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1. Trump erklärt Jerusalem zur Hauptstadt Israels

Zu Unmut in den Palästinensergebieten und Euphorie bei Israels Regierung führte US-Präsident Donald Trump mit seiner Anerkennung Jerusalems als Israels Hauptstadt. Ministerpräsident Benjamin Netanyahu lobte die Entscheidung des US-Präsidenten, die hilfreich sei auf dem Weg zum Frieden, denn der sei ohne Jerusalem als Israels Hauptstadt nicht möglich. „Es muss einfach getan werden“, wiederholte Trump, ohne seine Entscheidung näher zu begründen, als dass „die Zeit gekommen ist, um Jerusalem offiziell als israelische Hauptstadt anzuerkennen“. Das sei nichts anderes als, „die Realität wahrzunehmen“. Netanyahu freute sich über die "historische" Entscheidung. Er appellierte an andere Staaten, „dem Vorbild der USA zu folgen und ihre Botschaften nach Jerusalem zu verlegen“. Zwar hatte Trump in seiner Rede angekündigt, die Vorbereitungen zum Umzug der US-Botschaft von Tel Aviv nach Jerusalem „umgehend aufzunehmen“. Kurz darauf bremste der US-Präsident indes und erließ einen Aufschub des Umzugs um sechs Monate. Palästinenserpräsident Mahmud Abbas, der noch im Vorfeld der Rede Trumps vor neuer Gewalt warnte, ließ ausrichten, dass der US-Präsident für die Palästinenser als Vermittler bei Friedensverhandlungen passé sei. Ein noch für Dezember geplantes Treffen mit dem US-Vize-Präsidenten Mike Pence sagte Abbas ab. Ein Vertreter der Palästinensischen Befreiungsorganisation (PLO) erklärte die Zweistaatenlösung für tot.

Reality Check: Capital Yes, Unified No

(...) Labor leader Avi Gabbay was right to welcome US President Donald Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital. Trump's declaration (...) set to rights an historical anomaly which should have been put to bed long ago. (...) Trump's move, which carefully did not refer to the city's municipal borders, was more a recognition of reality than, as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu excitedly claimed, a historic moment to parallel the Balfour Declaration or the founding of the Jewish state. (...) There was no reason, though, for Labor leader Gabbay to follow suit and issue his own grandiose statement, and declare the day following Trump's announcement that a "united Jerusalem is even more important than peace." Really? Ensuring that the more than 300,000 Palestinian residents of Jebel Mukaber, the Shuafat refugee camp, Kalandiya, Sur Bahir, Walaja and other Palestinian villages can keep their Israeli identity cards and social security benefits is more important than securing a peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians? In one of the most disastrous decisions following the Six Day War in 1967, 28 Palestinian villages were annexed to Jerusalem. Now, some 50 years later, when you combine Jerusalem's Palestinian and haredi (...) populations, we have reached a situation where Israel's capital today has more Palestinians than Zionist Jews. (...) Is that what we mean by a united Jerusalem? (...) his remarks on a so-called "united" Jerusalem should be seen within the context of this attempt to move Labor

rightwards. Unfortunately for Gabbay, it won't work. Those on the Left will switch to Meretz at the next elections, while those to the right of Labor will either stick with Netanyahu (...)

Jeff Barak, JPO, 10.12.17

I'm a native Jerusalemite, and Trump's announcement didn't bring joy to my heart

(...) For years I spoke about the importance of international recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. I said this after the 1967 war and did not think I had any reason to apologize (...) as a native Jerusalemite, I thought that international recognition would refer to West Jerusalem, where I grew up. (...) Jerusalem is not really united. The feeling that many express, that "the city which is bound together" is the result of a lack of deep examination of the true situation on one hand, and religious and redemptive yearnings on the other. When I heard Trump's announcement I did not feel joy. The recognition of Jerusalem as the capital was a good thing in my eyes at the time when I believed Israel had a leadership that would view such recognition as a sign of shattering the anomaly. That is not the situation today. (...) But our problem is (...) the Israeli government and the way in which it applauded Trump's announcement. (...) The danger lies in a government that celebrates declarations receiving a redemptionist-messianic interpretation. Israel can flourish only if its leaders and citizens understand that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict must be separated from the beliefs that will lead to a religious war and the creation of a single state that will be an apartheid state against its will. (...)

