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1. Alternative für Deutschland und Israel

Israels Spitzenpolitiker ließen sich Zeit mit ihrer Reaktion auf das Ergebnis der Bundestagswahl. Regierungschef Benjamin Netanyahu twitterte lediglich einen Glückwunsch an Kanzlerin Angela Merkel, „eine wahre Freundin Israels“. Es sei gut, so schrieb er weiter, „wenn jemand zum vierten Mal gewinnt“. Das sei „ein Zeichen für das fünfte Mal“. Beide Politiker haben länger als zehn Jahre ihr Land regiert. Zum Erfolg der AfD hüllten sich Israels Politiker in Schweigen. In den Medien hingegen wurde der Einzug der Rechtsradikalen ins deutsche Parlament lebhaft und kontrovers diskutiert. Noch am Wahlabend schlug David Witzthum, Anchorman des Nachrichtenmagazins, das der öffentliche erste Fernsehkanal kurz vor Mitternacht ausstrahlt, einen Bogen zur Reichstagswahl 1930, als die NSDAP gut 18 Prozent erreichte. Besonderes Augenmerk fiel bei der Berichterstattung über die AfD auf den Spitzenpolitiker Alexander Gauland und seine Distanzierung von der Position der Kanzlerin, Israels Existenzrecht sei Teil der deutschen Staatsräson. Ausgerechnet die frühere AfD-Vorsitzende Frauke Petry warf Merkel Inkonsequenz vor, weil sie „auf deutscher Ebene etwas verkündet, was sie auf europäischer Ebene aber nicht durchhält, wenn sie sich an den Sanktionen gegen Judäa und Samaria beteiligt“. Rückendeckung von rechtsradikalen europäischen Parteien ist für die Siedler nicht neu. Österreichs FPÖ-Chef Heinz-Christian Strache tourte vor einigen Monaten zu den Israelis im Westjordanland, denen er beteuerte: „Unser Herz ist mit

Euch“. Und auch der flämische Abgeordnete Filip Dewinter stellte bei einer Besuchstour durch verschiedene Siedlungen vor einigen Jahren beeindruckt fest, dass "diese Berge Tel Aviv schützen". Nicht nur "aufgrund der Geschichte, sondern aus geopolitischen Sicherheitsgründen" müsse Israel an den Siedlungen festhalten.

The 'other' Germany

(...) AfD is a nationalist-conservative protest party that managed to harness the growing rage in various sectors of the German population at mass immigration; at the terrorism, (...) at the loss of the sense of personal safety, and at Germans' unwillingness to continue funding the rehabilitation of failing European economies. The ranks of AfD come from a mix of political streams: neo-liberals, conservatives, bourgeois. Some of its members are indeed on the radical right, but certainly not all. (...) AfD's primary success was bringing to the polls millions of voters who, having no faith in the political establishment, had not participated in elections until now. Many of these can be classified as far rightists. They represent the "other Germany," the Germany that went underground after the Nazis were defeated, nurturing a sense of victimhood. Many of these people (...) look at German Chancellor Angela Merkel as an agent of international Jewry, who "ushered Muslims into Germany on the orders of the Zionist government." The patriotic, anti-establishment platform espoused by this "alternative" party gave them the sense that, for the first time, a party was fearlessly expressing nationalist German

sentiments. (...) the radical left-wing party that has sat for years in the Bundestag is the heir to the East German Communist party, which was anti-Semitic, anti-Zionist and anti-Israel. (...) Despite this, Israel officially opened channels of communication and discourse with the pro-Israel elements in this party. So are we to understand that when anti-Semitism is displayed by the radical left, it is deemed acceptable, but when it is displayed by the radical right, it poses an obstacle to maintaining open channels of communication with the pro-Israel elements within it?

