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**1. Burkini-Verbot**

*Die Bilder französischer Polizisten, die eine muslimische Frau am Strand von Nizza dazu zwingen, einen Teil ihrer Kleidung abzulegen, waren Öl im Feuer der Debatte um das Verbot gegen den Burkini, den Ganzkörperbadeanzug. Kritiker verurteilten die Anordnung als überzogen und islamfeindlich. Der Versuch, dem Problem der islamistischen Terrorgefahr zu begegnen, in dem man den Frauen vorschreibt, was sie zu tragen haben, sei absurd. Die Stadtverwaltung von Nizza hatte in der Begründung direkt Bezug auf den Anschlag an der Strandpromenade genommen, bei dem Mitte Juli 86 Menschen getötet worden waren.*

**Israel's 'burkini' values**

(...) The contrast between Israel's beaches and France is an example of (...) coexistence, that Israel has developed between its secular and religious publics, Arabs and Jews, Muslims and Christians. There are no burka bans in Israel. (...) Israel is frequently criticized for its treatment of Arab and Muslim minorities. Yet it is in Israel that Muslims can build mosques and minarets as they please, in contrast to Switzerland (...). Western societies are attacking symbols. (...) Rather than focusing on that, these countries should focus on larger issues related to values, such as women's education and protecting women's rights. (...) In Israel, this affects not only Muslims, but also the large Orthodox Jewish population, parts of which adhere to very strict views

on modesty. (...) Israel has grappled for the last 68 years with issues that the West is facing today. For instance, there are numerous Sharia law courts in Israel. In the West, the word Sharia often conjures up images of the Taliban, but in Israel, it functions in relation to family law such as marriages, because Israel does not have civil marriage. (...) Banning burkinis, for instance, or full-face veils, doesn't make them go away. It merely secludes women from public life even more, accomplishing the direct opposite of those who advocate for social integration. (...) Editorial, JPO, 23.08.16

**The burkini ban is a gift to ISIS**

(...) what could be a better way (...) to send the message that European governments (...) are indeed the heartless and merciless enemies of Islam, and that devoted Muslims must fight back with all their might? (...) As the number of seaside towns and cities outlawing the full-body beachwear known as a "burkini" has climbed as high as 15, the press and social media has provided photographic evidence and testimony of women handed tickets and fines for wearing excessive clothing to swim and sunbathe by French police armed with handguns, clubs and pepper spray. The photographs depict the women stripping off the offending garments on the spot, in public view, as stony-faced police look on (...) On an utterly practical level, the burkini laws are a terrible idea because not only do they fail to fight terrorism in any way, they actively encourage it. (...)

It is wrongheaded enforcement of a wrongheaded law that essentially hands ammunition to the very forces the French government claims to be trying to fight. (...)

Allison Kaplan Sommer, HAA, 24.08.16

### **No freedom or liberty or fraternity in burkini ban, just racism**

(...) Those who hold people more important than "humanity" feel the burning physical desire that overcomes every dry liberal theory – the desire that every woman be free to dip in the sea or do anything else, without limitations, covers and supervisors. But watching the French enforcement of the ban on the full-body bathing suit burkini – sometimes, as Muslim women who use that opaque swimwear, to the crowd's rejoicing cries and racist comments – was simply nauseating and the nausea is even stronger than the urge described earlier. (...) The French law is repulsive not only for the way in which it is enforced. Its sin can be detected in the rationale it uses – public fear of traditional dress following the terror wave in the country. (...) the lawmakers and court that approved the law are not interested in what's good for women at all. They want to assuage the primordial, racist urges that the fear arouses. There's no freedom or liberty or fraternity here, but sloppily handled hysteria and the institutionalization of popular racism. (...)

Ravit Hecht, HAA; 25.08.16

### **Ban the burqa, allow the burkini**

(...) Some non-Muslim women, including British cooking celebrity Nigella Lawson, wear it for protection from the sun, while observant Jewish women have adopted a variant garment. (...) the burqa -- and the niqab, a similar article of clothing that leaves a slit for the eyes -- needs to be banned from public places on security grounds. Those formless garments not only permit criminals and jihadists to hide themselves, they also enable the wearer to hide, say, an assault rifle without anyone knowing. Men as well as women hide under burqas for criminal and jihadi purposes. (...) In contrast, the burkini poses no danger to public security. Unlike the burqa or niqab, it leaves the face uncovered, and it is relatively form-fitting, leaving no place to hide weapons. (...) Further, while there are legitimate arguments about the hygiene of large garments in pools (...), this is obviously not an issue on the coastal beaches of France. Accordingly, beach burkinis should be allowed without restriction. (...) If a woman wishes to dress modestly on the beach, that is her business,

and not the state's. It is also her prerogative to choose unflattering swimwear that waterlogs when she swims. (...) Burqas and niqabs must be banned (...). Freedom of speech about Islam and Muslims must be reconfirmed (...). Focus on these real problems and let Muslims wear what they wish to the beach.