Uzi Baram, HAA, 12.12.17

Trump and Jerusalem: Why it Matters

(...) What the world calls Jerusalem matters because the truth matters. (...) Trump recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital will not preclude future negotiations that recognize both Israeli and Palestinian claims to the city. But if an honest negotiation is ever going to take place, it has to be predicated on the understanding that the past 50, and 70, and 2,000 years cannot be erased. Jerusalem has been the political capital of the State of Israel for the better part of a century, and the spiritual center of the people of Israel for over two millennia. For anyone to deny it is an absurdity. To ask any Jewish citizen of Israel to deny it is an obscenity. (...)

Carra Glatt, JPO, 04.12.17

Trump and Jerusalem: Breaking a Consensus

(...) What is worth noting, (...) is that the "decades of consensus" among international peacemakers has led nowhere. Perhaps breaking with that decades-old consensus is what is needed, which is something Trump will do if he goes ahead and recognizes Jerusalem as the capital of the Jewish state.

Herb Keinon, JPO, 05.12.17

Trump's Jerusalem declaration could ignite a major fire

(...) While this expected declaration has a clear symbolic value, nothing will actually change. (...) Trump is handling every diplomatic issue like a pyromaniac who forces the people around him to put out the fire. (...) Trump's expected declaration on Jerusalem could turn into a match that would ignite a major fire in the violent region we are living in.

(...) Those who seek international recognition of Israel's sovereignty in Jerusalem must initiate far-reaching moves for an agreement. Any change in the existing status quo could only take place as a result of negotiations that would force all parties to make painful concessions. (...) during his long time in office Netanyahu chose not to do a thing that might jeopardize his position. His years in power can be defined, if you like, as "lost years." (...) In one of his recent speeches, the prime minister expressed his disappointment over the fact that he doesn't see a leader of Sadat's stature on the Palestinian side. It would be only fair to ask if the Israeli side has a leader of the late Menachem Begin's stature, who would be willing to risk his seat (...) for the supreme goal of achieving peace. (...)

Shimon Shiffer, YED, 04.12.17

Enough is enough! Jerusalem must be recognized as Israel's capital

(...) Jerusalem is the heartbeat, soul and eternal capital of the Jewish people. This message though needs to be also reinforced to our Palestinian neighbors. (...) The PA has not exactly been engaged in "peace talks" for quite some time now, while the failure to date of recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's rightful capital has not prevented the Palestinians from waging an incessant campaign of terror, violence and intifadas against the Jewish state. Enough is enough! The United States and the international community must no longer remain hostage to Palestinian threats, extortion and intimidation. President Trump should lead by example in this regard, by not only sending a powerful message to the Palestinians, but doing what is right and just, in recognizing Jerusalem as the capital

of the State of Israel. (...) President Trump has long professed his desire to reach the "ultimate deal" of peace between Israelis and Palestinians. The conventional wisdom has been that recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital would hamper this effort, as the Palestinians continue to threaten. (...) there is never a wrong time to do what is right, just and moral. (...) It remains an absurd anomaly that Jerusalem is the only world capital not recognized by the international community, and in which Israel, unlike every sovereign nation under international law, has been denied its inalienable right to designate its own capital. (...) Arsen Ostrovsky, YED, 05.12.17

Revolutionary recognition

(...) Initially, it seemed that recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital and the relocation of the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem were a diplomatic bargaining chip, best kept for future use in advanced stages of negotiations with the Palestinians. But now, after Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas has evidently refused to move one inch toward a diplomatic process while establishing a unity government with Hamas, and after the Jordanian king effectively shuttered the Israeli Embassy in Amman, there is nothing left to lose. American recognition, ideally together with a swift relocation of the embassy to Jerusalem, would signal to the Arabs that sometimes time is not on their side and that they stand to lose diplomatic ground. (...) recognition of Jerusalem will be of revolutionary importance. The move will perhaps outrage the Arabs, but they will have to deal with it. The time has come to stop being afraid. (...) For Netanyahu, it would be a historic achievement on a national and personal level. It might even make President Reuven Rivlin shed a tear.