Eldad Beck, IHY, 25.09.17

Why Israel won't condemn the shocking success of Germany's far-right extremists

(...) the outcome of last Sunday's elections meant more than just adding another new political faction to the Bundestag. That a radical right-wing party, Alternative fuer Deutschland (AfD), entered the Bundestag is an alarm signal, an unprecedented challenge to post-Nazi Germany. (...) Germany has now joined many other democratic nations in allowing anti-democratic movements to send representatives into their national legislative assemblies. The rise of right-wing populist parties and the new authoritarian tendencies in current politics threaten the democratic system all over the globe and should have been considered a major challenge also for the Jewish state. (...) Now, when the AfD has entered the Bundestag, it is high time to ask whether Israel is acting up to expectations. Unfortunately, the answer so far is no. The experience of the last few months proves the absence of a clear-cut Israeli condemnation of populist parties and tendencies (...) anti-Semitism is attributed primarily to those who do not support the Israeli government's policy. The old misfortune of being blind on the right side is repeated by Israel and its mouthpieces (...) It is time to wake up. (...) A blind eye to racism and intolerance in Germany, in Europe, for the sake of getting support for the present Israeli policies in the occupied territories is a disgrace. (...) Official Israel must to join the anti-AfD majority in Germany in its fight against the enemies of an open society.

Moshe Zimmermann und Shimon Stein, HAA, 25.09.17

Not the Return of Nazi Germany, but a Cause for Concern

It is easy to fall into the trap of comparisons, but the Germany of 2017 is not the post-World War I Germany. (...) Yet the loss of almost a quarter of the support for the two main streams of German politics, the Christian-Democrats and the Socialists, is troubling.

(...) The specter of some 80 rowdy, vulgar, xenophobic, racist, revisionists and ultra-nationalistic members of the Alternative for Germany party in the Bundestag, attacking every move of the government in domestic or external affairs, is frightening. (...) With an erratic, unpredictable US President and a weakened German Chancellor, who is to lead the "Free World" and who is to maintain some stability in a fragile international environment? (...) The Jewish People have every reason for concern. The passage of time, the frail human memory gradually diminish the impact of the Holocaust on arresting racist, xenophobic and antisemitic ideas and movements in Europe and elsewhere. (...) there is no reason to look for mitigating explanation that this is just a temporary protest against illegal immigrants and as soon as the immigrants are settled the AfD will evaporate. Israel and the major Jewish organizations in the Diaspora will have to agree on a comprehensive strategy to deal with and react to the very existence of a sizable party like the AfD in the German parliament and its legislative and other political initiatives in Germany and elsewhere. (...) Whatever the strategy adopted by the Israeli government and the Jewish organization is, it is important to coordinate that policy with the German government and the EU institutions. We need to combat the consequences of the German elections together.

Oded Eran, JPO, 26.09.17

Despite justified fears of the AfD, not all nationalism is Nazism

(...) For Jews, any whiff of a rightist rise is terrifying. When it happens in Germany of all places, the trepidation and foreboding are infinitely magnified. (...) Are we witnessing a repeat of the 1930s? The simple answer is no. The AfD and the Nazi party and the reasons behind their successes are not even remotely similar. (...) The problem is that Nazis are very real and very hateful. Their lust for violence goes far beyond the realm of baseless xenophobia. They wish to see nothing more than millions of Jews forced into gas chambers once again. To stigmatize any form of nationalism, however rational, however non-violent, as Nazism is a gross falsification of the truth; it is to trivialize just what the Nazis perpetrated against Jews and what real Nazis are prepared to commit once again. (...) the AfD (...) has absolutely nothing to do with Jews (...). Ultimately, those people in Germany (...), who voted for this rightist party did so because it was the only one telling them that their desire to salvage the last vestiges of the national heritage which they cherish is not inherently filthy, even if their history

is indelibly stained by their Nazi past. The AfD has told them that they do not need to sleepwalk into a future where Islam (...) dominates (...) a significant portion of their everyday lives (...) the most prudent way to stave off the rise of any hard-right party is to allow the people who are too often unjustly pigeon-holed as racists or Nazis to have a say without fear of abuse or recrimination. If this does not happen, the prospects of success of alternative parties to which they could well turn in future ballots are far more worrisome.