Daniel Pipes, IHY, 26.08.16

### **A rabbi backs the burkini ban? Absurd**

I was appalled when I heard that one of the leading rabbis in France, the rabbi of the Great Synagogue of Paris, Moshe Sebbag, had come out in support of the sweeping prohibition on wearing a bathing suit that meets the Muslim dress code, known as a 'burkini'. (...) It seems that Jews in Europe as well as other decent people are forced to choose between standing up for the basic values of European civilization, such as freedom of religion, respect for women and respect for the other, and taking a forceful stand against terror. It is deeply saddening that they feel themselves caught in such a bitter dilemma. But it is a false dilemma. Curbing public expressions of religiosity will not reduce the danger of terror. (...) Failing to differentiate between taking legitimate security measures and exploiting the irrational fears that terror creates is a blow against the basic values of the French Revolution, which promised not only freedom from religion but also freedom for religion. The absurdity goes beyond all proportions when a prominent rabbi helps compel a Muslim woman to either undress or to find herself a private pool to swim in, when he knows very well that she doesn't have the economic means to do so. This is a case of secular dogmatism playing on the fear that religion elicits and using that fear to trample a woman's dignity. (...) Dogmatism of this kind destroys the possibility of building a shared, inclusive, multi-cultural and respectful Europe. (...) Christians, Jews and humanists should all stand firm with Muslims in this struggle.

Michael Melchior, TOI, 25.08.16

## **2. Türkischer Einmarsch in Syrien**

*Mit der Operation "Schutzschild Euphrat" reiht sich auf dem Schlachtfeld Syrien eine zusätzliche Partei zwischen die Fronten: die Türkei. Die Offensive der türkischen Panzerbataillone gilt nicht nur der Extremistenmiliz IS, sondern auch kurdischen Kämpfern. Die Türkei sieht sich durch das Ringen der Kurden um einen eigenen Staat bedroht. Die Regierung in Ankara betrachtet die Volksverteidigungseinheiten*

*YPG der syrischen Kurden als Terrororganisation. Für die USA hingegen sind die Kurdenmilizen wichtige Verbündete im Kampf gegen die mörderischen Islamisten.*

### **Erdogan recalculates his route**

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is restless. He had dreams of establishing an Islamic Caliphate (...) Turkey was supposed to hold the title of "Sublime Porte" -- the seat of power of the Ottoman Empire -- and its president would have been the "Shadow of God on Earth." This doctrine, based on the principle of "zero friction" with its neighbors, proved to be a failure and was set aside. (...) The U.S.'s absence in the region is being exploited by an increasingly powerful Iran and by Russia, with both countries working together to keep Syrian President Bashar Assad in power (...) and destroy any chance of realizing the ultimate Turkish claim to get rid of him and to put in his place a Syrian alternative "compatible with Erdogan." (...) The Turks supported Islamic State for a long time, as the organization fought the Kurds and attacked the pro-Shiite regimes in Iraq and Syria. But following the infiltration of terror operatives into Turkey, a series of terrorist attacks and the failed military coup against Erdogan's regime, Turkish support for Islamic State came to an end. (...) In the regional power equation, a clear line has been drawn between growing Iranian Shiism and a divided Sunnism, forcing Erdogan to rethink his path. (...) Turkey has made peace with the fact the Assad is not going anywhere. (...) The need for Russian cooperation and gas explains the reconciliation between Erdogan and Russian President Vladimir Putin; and it also led, despite support for Hamas, to the renewal of relations with Israel -- as a gas supplier, an economic actor and a broker to the Russians and the West.