Amnon Lord, IHY, 03.12.17

An American withdrawal from peace

U.S. President Donald Trump has given a valuable political gift to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who's struggling amid the corruption investigations against him and is trying to maintain the stability of his governing coalition (...) even as he postponed fulfillment of his campaign promise to move the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. At the same time, he calmed Netanyahu's fears about presenting an American diktat for an Israeli-Palestinian agreement that might have unraveled the prime minister's coalition, which rejects the two-state solution or any gesture toward the Palestinians. (...) the problem isn't just ensuring calm in the short term, but finding a long-term solution to the conflict. Trump's nice words

about his commitment to peace won't solve the plight of 320,000 Palestinians who live in Jerusalem without civil rights. And they won't silence the right-wing Israelis who seek to rebuild the Temple even at the price of eternal war with the Muslim world. Above all, Trump's "Jerusalem speech" constitutes another step in the American withdrawal from the Middle East. It's true that his predecessors also didn't impose a settlement, but at least since the 2000 Camp David summit they mediated between the parties, guided by Bill Clinton's parameters. Trump has freed himself from a commitment to the past and has left the Israelis and Palestinians fully responsible for shaping and achieving a settlement.

Editorial, HAA, 07.12.17

Recognizing the Obvious

(...) Once US recognition has been extended, it will be easier for the Administration to relocate its most senior representative to Jerusalem, and finally rectify a historical wrong (...) Israelis have known no other capital. (...) no other city has served as the country's political heart. (...) The unwavering significance of Jerusalem to the Jews dates back 3,000 years. (...) President Trump must not be deterred by threats of violence on the part of those who resort to it routinely. (...) The Palestinian Authority does not have veto rights over Israel's relations with America or with any other country, nor can it prevent the reparation of this historical wrong. A declaration on Jerusalem is not the be-all and end-all of the peace process. The door to negotiations is still wide open. Nor should proponents of a divided city get their knickers in a twist. Such a declaration merely anchors the conversation in a new sphere where parties can have a discussion based on reality. Afterwards, the parties will continue to explore alternatives for the future -- East, West and all the rest.

Talia Dekel-Fleissig, JPO, 06.12.17

This time, Trump is right

(...) Trump is right. He is right about the case in question: The world's 70-year refusal to officially recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital was a foolish mistake, the result of diplomatic cowardice and neglect on the part of Israel's governments. It's time to fix that mistake. (...) What needs to be done now is to put the speech into perspective and into proportion. It's neither a third Palestinian Nakba nor a second UN Partition Plan for Israel. Like Trump said in his speech, it's a recognition of reality. What was a de facto recognition is being turned into a de jure recognition. (...) The Palestinians won't achieve a thing if they set fire

to Jerusalem and the West Bank. (...) The Palestinians can use the speech in their favor and suggest that all countries follow in the Czech Republic's footsteps and recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and the capital of Palestine. (...) The person who turned Jerusalem into Israel's capital wasn't Donald Trump. It was Israel's first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion. And he did it despite the world's criticism and against the advice of many of his colleagues. The State of Israel doesn't need the American president to recognize its capital (...). It's our responsibility, and ours alone. (...) The speech's impact won't be reflected in words but in the way it is understood by the two sides. (...) Israel's right-wing parties may try to speed up the annexation. More settlement construction, more Knesset legislation, more regulations. Trump, they will believe, gave them in his speech a license to go wild.

Nahum Barnea, YED, 08.12.17

2. Tage des Zorns

In Reaktion auf die Erklärung von US-Präsident Donald Trump zur Anerkennung Jerusalems als Israels Hauptstadt rief die Hamas zum „Tag des Zorns“ und gar einer Wiederaufnahme der Intifada auf, des palästinensischen Volksaufstands. Auch die Palästinensische Autonomiebehörde reagierte erzürnt auf Donald Trump, aberkannte den USA ihre bisherige Rolle als Vermittler und rief einen Streik aus. In Bethlechem, Ramallah, Nablus und anderen Städten kam es zu Auseinandersetzungen mit Verletzten. Demonstranten steckten Plakate mit dem Bild des US-Präsidenten und amerikanische Flaggen in Brand. Die israelische Armee reagierte mit Rauch- und Schreckbomben und mit Gummigeschossen, um die wütenden Kundgebungen aufzulösen. Die Hamas feuerte mehrere Raketen auf Israel ab. Im Gegenzug führte die israelische Armee Luftangriffe im Gazastreifen durch. Bei Unruhen an der Grenze zwischen Israel und dem Gazastreifen kamen mehrere Palästinenser ums Leben.