Alexander J. Apfel, YED, 26.09.17

2. Wehrdienst für alle

Die Entscheidung des Obersten Gerichtshofs, Ultra-orthodoxe nicht länger von der Militärpflicht zu befreien, führte zu heftigen Protesten. Nicht immer sanft ging die Polizei mit religiösen Demonstranten um. Acht von neun Richtern hatten entschieden, dass die bisherige Schonzeit für ultraorthodoxe Männer innerhalb eines Jahres vorbei sein soll. Damit entschied das Gericht gegen eine frühere Regelung, die eine „Anpassungsperiode“ bis zum Jahr 2020 vorsah und zusätzlich drei Jahre, in denen es Rekrutierungsquoten geben sollte mit der Möglichkeit des Verteidigungsministeriums, Jeschiwa-Studenten vom Pflichtdienst zu befreien. Die Richter des Obersten Gerichtshofs betrachteten diese Regelung als diskriminierend gegenüber den nicht-orthodoxen Abiturienten.

Who needs compulsory military service?

(...) Is it possible to sustain the Israel Defense Forces as a professional army of hired workers, which carefully selects its fighters, pays them a decent and appropriate salary based on their jobs, and isn't seen as a system that forces itself for several years on young people who have just begun their adult life? (...) The Defense Ministry has the largest budget of all government ministries. (...) A smart army is better than the people's army. It will allow us taxpayers to save on a huge security budget and divert the money to equally important goals, like improving education and offering food security to the Israeli society's needy. (...) If the IDF uses a strict screening system to select soldiers for combat roles, not only will it find itself with the finest people in real time, but it will also convey a clear message that not everyone is capable and worthy of holding a weapon, thereby turning the position of fighter into a desirable target. (...) it's time we realized the military system doesn't suit everyone (...). Israel no longer needs a melting pot in the form of "a people

builds an army that builds a people." It's time to grow up and realize that a smart, rewarding and uncomplex defense establishment will be able to function even without soldiers who have been forced to serve against their will, regardless of whether they are Haredi or secular.

Rotem Knaani, YED, 16.09.17

Haredi draft law needed to restore the glory of Torah

(...) "Torah is his trade" is a category limited to a select few in each generation. It doesn't apply to (...) most of the people in generations filled with the greatest of Torah scholars. The 400 ultra-Orthodox men whom Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion agreed to exempt from army service fell into this category. These 400 young Torah scholars – constituting 0.07% of the population in Israel at that time – matched the historic tradition of a select few in each generation who studied Torah day and night as their only pursuit. (...) That small number and percentage of the population exempt from serving has now reached over 60,000, creeping toward 20 percent of all draft-eligible males. (...) these numbers are disgraceful: they disgrace the Torah. (...) when every single Haredi who wants to study in yeshiva claims "Torah is my trade" it reduces the meaning of that phrase, and dishonors the glory of Torah. (...) And those young men who truly fall under this category — who deserve their exemption from military service and are worthy of the admiration and praise of the entire nation — become instead the subject of the nation's derision amid the controversy surrounding their not serving in the IDF. The time has come to make a clear distinction between the elite scholars who do nothing other than study Torah, and those yeshiva students who study Torah but have other interests, and do not spend all their time studying Torah (...) the overwhelming majority of students in the Haredi yeshiva system (...) should (...) serve the country, either in the IDF or National Service. (...) Dov Lipman, TOI, 17.09.17

Think about it: The Gordian Knot of Haredi Military Enlistment

(...) the current law is constitutionally unacceptable (...) because it is in breach of the principle of equality, since it enables the haredim to shirk military service, which is mandatory in Israel (...) the haredim have recognized the secular/national-religious state de facto but not de jure. (...) What most of the haredim refuse to accept is that mandatory military service applies to them as well, claiming that by being engaged in religious studies in the yeshivot, and through

prayer, their young men fulfill an equally important role in Israel's security as do the IDF's soldiers. The problem with this argument is that while the haredim do not deny that Israel requires a military force to survive, the seculars don't believe that religious studies and prayer contribute anything to Israel's security. (...) there is no doubt that the haredi leaders are afraid that if they allow their men to serve, even in special units that cater for their religious requirements and respect their religious beliefs, they will lose control over their flock, and might even lose souls. (...)

