks, instead of searching for excuses. (...)
Boaz Bismuth, IHY, 13.06.16

2. Vier Tote bei Terroranschlag in Tel Aviv

Schon schien es, als sei die aktuelle Welle von zumeist mit Messern verübten Attentaten überstanden. Auch deshalb ließ die Regierung über 80.000 zusätzliche Einreisegenehmigungen ausstellen für Palästinenser aus dem Westjordanland, die Familie in Israel haben und über den Ramadan-Fastenmonat zu Besuch kommen wollten. Die Cousins Ahmad Mussa Makhamreh und Khalid Muhammad Mussa Makhamreh aus Yatta, einem sozial schwachen Vorort von Hebron, kamen in schwarzen Anzügen in das Tel Aviver Café Max Brenner und erregten keinen Verdacht. Erst als das Lokal sich füllte, eröffneten die beiden Attentäter das Feuer auf die Gäste und töteten vier Menschen, bevor ihre improvisierten Schusswaffen versagten. „Ich werde mich nicht mit Lippenbekenntnissen zufriedengeben“, kündigte Israels neuer Verteidigungsminister Avigdor Liberman an und forderte als erste Maß-

nahme, die Rückgabe der Leichen palästinensischer Terroristen zu stoppen.

Only solution to Palestinian terrorism is the end of the occupation

(...) Israel has frozen 83,000 entry permits into Israel for family visits (...). These steps have just one objective: To satisfy an Israeli public seeking revenge. (...) This impassioned and hollow talk, similar to the acts of collective punishment, has no real value. It will not protect the life of a single Israeli; it will just increase the frustration and hatred among those forced to live under Israeli occupation. In the end it will only push more young people to terrorism. It's amazing how the Israeli government does not learn its lesson and recognize what should have been clear long ago: The terror will continue as long as the Palestinian people have no hope on the horizon. (...) The only way to deal with terrorism is by freeing the Palestinian people from the occupation. Until then, the Palestinians will continue their opposition using force, as most peoples have done throughout history.

Editorial, HAA, 10.06.16

Reacting to Sarona

(...) What should be Israel's response to this new round of violence? (...) Transportation Minister Israel Katz represents the hawkish approach: "The despicable attack in the heart of Tel Aviv necessitates an exceptionally painful Israeli response," (...) In contrast, Construction and Housing Minister Yoav Galant, a former head of IDF Southern Command, presented a more moderate position. "If someone believes it is possible to solve our security problem with a single aggressive military action, he apparently does not have much military experience," Galant told the radio station. (...) With all the difficulty of reining in our natural inclination to seek revenge for Wednesday's bloody attack, Galant's levelheaded stance serves Israel's interests better. (...) reacting emotionally is counterproductive. (...) That does not mean nothing can be done. (...) Steps need to be taken to prevent the unmonitored movement of Palestinians from the West Bank into areas with large Israeli population centers. Breaches in the security barrier should be closed. Israelis who employ Palestinians illegally should be punished. And there needs to be more intelligence gathering, including information received through cooperation with the Palestinian Authority's security forces. (...) The Sarona Market attack will be the first major test for newly appointed Defense Minister Avigdor

Lieberman. (...) Lieberman the politician was appealing to populism when he made those comments. But Lieberman the defense minister carries more serious responsibilities on his shoulders.

Editorial, JPO, 09.06.16

The beating heart of Tel Aviv

(...) In the hours after the attack, the streets in the area around Sarona emptied out. Perhaps this was due to fear or perhaps it was due to solidarity. It does not feel right to go and drink at a bar just a few dozen meters from where four innocent people were murdered hours earlier. Any act of murder is terrible, but a terrorist attack in the heart of a city leaves a lasting mark. The suicide bombing outside the Dizengoff Center in March 1996 is still seared in the memories of many Tel Aviv residents. Such memories do not fade easily.