Jerusalem recognition could spark widespread Arab unrest – this time, with no end in sight

(...) the Palestinian definition of “nonviolent” tends to be rather elastic. It generally includes violent demonstrations that include the throwing of rocks and firebombs. Such a scenario could unfold in East Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza in the coming days. The defense establishment will also be particularly attentive to any stirrings among the Israeli-Arab population. (...) The importance of the

Palestinian question has declined in recent years, (...) but the word “Jerusalem” can still spark strong religious emotions. (...) the Palestinians can't make Trump retract his words. This is a kind of “open crisis” with no objective or clear end point. Its fueling will depend mainly on the level of rage on the streets, which in turn will depend on the number of casualties. The Israeli army has long known that funerals in the occupied territories usually lead to more funerals. If demonstrations and attempted terror attacks end with many Palestinians dead, the area will catch fire and it will be harder to douse the flames. (...) in light of insights learned over the last two years, the system should be better focused and prepared for a confrontation if one does indeed break out.

Amos Harel, HAA, 07.12.17

Jerusalem Days of Rage?

Yesterday I woke up in my house in a “settlement” in the “occupied territory.” My son took the bus to his school, also in the “West Bank” while I drove into Jerusalem — the city on edge. (...) At lunch, a few of my colleagues and I decided to go out. We sat at an outside table enjoying the sunshine at a restaurant located less than a football field from the “Green Line,” the line that separated Israel from the Palestinians back before 1967. (...) After work, I went for a run (...) directly through both Jewish and Arab neighborhoods. As usual, there were plenty of Arab teens “hanging out” along parts of my run, having a good time with their friends. (...) After my run, I take a shower and pick up my son from a climbing gym in Jerusalem. We go to the mall to grab something to eat. The mall is packed with Jews and Arabs. (...) We make the drive back into the “West Bank,” back into the territories that the world believes are brimming with hate and violence, back to our home in our “settlement.” People see what they want to see. The New York Times Jerusalem bureau chief who wrote the article that I have excerpted went out looking for tension and hatred and despair. I have no doubt that he found it and that the people he selected to interview really believe that the city is on the brink. (...) Israel's capital, is much safer than most cities in the world.

Yarden Frankl, TOI, 11.12.17

The uncompromising Palestinians

(...) It is clear that the Palestinians were disappointed by U.S. President Donald Trump's announcement that the United States recognizes Jerusalem as the capital of Israel (...). The Palestinian response ignored (...) two statements, which in practice say

that as far as the final agreement is concerned, the Trump administration's stance is not significantly different than the position of previous American administrations. (...) they were included in Trump's announcement to soften Arab opposition, especially that of Saudi Arabia. A responsible (...) Only the Palestinian unwillingness to understand that if a solution is found, it will realistically have to be a compromise formula and not the fulfillment of all their demands, prevented the Palestinian leadership from relating to these aspects of Trump's speech, which were actually quite opportune for them. One could have expected a different response from the Palestinian leadership (...). It could have praised Trump for mentioning for the first time – yes, the first time – the two-state solution and expressing his support for it. (...) Every rookie diplomat and politician knows that the first thing that must be done in response to the statements of an external body is to emphasize those aspects that are convenient for you and only afterward disagree with what is unacceptable. The Palestinians did exactly the opposite, and in doing so bolstered the Israeli achievement. This response, which joined a long list of historic missed Palestinian opportunities, was not the result of stupidity or a lack of experience. It seems its roots can be found in the inability to live with compromise, which characterizes the Arab political discourse in general. (...) the uncompromising Palestinian response to Trump's announcement also does nothing to advance a historic compromise between the two national movements.

Shlomo Avineri, HAA, 12.11.17

Hamas is playing with fire

The natural tendency is to compare the latest developments in the Gaza Strip to the days that preceded Operation Protective Edge in 2014: a slow escalation of hostilities, dragging the sides into a cycle of moves and countermoves, ultimately creating a self-fulfilling prophecy of war. There is no shortage of parallels between then and now: the economic situation in Gaza, Hamas' ever-decreasing available options, the absence of diplomatic hope and the inability to resolve intra-Palestinian divisions. But there are also differences. More than ever, Hamas is being challenged inside Gaza by more radical groups (...). Neither side is overly enthusiastic about another round of fighting. (...) both Israel and Hamas want calm (...). Unfortunately, reality doesn't hinge exclusively on logic. Thirty years after its founding, Hamas is having trouble leaving its combative ideology behind in favor of pragmatism.