What does the recent court ruling contribute to unraveling this Gordian knot? Nothing. (...) This leaves only one possible realistic solution, which is to cancel mandatory military service in Israel, and establish a professional army, based on patriotic motivation on the one hand, and material benefits – including decent salaries, assistance with the acquisition of housing and higher education – on the other. Such a system could not possibly be considered discriminatory, but would come with a price tag which the state probably cannot afford. It is, however, the only way to cut the Gordian knot.

Susan Hattif Rolef, JPO. 17.09.17

The myth of ultra-Orthodox Jews as the last survivors of 'original' Judaism

(...) The myth that somehow a century or so ago, all Jewish men were God-fearing Orthodox Jews spending their days and nights in the study-halls of yeshivas has no basis whatsoever in history. (...) most Jews during any period of history weren't particularly devout or pious. Most were simply too busy trying to survive, making a living in agriculture or trade. (...) There has never been in Jewish history a period where the male populations of entire Jewish communities devoted their lives to Torah. They would have starved to death. (...) Limmud Torah, the study of Jewish religious texts, is a commandment which had no clear definition and can be fulfilled by reciting a few words once a day. Anything beyond that was aspirational. (...) there is nothing similar between the way Israeli politics and economy have allowed so many yeshiva students to study their Talmud for years and some mythical Jewish past. And there is nothing in Jewish law which would exempt them from compulsory military service – actually, there are religious commandments declaring the exact opposite. (...) The government, the Knesset and the Supreme Court will never be able to force the rabbis to agree to allow their students to enlist in the army, because it would mean admitting that not all of them have to study Torah all the time. It would mean confirming that there are

other ways of being Jewish, and that the mass exemption and subsidizing of hundreds of thousands of students is not the natural state of the Jews but an unprecedented and unsustainable situation. But there is no need for them to agree either. (...) More and more young Haredim are beginning to figure out for themselves that the real way of following in their forefathers' footsteps is to do what humans have always done: To evolve.

Anshel Pfeffer, HAA, 18.09.17

Stop Police Brutality

(...) Police brutality on display in the streets of Jerusalem Sunday is not an isolated incident. (...) It is no coincidence that minority groups identified by their external appearance suffer from discrimination. Some of these groups also adhere to extreme ideologies, which, from the point of view of mainstream segments of society, place them outside the pale. (...) Still, police have an obligation to maintain professionalism even under the most difficult circumstances. That is their job. (...) Stopping police violence against Ethiopians, Arabs, the handicapped, left-wing and right-wing activists and haredim necessitates recognizing there is a problem. The groups that suffer from police brutality are diverse, which makes it difficult, if not impossible, for them to work together. Haredim are hardly going to join forces with Ethiopian Israelis; left-wing opponents of Jew living in the capital's Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood will probably not cooperate with hilltop youth. These are the weakest groups in society and their inability to act together further undermines their position. We as a society need to encourage mutual respect and compassion. We are split by sharp disagreements but we are all human. But punishing police who overreact is not the solution. This only generates more suspicion and animosity and encourages police to stick together and cover up misdoings. We should encourage dialogue and prevent dehumanization of the "other." The health of societies are tested by how they treat their weakest members.