Eran Suissa, IHY, 09.06.16

A terror attack next door to the IDF headquarters

(...) Wednesday night's deadly shooting bears the markings of something more "professionally" planned. (...) The big question is how did they get their hands on the firearms, and how did they manage to make their way from the Hebron area into the heart of Israel with these firearms without being stopped. (...) The attackers carefully picked their target. (...) there's the possibility that they intentionally chose the crowded Sarona complex, which is right across the street from the IDF and Defense Ministry headquarters. The attack was committed on the evening of the second day of the Ramadan fast, and there's almost no doubt it was inspired by the religious incitement that prevails in the Muslim world, mostly among those belonging to radical sects. (...) the security apparatus must find the weak point that allows Palestinians from the West Bank to enter Israel illegally and reach the heart of Tel Aviv unhindered, where they could carry out their plans. This will now be the main issue investigated. (...)

Ron Ben-Yishai, JED, 09.06.16

It won't take much for Israel's new defense minister to set it all ablaze

(...) Lieberman really can be very pragmatic. He might kick all his statements and declarations out the door with an ease reserved for utter cynics. But even relatively minor decisions like "we won't return bodies" can set everything ablaze. (...) At the end of Moshe Ya'alon's term as defense minister he and Eisenkot felt that they had personally body-blocked the outbreak of a third intifada. (...) Eisenkot who

was then-Prime Minister Ehud Barak's military secretary at the beginning of the second intifada, remembers very well Barak's lack of control over then-IDF Chief of Staff Shaul Mofaz's army, and the enormous power the army fielded in those days. He doesn't forget how the situation deteriorated and he is determined to act differently. (...) one thing is clear: Even a few small consolation prizes that Lieberman hands out, just to be sure he doesn't stray too far from his bully image which has served him well, could reignite things.
Raviv Drucker, HAA, 13.06.16

3. Erweiterte Koalition und Friedensgespräche

Einen Dämpfer versetzte Israels Regierungschef Benjamin Netanyahu all jenen, die sich über seine zunächst angekündigte Bereitschaft freuten, Verhandlungen auf Grundlage der Arabischen Initiative zu führen. Das 2002 veröffentlichte Dokument sieht die Anerkennung Israels durch die Mitgliedsstaaten der Arabischen Liga vor im Gegenzug zu u.a. dem Abzug der israelischen Truppen aus den Palästinaergebieten. Netanyahu widerrief indes seine Zusage und machte „massive Änderungen“ an der Initiative zur Vorbedingung für Verhandlungen. Kritiker bezweifeln, dass Netanyahu seine Verpflichtung zur Zweistaatenlösung, die er jüngst erneut beteuerte, ernst meine. Der Regierungschef hatte die Sorge vor seiner erweiterten Koalition zerstreuen wollen, der fortan die ultranationale Partei Yisrael Beiteinu angehört, angeführt vom streitbaren Avigdor Lieberman, der nun als Verteidigungsminister dient.

Netanyahu's two-state comments should not be taken lightly

(...) Lieberman reached the prime minister's circle as the dominant man who can enable Netanyahu to make statements he had shelved years ago. Clearly the statements they both made in support of a two-state solution and about the positive elements in the Arab peace plan were meant to calm Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah al-Sissi and governments worldwide that were fuming over Lieberman's appointment. (...) with Lieberman presenting himself as an enthusiastic supporter of the two-state solution, which Netanyahu raised in his 2009 Bar-Ilan speech, it allows Netanyahu to say things that might fall on attentive ears abroad. (...) his statements about the two-state solution and the Arab peace initiative were made in public and so they should not be taken lightly. Will he be able to get out of them when next to him stands the man whose slogan in

the past was "a promise is a promise"? (...) Netanyahu now has no reason to reject the French peace initiative. The prime minister and defense minister can take part in the peace conference, and thus weaken Netanyahu's fear of President Barack Obama's vengeance. (...) Lieberman might balance out Netanyahu's moderate words with appropriately extreme security responses. You have been warned.