Dr. Reuven Berko, IHY, 25.08.16

### **The Turks are back**

Almost a century after the Turks evacuated the Arab Middle East at the end of World War I, they are back. Not just with bombing or artillery fire, but a full-scale, old-fashioned invasion of Syria. (...) forcing the Kurds back over the Euphrates is a tacit acknowledgement that their presence east of the Euphrates is legitimate. As a result, the Turkish invasion may be seen in future as the definitive legitimization of a Syrian Kurdish autonomous region in north-eastern corner of the country. The likely result of the Turkish action will be to exacerbate the Balkanization of Syria, with Assad control-

ling the coast and parts of the west of the country, the Kurds controlling the north-east and a series of Sunni groups contesting the center. (...) Turkey's armed incursion into Syria does not directly affect Israel, which in any case, has just ratified an agreement with that country to normalize relations. (...) Jerusalem might be able to convince Ankara (...), to attack Hezbollah in Syria. (...) Its definitive defeat would greatly weaken the Assad regime and help to force the Russians and Iranians to make some sort of deal whereby the Alawite regime would survive but without Assad. And Israel's most dangerous current enemy would be greatly weakened. (...)

Dr. Norman Bailey, TOI, 28.08.16

### **The Turkish adventure in Syria**

Turkish President Recep Tayyip (...) Erdogan chose to open a new-old front against his enemies in Syria. (...) the Russians and Iranians also announced they were sending troops to Syria to fight ISIS, but actually they are fighting the moderate rebel groups posing a threat to the rule of Syrian President Bashar Assad while largely ignoring Islamic State. Islamic State is indeed a growing nuisance for the Turks, but in the Syrian arena, they see the Kurds as the real threat. For their part, the Kurds are slowly establishing (...) true autonomy in northern and eastern Syria (...). Erdogan, it appears, believes the best way to prevent the creation of a Kurdish state in Syria is by military intervention and perhaps ongoing occupation on Syrian soil. (...) it is the only way to get the Americans (...) to limit the scope of Kurdish activity inside Syria. Indeed, the Kurds, lacking a better alternative, are being made to swallow this bitter pill. They are dependent on the good graces of Washington, which needs the Turks. (...) the Turkish campaign is limited in scope. It comprises several hundred troops and a few dozen armored vehicles. (...) After all, they also want to avoid sinking in the Syrian quagmire. (...) The big winner is of course Assad, who is still securely in power and enjoying the fact that his adversaries are fighting among themselves. (...)

Prof. Eyal Zisser, IHY, 28.08.16

### **What if no one wants to win the Syrian war?**

(...)The Turkish intervention, supposedly directed at "fighting Islamic State," was also directed at interdicting any attempt by Kurdish forces (...). A deeper problem in Syria is that no one wants to win the war. The Turkish intervention stemmed from two parallel interests: to support the various Syrian groups allied with Turkey such as Faylaq al-Sham, and to reduce

the influence of the Kurds in Syria. (...) The Turkish role in Syria is not to win but merely to create a buffer zone. The Kurdish role in Syria is also not to win, but only to create some sort of united federal region, linking Kobane, Rojava and Afrin, the historic Kurdish areas. ISIS is also not bent on winning in Syria, and never was – its interests often were across the border in Iraq, in its global “caliphate” and mass rape and murder around the world. (...) Russia’s intervention in Syria in the fall of 2015 was not aimed at winning but propping up Assad. Iran and Hezbollah’s intervention in Syria, dating to the earlier years of the war, was not aimed at winning. The Americans don’t want to win in Syria, they want ISIS defeated. The Syrian rebel groups (...) want to control some tiny little area. (...) In some ways the Syrian civil war bares a gross resemblance to the Thirty Years War in Germany. It isn’t merely the sectarianism and numerous interventions by outside parties to support their proxies, but also the mass destruction and brutality. (...) the only option is to end the war. But there is apparently much blood to be spilled before that can happen, and the great and regional powers involved don’t care particularly if it continues. (...).

Seth J. Frantzman, JPO, 30.08.16

### 3. US-Wahlen und das Verhältnis Israel-USA

Das Näherücken der US-amerikanischen Präsidentschaftswahlen bringt die Analysten in Israel dazu, mit Blick auf die bilateralen Beziehungen ein Resümee der Amtszeit Barack Obamas zu ziehen. Und sie halten Ausschau auf die Zeit, die kommt. Im konservativen Lager schwinden die Sympathien für den Spitzenkandidaten der Republikaner Donald Trump, vor allem nach seinen geschmacklosen Bemerkungen gegenüber den Eltern eines gefallenen Soldaten pakistanischer Herkunft. Bei den links-liberalen Israelis sinkt die Hoffnung, dass der große Bruder jenseits des Atlantiks noch einmal einen glaubwürdigen Ansatz unternehmen wird, um die Zweistaatenlösung voranzutreiben.