(...) Hamas knows it is playing with fire. If a rocket explodes in the wrong place at the wrong time, or an Israeli airstrike causes mass casualties, the situation will easily erupt. Neither side wants to see this happen, but both are preparing for it. (...)

Yoav Limor, IHY, 15.12.17

Three reasons we aren't seeing a third intifada

(...) In retrospect, the first intifada had been an event waiting to happen. It just needed a spark. (...) The second intifada was a very different affair. It had spontaneous and "popular" elements at first, in the rioting that broke out in Jerusalem following then-opposition leader Ariel Sharon's visit to the Temple Mount. But from a very early stage it had a much more organized fashion, (...) it was an attempt by the Palestinians to make gains they had failed to achieve by diplomacy. (...) With every new outbreak of violence, there was an expectation of a full-blown intifada following in its wake. In this period there have been four rounds of heavy fighting in Gaza, which have claimed the lives of thousands of Palestinians. But the violence failed to spread to the West Bank and Jerusalem. (...) it seems this latest wave, now four days old, isn't the much-anticipated third intifada, either. (...) all three Palestinian communities living under Israeli occupation – the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem (...) have different agendas. (...) The PA in the West Bank (...) feel they have too much to lose from chaos. Hamas is calling for an intifada, but only in the West Bank and Jerusalem where they don't have any control. (...) The memory of the thousands of deaths in two intifadas and four Gaza conflicts inhibits any mass outpouring of rage onto the streets. (...) There is plenty of Palestinian despair and anger at the lack of any prospect of diplomatic progress and an end to the occupation. But there is also political pragmatism and the necessity of making a living. For the overwhelming majority of Palestinians, the price of another intifada is simply too high.

Anshel Pfeffer, HAA, 13.12.17

3. Proteste gegen Netanyahu und Korruption

Regierungschef Benjamin Netanyahu bleibt weiter Ziel wöchentlicher Proteste auf dem Rothschild Boulevard in Tel Aviv. Die Menschen demonstrieren gegen die vielen Korruptionsaffären rund um den Ministerpräsidenten und Abgeordneten der Regierungsparteien sowie gegen ein neues Gesetz, das Netanyahu vor Strafverfolgung schützen sollte. In seiner ursprünglichen Fassung sah das Gesetz vor, dass die

Polizei nach Ermittlungen ihre Empfehlung an die Staatsanwaltschaft für oder gegen eine Anklage nicht mehr öffentlich machen dürfe – und zwar ab sofort, i.e. auch bei bereits laufenden Ermittlung wie jene gegen Netanyahu. Seit Monaten ermittelt die Polizei in zwei Korruptionfällen gegen den Ministerpräsidenten. In einem Fall geht es um teure Geschenke wie Zigarren und Champagner, die Netanyahu und seine Frau Sara über Jahre hinweg von dem israelischen Geschäftsmann und Hollywoodproduzenten Arnon Milchn sowie dem australischen Milliardär James Packer erhalten haben sollen. In dem anderen Fall geht es um eine angebliche Vereinbarung mit dem Verleger der Zeitung Yedioth Ahronot. Für eine vorteilhaftere Berichterstattung des Blattes über Netanyahu sollte der Ministerpräsident dabei helfen, den Erfolg der kostenlosen Konkurrenzzeitung Israel Hayom zu schmälern. Netanyahu weist sämtliche Vorwürfe zurück. Zu dem ersten Protestmarsch sind mehr als 30.000 Demonstranten über den Rothschild Boulevard in Richtung Habima Platz gezogen. Viele haben gefordert, den Ministerpräsidenten zu verhaften. Das umstrittene Gesetz wurde inzwischen verabschiedet, wird aber nur für zukünftige Ermittlungsverfahren gelten.