Uzi Baram, HAA, 01.06.16

Snap judgement: The two faces of Liberman

(...) it takes a lot to shock me, but the sheer cynicism of Liberman's willingness to sell out Jerusalem's non-haredi population for the sake of political expediency and petty account-settling came close. This is the Liberman whose shady business dealings here and abroad were the subject of years of police investigation. The wheeler-dealer who brought the hard-drinking, strip-club habitué Stas Meseznikov into the cabinet, while alienating or discarding more capable figures from his Knesset list, including Yair Shamir, Danny Ayalon and Orly Levy-Abecassis. The political leader whose apparent tolerance of malfeasance helped foster a culture of deep corruption in Yisrael Beytenu, including the current scandal that has entangled more than two dozen of the party's top officials in a web of bribery and fraud accusations. That this figure is now running the government's most important and sensitive ministry, one where corruption and politics-worse-than-usual can become a matter of life and death for this nation's soldiers, is what has me concerned (...). Liberman, to quote Churchill's famous remark about Russia, has until now been a riddle wrapped up in a mystery inside an enigma. (...) the real Liberman is unknown to us. (...)
Calev Ben-David, JPO, 02.06.16

Herzog, don't fall for Netanyahu's 'peace' manipulation

(...) In the two years that have elapsed since the breakdown of the negotiations led by U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, Netanyahu entrenched himself in the deep right and removed the idea of partition from the agenda. But the moment he brought Avigdor Lieberman into the government as defense minister, the two found the divine light of reaching an agreement with the Palestinians and began preaching the two-state gospel from every possible pulpit. (...) The talk of a potential political breakthrough is meant to pressure Zionist Union, or parts of it, to join up with Netanyahu. (...) But as usual

with Netanyahu, it's hard to detect any real substance behind the slogans. Netanyahu rejected from the outset the only concrete political process at the moment, the French peace initiative. (...) Netanyahu also continues to insist on Palestinian recognition of Israel as a Jewish state, offering nothing in return. Under these circumstances, Zionist Union co-leaders Isaac Herzog and Tzipi Livni should remain outside the government while promising Netanyahu to support movement toward a two-state solution from the opposition. Their joining the coalition would only bulwark Netanyahu's rule (...).

Editorial, HAA, 05.06.16

We won't always have Paris

(...) We're returning to an older era during which diplomats and statesmen in the West were preaching for a forced solution. (...) The problem is that peace is not imminent - not in Paris, not in Ramallah and not in Jerusalem. Abbas wants to internationalize the conflict. The Paris conference is therefore an achievement for him. He will make Israel keep paying the price on the international stage, but won't get his independent state. Even if Israel was willing to make the necessary concessions, it's doubtful he would've been willing to making the concessions he is required to make. When a resolution draft is formulated and accepted by all members of the Security Council, if such a resolution is reached at all, the Palestinians would be the first to object to it. (...) Four Muslim states are considered major players in the area: Iran, Turkey, Egypt and Saudi Arabia. Three of them have shared interests with Israel. These interests lie in the concern of Iran growing stronger, strained relations with the Obama administration, the threat of ISIS terrorism, and the need for an anchor of stability in the Middle East. (...) The renewal of peace talks might have made it easier on the leadership in Saudi, Egypt and Turkey to form, strengthen or renew ties with Israel, but it's not a necessary condition. The occupation is our curse, and the curse of the Palestinians. They, like us, cannot stomach it, but are also unable to throw it up. (...)

Nahum Barnea, JED, 03.06.16

Change for peace will only come from outside Israeli society

(...) Avigdor Lieberman, Naftali Bennett and Benjamin Netanyahu were meant for each other. (...) If the majority wishes to expel elected Knesset members whose loyalties it feels are unsatisfactory, or if the majority decides that leftist NGOs or human