#### Nothing is over

It has been a tough time for Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump since the Republican National Convention in Cleveland (...). However, in his speech in Ohio (...) Trump sought to put the issue of national security (...) back in the spotlight and at the center of the race. Trump knows the current administration failed in this regard. He isn't giving up. (...) Trump's main policy shift (...) came in the form

of a hardened stance on immigration. (...) Trump does not want hostile immigration. Liberals certainly won't like it. Many Americans, however, do. Trump was mostly speaking to his Republican base. To those millions of people who already voted for him (...) in the primaries, and to the many millions more he needs to even have a chance of winning in November. (...) In the craziest electoral race America has ever known, nothing is over yet. (...)

Boaz Bismuth, IHY, 16.08.16

#### Clinton could have clout over Israel

The expected election of Hillary Clinton as the next president of the United States will affect Israel in a great number of ways, but one of them is rather different and unexpected: Her election will certainly influence the question of religion and state here. (...) Members of the Jewish community in the United States have a great interest in what is going on in Israel in the realm of religion and state, mostly on issues such as conversion, marriage and divorce (...). Most American Jews identify themselves as Conservative or Reform (...). But in the eyes of the Israeli Orthodox establishment, they are beyond the pale. Many major Israeli rabbis consider the Reform movement to be “worse than the Christians.” (...) American Jews (...) find it very difficult to accept the power the Haredi establishment wields in Israel, as well as the fact that virtually every non-Haredi alternative is crushed. The Americans' closeness to Israel stems from the feeling that they have shared values, among other things, and religious pluralism is a central one for them. (...) Reform and Conservative Jews in the United States (...) have been investing in developing their own infrastructure in Israel and in activities aimed at achieving recognition of their rights here. (...) these groups have tried to promote issues such as civil marriage, rights for all Jews, changes in the existing system of religious services, and more. The second way that is open to American Jews who seek to put pressure on Israel is through the U.S. administration. Until now, use of this method has been very limited, if anything. But if Hillary Clinton is elected, this will change. (...) Clinton's daughter Chelsea is married to a Reform Jew and therefore her children are considered Jewish according to that movement's interpretation. But they are not recognized as Jews in Israel by the Orthodox rabbinical establishment. So, all of a sudden, the issue of recognizing Reform conversions will become a personal problem for the president of the United States. (...) Maybe, just maybe, Hillary

Clinton will be a solution to the issue of religion and state in Israel. (...)

Shuki Friedman, HAA, 17.08.16

### **The Americans simply don't care about Israel and the Palestinians**

(...) The real question (...) is why the U.S. refuses to link its enormous aid package to Israel to progress in the Palestinian arena. The only reasonable answer is that the occupation and the apartheid regime in the territories simply don't figure in the equation to the degree they should. Israel is an important ally, its military potential is at the service of the U.S. at all times. But the relationship is not reciprocal. Washington in effect vetoed an Israeli attack on Iran by refusing to supply the necessary means. The Netanyahu-Barak government gritted its teeth but was silent. (...) The United States has an interest in those areas by dint of being a power with global responsibility. The Palestinian issue is completely marginal, even meaningless, to it, as is Israel's long-term future. It's only natural that Barack Obama, a black social activist from Chicago, shies away from Israeli Zionism, which rejects the fundamental rights of another nation. But Obama is president today, not a social activist. As such, he is not prepared to use drastic means, such as lifting the American veto in the United Nations. (...) To the Americans, it's enough for the sea to be calm; but for us, as a free society, it's the road to perdition. (...)

Zeev Sternhell, HAA, 22.08.16

### **The messiah won't come to Israel from across the Atlantic**

(...) Anyone who is counting on American pressure to push Israel and the Palestinians into the pipeline that will lead to two states ought to wake up. When you're here, in Washington, you see (...) that the alliance with Israel has near-sacred status. (...) Israel is a taboo subject. (...) Many American Jews, actually, are much more critical of Israel than are top administration officials, much less the heads of Congress. But very few support putting pressure on Israel and even fewer are willing to call for such pressure. (...) There's no point in waiting for a political messiah in a white airplane. The messiah won't come. The only possible effective pressure is from within, from Israeli society. No one will do the work for us or instead of us. (...)