Civic Responsibility

It was heartwarming to see tens of thousands thronging the streets of central Tel Aviv on Saturday to protest against the government's exploitation of its powers for narrow interests. (...) The people who put their personal lives on hold for a few hours and took the time to come to Rothschild Boulevard (...) were motivated by a genuine concern with the State of Israel's fragile democratic institutions. (...) The legislation is presently so blatantly in Netanyahu's interest that it is impossible to conduct a fair discussion. (...) The wording of the law reflects the special circumstances of Netanyahu's plight, the negotiations among the coalition partners are eclipsed by Netanyahu's unique concerns and, as a result, any legislation produced now will reflect this. (...) Israelis who demonstrated on Saturday night at Rothschild Boulevard came not because they are opposed to the rule of a right-wing government. They were exercising their civic duty as citizens who care about the democratic institutions of their state. (...) Cynicism may have taken hold in the government but Israelis have not lost faith in democratic ideals. (...)

Editorial, JPO, 03.12.17

Rothschild Boulevard protest: The second generation

They headed to Tel Aviv (...) on their own behalf. They moved up Rothschild Boulevard, in a line that grew thicker and thicker before spilling over into Allenby Street and blocking it. (...)

The move (...) to Tel Aviv's Rothschild Boulevard reflected much more than a change of location on the map. What began as a protest of two people (...) is turning into a mass protest before our eyes. (...) Saturday evening's protestors were the sons of veteran, organized Israel, people from the middle and upper class. (...) A similar crowd can be seen at the annual Rabin memorial rallies at Rabin Square, with one difference: At the Rabin rallies there are mostly elderly people and teenagers, members of youth movements. Saturday evening's protest was also attended by the middle generation. (...) I don't think the people—in other words, the majority of Israel's citizens—are demanding legal justice. Not just yet. (...) Prime Minister Netanyahu's abuse of power is much worse than the offenses he is being interrogated over (...) He knows that the sense of disgust doesn't stop at Rothschild Boulevard. (...) Corruption wasn't invented by Netanyahu. His abuse of power is much worse than the offenses he is being interrogated over. (...)

Nahum Barnea, YED, 03.12.17

Business as usual in the hangman's square

(...) Once again, the enlightened are marching on Rothschild Boulevard in Tel Aviv, the site of the massive social justice campaign of the summer of 2011. (...) The grand march was in opposition to one man, the man for whom guillotines were set up on Rothschild, who was shown in pictures with a rope around his neck (...) The Left is once again flush with anger (...) The enlightened are replete, stuffed with pleasure, red-faced, just like they were in 2011. Participants in both movements fit the same socio-economic profile. (...) This man has been persecuted for some 20 years for a single crime: beating the late Labor party leader Shimon Peres. (...) The Left sees only one problem with them: they haven't yet finished evolving from monkeys to enlightened human beings; they are Jews from Arab countries. (...) It's very sad. 100 years after the Balfour Declaration, to the sorrow of the post-Zionists who see themselves as enlightened, Balfour Street is the seat of the best prime minister the Jewish people have ever had. The man who is leading the people and the state to heights that 100 years ago no one ever dreamed of is boycotted by

the rabble on Rothschild Boulevard, on their way to Berlin.

Dr. Gabi Avital, IHY, 04.12.17

If Netanyahu is so corrupt and dangerous, why don't rivals unite to defeat him?

(...) Yair Lapid, whose centrist Yesh Atid is generally polling as the main competition to Netanyahu's Likud, has long asserted that the prime minister is both personally corrupt and running a corrupt coalition. (...) For Avi Gabbay, the new Labor leader (...) Israel under Netanyahu is "really getting close to becoming Turkey" in its corrupt, one-man rule. Gabbay is demanding "elections as soon as possible." (...) What's quite staggering is not merely the avalanche of criticism and doomsaying by the prime minister's would-be successors, however. It is, rather, the disconnect between the insistence that Netanyahu has to urgently go — for the sake of Israel, no less — and the critics' abiding unwillingness to take the one step that would most effectively advance this ostensible national imperative. No matter how grave the purported danger, they simply refuse to get together to defeat it. (...) some of Netanyahu's critics would have us believe that the very fate of our country is at stake, that we are deeply threatened both internally and externally. And yet, still, the egos hold sway. Gabbay and Lapid snipe at each other. (...) It would surely give the long list of Netanyahu's would-be successors considerably more credibility if, when complaining about the damage the prime minister has done, is doing, and will do if he is not stopped, they also declared that, given the gravity of the hour, they were putting aside their relatively marginal ideological differences and unifying to protect the country. (...) But their egotistical approach, as all their own surveys must be telling them, continues to leave much of the public unpersuaded.