rights groups are foreign agents, the Supreme Court has no right to intervene. Justices weren't elected and their guiding principles were never ratified by voters. This is what democracy means to these three. They also share the view that relinquishing control of the West Bank in order to end the conflict with the Palestinians is absurd. (...) All this leads to the conclusion that a profound change will not come from within Israeli society, only from without. (...) This is why the international conference in Paris is an important step forward if the United States and European Union treat it with the necessary gravitas. (...) Indeed, if striving for a two-state solution becomes important enough to the Americans and Europeans, they have all the tools to take action. All the Israelis need to realize that the occupation has a price is for the Americans to whisper in the prime minister's ear that if one more housing unit goes up in the West Bank beyond the 1967 borders or if one new outpost is established, American military aid will stop greasing the wheels of Israel's arms makers. Let the Israeli taxpayer try paying for research and development and sustaining thousands of jobs. (...) No more free lunch. When the automatic American veto is lifted, Israel will be held responsible for its actions. (...) The Europeans can do their part by deciding that the settlements are not part of Israel. They can support Israel's economic and cultural prosperity while boycotting the settlements. This is the only way to help us extricate ourselves from the morass we're mired in.

Zeev Sternhell, HAA, 03.06.16

Peace order

(...) The addition of Yisrael Beytenu (...) to the government coalition has fueled speculation in the world that Israel has become more intransigent vis-a-vis peace initiatives with the Palestinians. Netanyahu seemed to want to counter this impression by making a significant diplomatic statement. The launch (...) of the Paris-led international peace initiative threatens to put pressure on Israel to make concessions to the Palestinians. (...) Netanyahu understands that Israel needs to position itself to deal with various diplomatic initiatives in the offing. (...) One way of deflecting these initiatives is by launching one of our own that avoids the pitfalls of previous attempts to reach peace with the Palestinians. (...) an accommodation needs to be reached with the Arab world. Once this happens, the Palestinians will have broad regional support for embarking on nation-building. (...) today - more than ever - Israel and Sunni states such as Jordan, Egypt and Saudi

Arabia share a number of interests, from the battle against Islamic State to the curtailing of Iran's hegemony in the region. The (...) Palestinians will need Arab support to overcome the internal conflicts that make Palestinian state-building impossible right now. (...) The involvement of Egypt and Jordan (...) might have a moderating impact on Palestinian society, which has in the past decade shown a preference for Hamas over Fatah. (...)
Editorial, JPO, 05.06.16

4. Medienquerschnitt

Jerusalem-Tag

Jerusalem Day

(...) It is ironic that Jordan has become the main defender of alleged Palestinian rights in Jerusalem's Old City, whose Jewish Quarter the Jordanian Arab Legion ethnically cleansed when it occupied the city. (...) We live in a thriving capital city whose diverse population comprises every variety of religious and political persuasion. That we basically all get along is a miracle that hints of that heavenly city. (...) Unfortunately, what should be a heavenly day has been marred by violence, instigated by ultra-nationalist Jews (...) the parade has provoked racist slogans and incitement to violence. (...) In Israel's capital, the interface of the earthly and the heavenly moves on, sometimes veering in one direction or another. Jerusalem's physical and spiritual beauty is shared by Jews the world over who feel its presence, perhaps no more beautifully than under the wedding canopy, where building a home in Israel begins. The wedding blessing itself acknowledges that all Jewish weddings symbolically take place in Jerusalem, and reminds us never to forget it.
Editorial, JPO, 04.06.16

Jerusalem of iron

(...) Jerusalem is thickly layered with the devotions of the past. It's impossible to walk its living, noisy streets without these memories encroaching uncomfortably on the present. (...) Pain and love are sticky; they cling to a place, a smell, a word, even across generations. Jerusalem has seen so much of both that there is hardly a corner that doesn't cry out from some other time. (...) All of us Jews and Muslims and Christians, American visitors in their hotel bathrooms, young soldiers on their sweaty patrols, all of us jostling for air, hoping for comfort in this asthmatic city, this city whose generations pass in remem-

brance and expectation, in bated breath, in war and terror and fevered dreams of peace. (...) What can one make of such a place, whose ancient name might be translated, "city of peace," or even "city of completion?" Everything about it, its ugliness and beauty, the crimes committed in its name and the love that saturates its warm stones, the gold and the iron, the light and the darkness, all of it is true. On Jerusalem Day 5776, it seems too cheap and easy to sing Jerusalem's praises. Jerusalem is too old and too beautiful for monotonous praise. (...) Maybe it is enough, on Jerusalem Day, the day of our return, simply to be home.
Haviv Rettig Gur, TOI, 05.06.16