Nitzan Horowitz, HAA, 24.08.16

### **Netanyahu's mistake, or Barak's misunderstanding?**

One can (...) assume that the US government was ready to provide Israel with the US's most effective weapons; bunker buster missiles which could destroy Iranian nuclear production facilities. (...) The transfer of these weapons systems would present a significant leap in Israeli technological and operational capabilities and in security cooperation between the two nations. However, this didn't happen. It's not clear if this is what Ehud Barak was referring to two days ago when he blamed Netanyahu for exposing Israel to major threats and security challenges. Barak claimed that (...) Netanyahu is someone who is unable to correctly ascertain Israel's security interests, and as someone who hasn't internalized the potential for cooperation between Israel and the US. Since this means that there are secret channels between the two countries, channels which the Prime Minister's Office can deny exist, it's only right that Barak present his finding in a secret subcommittee, such as the Defense and Foreign Affairs Subcommittee. While Barak is indeed a civilian, the doors of the Pentagon are still open to him (...). However, even with all of this, and Barak's relations with Netanyahu, it is unlikely he actually knows what is going on between the White House and the Prime Minister's Office behind closed doors.

Alex Fishman, JED, 19.08.16

### **Obama's behavior is not Netanyahu's fault**

As someone who turned imperiling the Jewish state into an art form, Barak ought to know better. (...) It was he who exposed the truth (...) that the Palestinian terror master and Nobel Peace prize laureate was ever-bent on annihilating the Jews in his vicinity. (...) And let's not forget Barak's hightail-it-out-of-there retreat from southern Lebanon that left a vacuum for Iran to fill. (...) To stay relevant on the think tank and lecture circuit, they need something to say, and it isn't "I'm sorry." (...) Yes, according to Barak, Netanyahu is a fascist who uses fear-mongering about "existential threats" like a nuclear Iran in order to stay in power. (...) not one word of Barak's tirade was the truth (...). From the moment that U.S. President Barack Obama took office, he proceeded to implement the intertwined policies of (...) reaching out to radical Muslims and emulating Europe. In this context, he could only view Israel as a hindrance. (...) Israel by its very nature was antithetical to Obama's entire outlook (...). In other words, Israel appears to the administration in Washington to be like an extension of the Republican

Party. (...) It is the Democrats' shift away from such basics that has caused Israel no longer to be what Americans call a "bipartisan issue." Netanyahu has nothing to do with it. (...) Ruthie Blum, IHY, 19.08.16

#### 4. Medienquerschnitt

##### Palästinensische Städtewahlen

###### Deja vu and the coming PA elections

(...) The unpopularity of the Palestinian Authority and the ruling Fatah Party due to corruption, incompetence, and growing repression helps explain why West Bank voters might choose Hamas. (...) There is one difference from 2006 that is very much worth mentioning. The myth exists that the United States forced the Palestinians to hold those elections over the objections of the PA leadership. That's false (...). Today, at least that argument is over: No one is claiming that these elections of 2016 are being demanded by the United States and imposed by the Obama administration on a reluctant PA leadership. (...) allowing a terrorist group, Hamas, to contest the election without the slightest nod to stopping its terror or giving up its rule of Gaza (...) is wrong (...). Hamas may win power in a number of West Bank cities but Fatah will not be (...) this sense the dice are loaded, or to mix metaphors, Hamas can say heads I win in the West Bank and tails you lose in Gaza. (...) It is a mistake with global implications to allow terrorist groups to have it all: to run for office like peaceful parties, but continue their violent activities. That was the mistake we made in 2006, and it is being repeated. (...) Elliott Abrams, IHY, 30.08.16

###### Why did Abbas call municipal elections?

(...) Abbas keeps repeating that the Palestinian people need democracy, but democracy and the violent fundamentalist Islam espoused by Hamas (...) don't seem very compatible. We all know a Hamas victory in the West Bank would effectively end Palestinian hopes of statehood among international opinion makers. (...) It's either a deeply worrying move with no sense behind it at all, or Abbas is a strategic genius who knows something that his own people in Fatah – who stand to lose key positions – and the rest of the world don't know. (...) In the meantime, Hamas are Bonaparte- esque in their quiet. Not wanting to interrupt their political rival before they can announce, "checkmate." You will

have to excuse me now, I'm off to get some scalp treatment.