Editorial, JPO, 18.09.17

A time for unity

If police officers in Europe were to break up a Jewish protest the same way in which police broke up an ultra-Orthodox protest in Jerusalem on Sunday, the Israeli media would have accused them of anti-Semitism. (...) Israel is a small country, with societal divides so deep it sometimes seems as if everyone has it out for everyone else. We have paid a high price for this lack of solidarity throughout Jewish history. The

realization in recent generations of the vision of a return to Zion has been accompanied by divisive motifs that could have potentially unraveled social cohesion. (...) Police officers must show restraint, even when the mission they are tasked with is complex. Igniting a fire is easy; the difficult part is putting it out. (...) It is very difficult to accept the burning of dumpsters and the blocking of intersections, and yet, these actions still do not justify the use of violence. How insensitive must you be to send female police officers to disperse a haredi protest? Israeli society in its entirety must do some soul-searching. (...) The police officers that resorted to violence Sunday will, without a shadow of a doubt, be punished to the full extent of the law. (...) Dr. Haim Shine, IHY, 18.09.17

Anything but funerals in Bnei Brak

(...) They don't want funerals in Bnei Brak. They don't want an ultra-Orthodox mother to weep for her son. (...) Their sons must not be wounded or killed (...). They don't see army service and the nation-state as values worth fighting for, and if the Zionists want to fight, let them fight alone. (...) The High Court views the ultra-Orthodox in a completely different light. It sees them as citizens with equal rights and equal obligations. (...) the government must change its approach and stop legislating deceptive laws. It must apply the compulsory draft law to the ultra-Orthodox as well. There's broad agreement across society on this point. The ultra-Orthodox should be drafted into the army at age 18, like everyone else, with no breaks, no quotas and no tricks. It's simply crazy that ultra-Orthodox Knesset members happily vote in favor of military operations in Gaza when they know their sons will never be on the firing line. (...) Clearly, the ultra-Orthodox are entitled to study as much Torah as they please, but only if they fulfill their civic obligations. That way, they will finally leave the ghetto and enter the heart of Israeli society. Nehemia Shtrasler, HAA, 19.09.17

Israeli army's 'purity of arms' doesn't only apply to secular soldiers

(...) Every soldier and officer has his own moral conscience. Each has the potential to behave immorally or cruelly. Such behavior is not registered anywhere in the names of the religious or the Haredim. Accordingly, ultra-Orthodox and religious soldiers don't owe anyone any proof that they can balance between the ethics of combat and their loyalty to religious principles. (...) Faulty morals are not the result of secular or religious ideologies; they are the product of immoral individuals. (...) Such behavior has been seen

throughout history in religious and secular leaders alike, as it is today. (...) the only way to prove or disprove an argument is by testing it. Religious soldiers have served in the IDF since it was founded, including in senior command positions. (...) there is no evidence of any kind that they are less moral than secular soldiers. (...) The IDF is (...) strong enough to include healthy multiculturalism in its ranks. Religious and Haredi soldiers have been and will be an inseparable part of the Israeli army, just like secular soldiers. And as in civilian life, the IDF will need all of us to continue seeking to strike the right balances and find the greatest possible common ground without forcing anyone in civil society or the army to compromise on their basic values – a complex but critical mission. (...)

Daniel Goldman, HAA, 20.09.17

3. Terror in Har Adar

Seelische Probleme waren eins der Motive für das Schussattentat mit vier Toten in der israelischen Siedlung Har Adar. Der Palästinenser Nimr Jamal reihte sich am frühen Morgen wie schon oft zuvor unter seine Kollegen am Kontrollpunkt der Siedlung, als er plötzlich das Feuer auf die dort postierten Sicherheitsleute eröffnete. Er erschoss drei Wachposten, bevor er selbst mit Schüssen, an denen er später starb, handlungsunfähig gemacht wurde. Der 37-jährige Attentäter war Vater von vier Kindern und wohnte in dem benachbarten Dorf Beit Surik, nordwestlich von Jerusalem. Er soll seelisch labil und seiner Ehefrau gegenüber gewalttätig gewesen sein. Erst vor wenigen Wochen war die Frau nach Jordanien geflohen. In einem Abschiedsgruß beteuerte Jamal, dass seine Frau nichts mit dem, was passieren würde, zu tun habe. Sie sei eine gute Ehefrau und liebevolle Mutter gewesen. Brigadegeneral Nitzan Nuriel, ehemals zuständig für Counter Terrorismus im Büro des Premierministers, erklärte in einer telefonischen Schaltkonferenz, es sei für Israel besser, „dass die Palästinenser Arbeit haben und ihre Familien ernähren können“. Nichtsdestotrotz sei erhöhte Aufmerksamkeit der Sicherheitskräfte ratsam, denn die Zeit der Feiertage gelte als Hochsaison für Terroristen. Israels Regierungschef Benjamin Netanyahu kündigte an, das Familienhaus des Attentäters abreißen zu lassen und Mitgliedern seiner Großfamilie die Arbeitserlaubnis zu entziehen. In Har Adar sind zwischen 100 und 150 Palästinenser überwiegend als Bauarbeiter beschäftigt. Auch Jamal war im Besitz einer gültigen Arbeitsgenehmigung.