Ehepaar Netanyahu unter erneutem Korruptionsverdacht

Probe Netanyahu's French connection

(...) The multiplicity of versions points to the need for a full criminal investigation. (...) even if the statute of limitations may have expired on any offense of which Netanyahu may be suspected. (...) There is a supreme public interest in going through with it because the truth must be sought in cases that cast criminal suspicion on elected officials. This public interest has been accommodated in the past (...) in other cases of suspicions against politicians. The investigation of the Netanyahu-Mimran case must end with either a comprehensive public report or an indictment.
Editorial, HAA, 09.06.16

Gay-Parade in Tel Aviv

Don't Pinkwash the Occupation, But Don't Whitewash Gay Pride Either

(...) After speaking to some of the leaders of the LGBT American Jewish advocacy organizations (...) I gathered that they can use all the support they can get. Engaging with Israel is a tricky business for them, as it often challenges their alliances with other LGBT groups, most of which are firmly in the far-left progressive edge of U.S. politics, which has rapidly grown increasingly hostile towards Israel. (...) Almost any form of identification or engagement with Israel that does not involve protest is taboo in such circles and meets with charges of "normalization" and "pinkwashing" - the popular term for deliberately hiding the oppression of Palestinians behind the facade of enlightenment represented by

LGBT tolerance in Israel. (...) To be sure, pinkwashing charges are not baseless. Israel's defenders do often exploit the country's tolerance for LGBT life as a way to paint it as a civilized humane island in a sea of intolerant barbarity. (...) Fighting against the horrific treatment of homosexuals in many countries is important - but should be kept separate from praising Israel. The LGBT community in Israel deserves better than to be used as a club in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. By the same token - it is equally inappropriate for American LGBT organizations who advocate for Palestinian rights to bully LGBT Jews in the U.S. away from connecting with their counterparts in Israel, and to deny that there is anything positive or uplifting about what is happening in the Jewish state. (...) Oppression of Palestinians shouldn't be ignored or glossed over - but neither should the growing ability of members of the LGBT community in Israel to live in relative freedom and safety. Both should be seen and acknowledged. (...) Allison Kaplan Sommer, HAA, 03.06.16

Wacklige Mitte

Losing by winning: The rupture of the Israeli center

(...) One edge of the country's political spectrum does not want to stop settlement activity anywhere, and the other edge does not believe Netanyahu will ever declare an end to construction in what would be a Palestinian state. (...) Israel's center is not holding, and its more assertive edges clearly disagree on how the Palestinian issue may affect the country's future. (...) unity between center-right and center-left is unlikely to happen on Netanyahu's watch (...). His room to maneuver on the international stage has already shrunk dramatically since the Herzog talks collapsed two weeks ago. (...) Without a broadened government, he will likely be unable to demonstrate publicly that Israel's settlement policy is being brought into line with his professed desire for a two-state outcome. And without such an initiative, the government will be hard pressed to prevent international efforts to address the Israeli-Palestinian issue. (...) Ironically, some (...) are ready to give the Israelis a chance to launch an initiative (...). Egyptian president Abdul Fattah al-Sisi's remarkable statement (...) was not accidental. Sisi was aware of the seemingly emerging coalition agreement and the likelihood of an Israeli peace initiative, and it led him to the extraordinary step of publicly appealing for unity within Israel. (...)

At present, the only other real option is to restore a sense of possibility and preserve hope for a two-state outcome (...). For Israel, this means limiting its settlement activity (...) and signaling its willingness to negotiate a different final border if Palestinians come to the table. For the Palestinians, this means stopping the antinormalization campaign against contacts with Israelis, ending payments to families of people who are killed in the act of stabbing Israelis, and ending the practice of calling such people "martyrs." (...)