Alex Benjamin, JPO, 30.08.16

##### Liebermans Zuckerbrot und Peitsche

###### Lieberman's recycled plan

Defense Minister Avigdor Lieberman announced (...) that he would handpick Palestinian leaders and deal with them directly rather than with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas. But this is just another attempt at recycling a failed policy. (...) When Israel engaged in a similar effort in the Gaza Strip, hoping to undermine the Palestine Liberation Organization there, the outcome was much worse. (...) Israel was very happy with these so-called social workers, until they formed Hamas. (...) Lieberman's plan has no chance of success, and it may hurt Israel. (...) Lieberman has taken the liberty to promote a policy that was never deliberated by the ministers. He has announced that he would use the means at his disposal in Judea and Samaria (...), he might hire a private lawyer and argue against the government at the High Court of Justice. This is yet another chapter in Lieberman's bull-in-a-china-shop mentality. He is flying solo, using the state's agencies (...). Netanyahu (...) must do something to stop and tame the wild minister. Dan Margalit, IHY, 18.08.16

###### Carrots and sticks for Gaza

(...) Israel's interests in Gaza are only security-related, and they can be divided into two parts: First, we want there to be no Gazan fire towards Israel. Second, we want the military strength of Gazan forces to be weakened. Israel doesn't have any territorial, economic, or political interests in Gaza. (...) The conflict of interests between Israel and Hamas is (...) not as absolute as one might imagine (...) a mutually satisfactory reality could be created. Such a reality can be brought about by using two means: On one hand, severely responding to any fire against us, thus preserving deterrence; and on the other hand, helping Hamas, or at least not hinder its efforts to, achieve some of its important goals. Israel tends to err on that second point. (...) For the last ten years Gaza has been a de facto independent state. It has clearly defined borders, a government, a foreign policy, and its own military. These are signs of statehood. True, it's an enemy state ruled by bad people, but not only is this a reality with which we must live, it is in fact the least bad reality available to us. Facing this enemy, we can

create a modus vivendi that would allow us to preserve our interests—prolonged quiet being chief among them—and give the other side good reasons to keep calm as well. (...) If Israel does not encourage international aid to Gaza, with Hamas' government being in the loop, we may experience another armed conflict. This one, like the last, will not come about due to a lack of deterrence—but due to the lack of its necessary companion: positive incentives. Giora Eiland, JED, 23.08.16

## **Nasrallahs Drohung**

### **Better to be leopards than goats**

(...) Hezbollah Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah threatened us with an array of rockets that could cover all of Israel. What can we do to appease him? Nothing. Nothing but our deaths will please him and his ilk. (...) In our region of the world - which is still quite wild and tribal - honor and revenge are not just words describing abstract emotions. (...) one gang travels on to kill the other. In this reality, even if the leopard will eventually lie down with the goat, it's better that we be the leopard just in case. Politeness, an eagerness for peace and acceptance, are seen here as weakness. In this neighborhood, those who want peace should prepare for war. (...) We have no way of buying peace from Hamas, Hezbollah, and other terrorist groups – neither with territory nor any other kind of generous concession. They want our heads, and these are not for sale. (...) But that doesn't mean we can't achieve a kind of quiet. (...) We'll be strong, successful, and good, and we'll respond forcefully to every blow. Not proportionally, but with such force that they'll think we've gone off the rails. (...)

Gilad Sharon, JED, 16.08.16

## **Erdbebengefahr auch für Israel**

### **Before the quake**

Italy's disastrous earthquake should serve as a timely reminder to Israelis that our country has been living on borrowed time in expectation of the area's next big one, which experts say can happen at any time. (...) To most Israelis, the government's answer to the imminent threat of another, long overdue quake is the so-called Tama 38, a Hebrew acronym for National Outline Plan 38 for the seismic strengthening of existing buildings. (...) Residents want to join the project because it promises to add a room to their apartments and in many cases an elevator for the building. But what sounds like a

win:win transaction is not. (...) Among the shortcomings of the plan was its failure to limit the number of apartments that could be added to an old building, which became a source of friction among neighbors being courted by an eager contractor. (...) High real estate prices thus make earthquake protection available to upper middle class neighborhoods in cities whose weaker sections are not economically feasible – profitable – for contractors. (...) With the grim views of Italy's disaster still in our thoughts, it is urgent for the government to devise and implement a better plan, one that will benefit all our citizens, whether in the Center or the periphery.