A terror attack born of personal crisis

The statement issued by Israel's Shin Bet security services hours after the Har Adar terrorist attack made a mockery of the accusations issued by several Israeli politicians who charged the Palestinian Authority and its head Mahmoud Abbas with responsibility for murder. The Shin Bet stated that the terrorist (...) had "significant" personal and family problems "including a problem of violence in the family. (...)" This is not the first case, and sadly won't be the last, in which grave personal circumstances led Palestinians to carry out attacks. (...) They also may act, in part, in an effort to achieve some measure of enduring fame, carrying out an attack that would cause society, and the members of the family with whom they are at odds, to cherish and admire them. This may sound like cheap psychology, but such is reality. (...) Ultimately, the terrorist's motivation — be it personal, nationalist or religious — is less relevant. And yet, politicians from all sides are seeking to profit from it. Some Israeli ministers are pointing to a religious motivation to the attack in order to link it to attacks in Europe, while Hamas has adopted a similar point of view in order to assert that the "lone wolf intifada" is alive and kicking. (...) The policy of conflict management has proved itself more than once in recent years and has produced a kind of status quo. But within this status quo, the reality of relentless intermittent attacks is not about to disappear. (...)

Avi Issacharoff, TOI, 26.09.17

Har Adar attack: A painful but local incident

(...) this terror attack must be put in the right context, as it doesn't necessarily correspond with the substantial changes taking place in the Palestinian arena. (...) The perpetrator of the attack (...) doesn't match the definitions of the "classic" terrorist or of a lone-wolf terrorist inspired by terror organizations. The (...) expanded policy of granting work permits even at times of escalated violence, has proven itself in the current wave of terrorism, and only few people with work permits carried out attacks. The policy of distinguishing between terrorists and the civil population has also been deemed successful and helped reduce the number of terror attacks. Out of more than 450 attempted terror attacks, only two were carried out by Palestinians with work permits—one who had a regular permit and the other who had a temporary one. (...) the Shin Bet and the Military Intelligence Directorate are actually incapable of identifying a potential terrorist like Jamal (...). This terrorist didn't leave any social media posts indicating he was planning to carry out an attack (...). On the other hand, we should be

concerned about the operational conduct on the ground: The terrorist was able to fire 13 bullets, hitting four people and killing three of them. That's a very bad outcome considering the fact it wasn't citizens he was facing, but the security forces. (...)

Yossi Yehoshua, YED, 27.09.17

Unusual attack, limited solutions

(...) Nimr Mahmoud Ahmad Jamal (...) was no different from the hundreds before him. Faced with difficult issues at home (...) he decided to kill himself. But instead of ending his life as an anonymous nobody, he opted for the path that would induct him into the Palestinian pantheon, and would probably also guarantee survivors' benefits for his widow and children. There is no doubt that the Palestinian Authority had nothing to do with the attack or the terrorist, and it is also likely that its leaders mostly disapprove of the act as they understand its ramifications. But the support the Palestinian Authority gives terrorism via incitement, offering no condemnation, and financing the families of security prisoners and terrorists who were killed, all but pushes many Palestinian to embark on the path of terrorism, knowing that this is how they guarantee status and dignity for themselves. (...) Only a combination of strong defenses by the IDF in Judea and Samaria and the Israel Police in Jerusalem, heightened security measures, close cooperation with the Palestinian security forces (...) and a technological effort succeeded in providing a response that has significantly reduced the number of terrorist attacks. Particularly noticeable was the authorities' work on social networks, which enabled them to identify radicalized youths and see clues that they were planning attacks, allowing the defense establishment to stop them before they had a chance to follow through on their nefarious plans.