David Horowitz, TOI, 04.12.17

Enough with the conspiracy theories

The tens of thousands of anti-corruption marchers who jammed Rothschild Boulevard in Tel Aviv had not even taken two steps when mouthpieces on the Right already began propagating the stale conspiracy theory trope: The protesters were bought off, funded by haters of Israel, marching to the drum of foreign agents to topple the elected right-wing government. (...) Is it really so difficult to believe the protesters are free, concerned and angry Israelis, who see their beloved country being run by a group of people who have forgotten they were elected to serve for the betterment of the people? (...) the majority of the

public, in every poll, says the demonstrations are not a product of the "extreme Left." (...) Employing the conspiracy strategy will not help. If the Right wants to stay in government and preserve its power, it must purge its ranks and courageously jettison the corruption and the corrupt. Those who continue disparaging the protesters with hysterical lies will ultimately find themselves in the opposition. It is imperative for the parties and leaders of the coalition, chiefly Likud, to understand that they must spearhead a campaign to clean their own stables instead of accusing and denigrating those who demand it. (...) Polly Bronstein, IHY, 12.12.17

4. Medienquerschnitt

Massenkündigungen bei Teva

Fake news about Teva and some true facts

(...) Teva is an Israeli company (...). So goes the narrative. The fact is that Teva hasn't been Israeli for a long time. It's a multinational company that long ago outgrew its homeland. Only 12% of its workforce is Israeli, only about a tenth of its shares are held by Israelis, little more than half its board lives in Israel, and most of its top executives are foreigners. (...) It is true that Teva got about 22 billion shekels (...) in tax breaks. The lion's share of those tax breaks were awarded when the company was making giant profits. (...). In any case, many ask why the tax benefits didn't hinge on promises to maintain certain employment levels. The answer is that Israel is in no position to impose such constraints. Manufacturing in Israel is costly and we're geographically distant from major markets. That's why no multinational companies make anything here on a large scale, with the exception of Intel, which gets substantial subsidies from the Israeli government to do so. Without the tax breaks, Teva would not have been able to justify producing drugs and medical devices in Israel at all, and there would have been no workers to lay off to begin with. (...) Saying that the rank and file alone are being forced to pay the price for Teva's failures is a profound misrepresentation. (...) Shareholders have lost a vast chunk of their investment as its value shrank and have been punished by having dividends cut to zero. It is true that the executives who departed got generous severance packages, but so will ordinary workers, relative to their salaries. (...) The Israeli economy is at full employment, or close to it, and in many job categories there is actually an acute labor shortage. (...) True, not all the redundant Teva

workers will land on their feet. Older ones and those living in development towns won't have an easy time finding a job, but under the circumstances, they couldn't have found a better time to be unemployed. (...)

David Rosenberg, HAA, 15.12.17

Will streamlining save Teva?

(...) Teva raised money for the acquisition of Actavis Generics in the summer of 2016 for almost \$40 billion. Although the interest rate on the debt is low, it is still a burden for Teva, which has been having trouble reducing it in recent quarters. (...) Teva has been forced to sell assets that are not part of its core business in order to raise money for debt repayment. (...) Teva owes nearly \$11 billion to the banks. (...) Teva will be able to service its existing debt by taking harsh measures: a program of cutbacks, selling assets, refinancing its existing debt, and perhaps also raising money. The market believed that Teva would try to save \$1-2 billion on its annual expenses. (...) Beyond the expected cutbacks and the assets that have been sold, opinion is divided on Teva's plans for raising capital. (...) At this stage, S&P and Moody's still give Teva an investment-grade rating, but with a negative outlook - in other words, a downgrade is possible. If Teva's rating is downgraded, it will have to pay more on its existing debt, because its financial covenants with the banks include a clause concerning the ratings by these agencies. The fact that the two rating agencies are still giving Teva an investment-grade rating indicates that they believe in Teva's ability to repay its debt, whether by making cuts or through refinancing. (...)

Shiri Habib-Valdhorn, GLO, 14.12.17

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