Editorial, JPO, 27.08.16

## **Mehr Geld für die Diaspora**

### **Can Israel teach American Jews about Jewish identity?**

Diaspora Affairs (...) Minister Naftali Bennett is about to spend (...) NIS 250 million (...) to (...) students in America. (...) These programs will be run by three organizations, Chabad, Olami and Hillel. The first two are Orthodox groups. I must admit that this entire project is both baffling and disturbing to me. (...) What (...) has Israel to teach American Jewry (...)? Israel is the only country in the free world where non-Orthodox groups are denied recognition, where only the officially appointed rabbinate has control of marriage and divorce. (...) Israel is not the Vatican of the Jewish People. (...) since the vast majority of American Jews are not Orthodox, why is it that two-thirds of the money is going to Orthodox groups and none whatsoever to the Conservative or Reform groups that represent the majority of organized religious Jewry? (...) I wonder if the minister is aware that the usual practice of Chabad rabbis and congregations is not to say a prayer for the State of Israel or the IDF, not to sing "Hatikva," not to use the term State of Israel, and not to celebrate Independence Day. (...) when Chabad sends children from Russia and elsewhere for a pilgrimage before their bar mitzva, they send them not to Jerusalem but to Brooklyn. That should make them perfect for the job of improving the connection to Israel.

(...) does American Jewry really need the money from Israeli taxes for this purpose? After all, it is the richest Jewish community in the history of the world, and is perfectly able to support any Jewish identity programs it feels necessary. (...)

Reuven Hammer, JPO, 18.08.16

### **As an Israeli, I don't want a dime of my taxes going to Jews in Diaspora**

(...) as an Israeli citizen, I don't want a single shekel of my tax money going to Jews in the Diaspora. Not the Diaspora in general and certainly not the Diaspora in rich America. It isn't that I'm mad at the Jews of America. (...) But I don't feel any sense of responsibility for them (...). If you believe in Zionism, you don't live in America. You live in Israel (...). By the same token, the State of Israel needs to let go of its ownership of Judaism. Nobody handed it over. Israel was founded and exists as the national home of the Jewish people, not as an global, umbrella authority over Jews and Judaism. The knot is a complicated, almost Gordian one, but we have to start untying it. No other national homeland maintains bodies like the Jewish Agency, the Zionist Histadrut or a ministry for Diaspora Affairs. (...) The Jews of North and South America have no rights here, certainly not a "birthright". The right to this place belongs to the people who live here, Jewish or Arab. (...)

Uri Misgav, HAA, 19.08.16

### **Arbeiterrechte**

#### **A step back for Palestinian workers' rights – and for Israeli democracy**

(...) The Jewish Labor Committee opposes this new regulation (...) by Justice Minister Ayelet Shaked (...) to prevent Palestinian employees of Israeli businesses from benefiting from Israel's progressive labor laws. (...) Under the new requirement, non-citizens will be obligated to make a monetary deposit before submitting a lawsuit against an employer in Israeli labor court, unless they can immediately present evidence proving their claim. (...) In 2007, Israel's Supreme Court ruled in the interest of 30,000 West Bank Palestinians who work for Israeli businesses in the West Bank. Most Palestinians employed by Israelis in settlements became entitled to the protection of Israeli labor law. But this protection is threatened by the new regulation being promulgated by Minister Shaked. (...) Palestinian workers in the Jordan Valley (...) are denied such basic rights as a pay slip, minimum wage, vacation time and sick days. Also, since there are no written labor contracts, farmers can fire employees at will. Workers who realized that these conditions violate Israeli labor laws have hired lawyers and sued for their rights in Israeli labor courts. (...) We strongly oppose this special new regulation. (...) It will only embitter (...) Palestinian workers, and (...) reinforce a social

and political regime in the West Bank that enforces one set of laws for Israelis and another, inferior, set of regulations for Palestinians living in the West Bank. (...)

Stuart Appelbaum, HAA, 23.08.16

HAA = Haaretz

JED = JediothAhronoth / Ynetnews

JPO = Jerusalem Post

IHY = Israel HaYom

TOI = Times of Israel

GLO = Globes

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*Dr. Werner Puschra,*

*Leiter der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Israel*

Redaktion:

*Susanne Knaul*

*Judith Stelmach*

*Homepage: [www.fes.org.il](http://www.fes.org.il)*

*Email: [fes@fes.org.il](mailto:fes@fes.org.il)*