In this respect, Jamal was different. Neither young nor particularly active on social media, he did not meet the profile of the average terrorist. (...)

Yoav Limor, IHY, 27.09.17

Target terrorism and cultivate good relations

(...) Jamal apparently decided that the solution to his problems was to commit a terrorist attack against those guarding a border crossing at the security fence, behind which live his employers and hosts in the community of Har Adar. How cynical. Relations between Jews and Arabs in the area, specifically Har Adar, are certainly a fantastic model that should not stop. The existing neighborly and work relations are a tapestry that must continue to be woven. (...) The heinous terrorist attack is a painful reminder of the

security reality we live in. It is a reminder that terrorist organizations, first and foremost Hamas, continue to devote efforts to plan attacks in Judea and Samaria. They attempt to shake our relative stability in Judea and Samaria from within the region itself. (...) Any attack manages to ignite the atmosphere, which is in any case on fire, and brings out other lone attackers looking for a moment of glory who are willing to sacrifice themselves. It is the period of High Holidays, during which the terrorists prefer even larger acts of terrorism. As has been said in the past, this quiet is false and misleading. It is a result of the hard work by the Israel Police, Israel Defense Forces and Shin Bet agents. (...) We must find a way to enable normalization, as much as is possible, in employing Palestinians. (...) Our situation will improve the more we allow the tapestry of normal life to continue, which includes bringing back the security coordination with the Palestinians.

Yaron Blum, IHY, 27.09.17

4. Medienquerschnitt

Jüdisches Neujahrsfest

A Collective Rosh Hashana Experiment

For thousands of years we as Jews have felt oppression on our skins, and have likened ourselves to the persecuted people par excellence. (...) What came of it is that many in the Jewish world automatically equate being a Jew with being a victim. (...) Each one of us has witnessed how the idea of being a victim has worked its way up into our core, burrowing itself into our thoughts and become part of daily life. (...) we've adopted a blaming strategy. (...) It's like a tiny injection of moral righteousness that gives you a temporary high, a friend who never lets you down. (...) The issue, however, is that deep down inside most of us know that in the long run the blame game does not and won't take us anywhere. Generating outrage should not be our focus. Until we actually take responsibility for our lives, we won't be able to locate and incrementally move toward the good life. Taking responsibility is more of a present-tense action. Our past courses through our blood and should never be forgotten or diluted, but it is out of our hands. Now, we get to choose what it means going forward. (...) The difference between being a victim and assuming responsibility for your life and therefore being a free person is a matter of choice. And the more we opt for responsibility and less for the victim narrative and strategy, the more leverage we will have over our

lives, how to change things and how to pursue directions we deem most promising. So for this Rosh Hashana (...) I want to urge the Jewish People to choose not to be victims anymore. (...) We live in a time with the most freedom of choice, security and opportunities for us as Jews. We (...) should start the new year by assuming full responsibility over our lives. (...)

Irina Nevzlin, JPO, 19.09.17

Hamas und Fatah erneut auf Versöhnungspfad

Extending its hand 'in peace,' Hamas backs Abbas into a corner

(...) Hamas basically moved the ball into Abbas' court. (...) Hamas is extending its hand in peace and doing everything it has been asked to do by Cairo. The organization also demanded an implementation of the reconciliation agreement and called (...) for elections. This move embarrasses Abbas, who is now facing an important test. He must now cancel the sanctions and restore the situation in Gaza, which will cost him quite a lot of money. A refusal to lift all the sanctions would portray him as a rejectionist and place him in a very negative light, especially vis-à-vis Egypt, whose relations with Abbas are already unstable. (...) Abbas is realizing that any other decision apart from restoring the situation before the crisis could further warm up the relations between Cairo and Hamas at his expense, at Ramallah's expense and at Fatah's expense. (...) Hamas leaders are already taking pleasure in the serious challenge they have imposed on Fatah, as all eyes are now on them. Hamas's hand is seemingly extended in peace, but will Fatah accept the challenge and, albeit unwillingly, shake Hamas's hand?