David Makovsky, Dennis Ross, TOI, 01.06.16

Fast 50 Jahre Besatzung

Summing up the glories of the Israeli occupation as we enter its 50th year

(...) The only damage the occupation caused to Israel itself was to delay for many years the disintegration of its symbols, in the argument over the occupation and over the symbols themselves: volunteerism, locally made goods, agriculture, melting pot of immigrants, army, kibbutz, socialism, the rule of law, the Hebrew language. All these and more not only failed to take root and develop but were gradually revealed to be shallow and empty. (...) The state is realizing the colonialist challenge with great force and the help of simple, atavistic symbols such as "the divine promise." Thus we can only give thanks, praise and extol the colonial project. Even when we thought colonialism was finished and the Arabs within us were forgotten, (...) we continued to blather on about Israelis' high levels of satisfaction and about any minute now everything will work out. This is what remains: hatred. And for that we thank everyone who was in favor of going into that war and who postponed the end. The end was over long ago. Now is the life after death, like vampires.

Yitzhak Laor, HAA, 06.06.16

Israel 2016: A house divided

(...) Abraham Lincoln (...) made a famous campaign speech: "A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure permanently, half slave and half free. It will become all one thing, or all the other. (...)" Our own Israeli house became divided, its government "half slave and half free," in that week of glorious victory in June 1967. (...) This was supposed to be a strictly "temporary" measure, pending unspecified negotiations at an unspecified future time. (...) These 49 years of Israeli military rule have seen the relentless

advance of the settler movement, spreading in ever greater numbers over the West Bank and taking up still more Palestinian land. Religious-Nationalist Messianism, which burst on the scene in those euphoric days of June 1967, is becoming ever more militant, ever more powerful and dominant. (...) The Israel of 2016 is getting increasingly out of tune with the international community. (...) A year from now, Israel's occupation of the Palestinians will be 50 years old. (...) A Jubilee was supposed to be a very special kind of year – a time when slaves and prisoners would be freed, debts would be forgiven, and alienated land returned to its owners. Inspired by this biblical verse, American Civil War soldiers sang "Hurrah! Hurrah! We bring the Jubilee!" when marching to set slaves free.(...)
Adam Keller, JPO, 01.06.16

Unruhe beim jordanischen Nachbarn

What is happening in Jordan?

(...) The media are puzzled and rather clueless about what exactly is happening in my country, Jordan. (...) As these lines are being written, unrest continues in the Wadi Mousa-Petra area, including gun battles between the king's police and the locals, arrests, the destruction of vehicles and other property, stone throwing, and rumors of casualties on both sides. In short, there is an intifada at one of Jordan's most significant tourist sites. (...) Jordan's debt-to-GDP ratio is above 90%. Greece's economy collapsed when it hit the same rate, and the Jordanian regime is not getting the help from Arab states that Greece got from the European Union. Nevertheless, the Jordanian royal family spends beyond belief and is not shy about showing off its opulent lifestyle to its starving subjects. (...) There are also no signs or news of aid money coming from the Gulf states. Our Arab brothers are wise; they won't give their money to an ailing regime. (...) Jordan's army is independent of the king, and so is Jordan's intelligence service. Both are tightly coordinated with the U.S. Central Command. (...) Jordan's king sees firsthand signs that his angry, hungry, and hopeless people could actually topple him, and with him having no control over the army now, the king could face a situation like that of Egypt's 2011 revolution, which was supported by the Egyptian army. Afraid and helpless, Jordan's regime has turned to the oldest trick in the book: beating the Israeli drum. The regime knows that if a new intifada breaks out in Israel, this could buy it more time in power; the world

would be too busy to let it go and Jordan's public would be distracted by anti-Israel hatred once again. (...) Change is coming to Jordan. (...) It is about time the few pro-Hashemite hopeless romantics wake up and smell the strong Jordanian coffee already brewing in Amman. (...)
Mudar Zahran, IHY, 02.06.16

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