Elior Levy, YED, 17.09.17

The Egyptian maestro and his Palestinian marionettes

(...) the director of the Egyptian General Intelligence Directorate, General Khaled Fawzy, is leading the Palestinian wooden puppets. With his right hand, he's entertaining himself with Hamas' political bureau, and with his left hand, he's pulling the strings of the Palestinian Authority delegation. (...) although Hamas conceded the administrative committee, it will keep running the strip. Giving up the shadow government was just bait used by Fawzy to bring the PA delegation to Cairo. I doubt Hamas itself takes its announcement seriously. In light of Hamas' gesture, Abbas couldn't say no to the Egyptians and was forced to

send a delegation to Cairo to look into the possibility of relaunching reconciliation talks. (...) The concessions made by Hamas following the Egyptian pressure will allow Abbas to get off his high horse, lift the sanctions and start funneling money to the strip again. Israel, on its part, should encourage the reconciliation process. If the economic situation in Gaza improves following this process, it will moderate the estimates of a possible military conflict. (...)

Alex Fishman, YED, 24.09.17

Netanyahu in New York

We'll always have Iran

(...) Netanyahu has turned the UN speech from a pretty insignificant event into the essence of the Zionist future. Netanyahu is misleading the public and the media into believing he is one of the leaders of the world. (...) In what other country is the media preoccupied with the content of the speech for three days? (...) With the absence of a diplomatic agenda, Netanyahu goes back to Iran. We'll always have Iran. (...) Iran affects his perception of the Palestinian issue, the submarine purchase, the relations with Russia and with the United States. (...) This time, however, the drama is artificial. Granted, Trump doesn't like the agreement. But Secretary of Defense James Mattis, National Security Advisor H.R. McMaster and White House Chief of Staff John Kelly—who are all retired generals—have no intention of cancelling it. The false pretense that the US will supposedly withdraw from the agreement (...) is misleading. The agreement isn't being cancelled. What Netanyahu can do, quietly and without bragging unnecessarily, is to create pressure to change Iran's negative and dangerous regional conduct. It's not part of the agreement, but that's where the joint agenda with the US lies. (...)

Alon Pinkas, YED, 19.09.17

The UN, the GA and Israel

(...) As the GA starts (...) analysts listen for morsels that might telegraph change or crisis or a solution to a global problem. Journalists look for scoops. But when all is said and done, the GA is nothing more than a glorified parade of dignitaries. Speeches are pat and predictable. The real action takes place (...) at places far from the watchful eyes and sensitive ears of the press and their cameras. When leaders talk to one another without fear of being vilified at home for speaking to the enemy – that's when progress is made. Corridor conversations conducted through third parties or mediators happen day and at night during the GA. (...) that is where Israel really

shines. (...) most of the deals between Israel and (...) other nations – many of whom refuse to acknowledge Israel's existence (...) are initiated and inked behind closed doors at UN committees and during annual GA gatherings. (...) Many bodies within the UN are (...) anti-Israel and the United Nations is still a platform for an ugly, deplorable form of antisemitism. That hasn't changed. Yet (...) Israel has changed. Today Israel contributes greatly to the UN and, by extension, to the world. Those contributions are what makes the world a better place and slowly moves publicly antagonistic countries closer to recognizing Israel as a contributing member of the nations of the world. (...)

Micah Halpern, JPO, 24.09.17

HAA = Haaretz

YED = Yedioth Ahronoth / 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