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Die Themen dieser Ausgabe

1.	Diplomatische Krise zwischen Polen und Israel	1
2.	Mike Pence in Israel	3
3.	Solidarität mit Geflüchteten	4
4.	Medienquerschnitt	6

1. Diplomatische Krise zwischen Polen und Israel

Ein neues Holocaust-Gesetz, das im Entwurf zunächst vom polnischen Parlament befürwortet wurde, belastet die Beziehungen zwischen Warschau und Jerusalem. Das Gesetz sieht Haftstrafen von bis zu drei Jahren für Frauen und Männer vor, die dem polnischen Staat oder dessen Bürger_innen Straftaten Nazideutschlands zuschreiben oder die Bezeichnung "polnische Todeslager" für Vernichtungslager der Nazis im besetzten Polen verwenden. Israels Ministerpräsident Benjamin Netanyahu kommentierte den Gesetzentwurf mit den Worten: "Geschichte kann nicht umgeschrieben werden, und der Holocaust darf nicht geleugnet werden." Parlamentarier_innen der Knesset brachten nun ihrerseits einen Gesetzentwurf zur Debatte, der das polnische Gesetz zu einer Form illegaler Holocaust-Leugnung erklärt. Auch die Leugnung oder Verharmlosung der Beteiligung von Nazi-Helfer_innen und Kollaborateuren_innen soll unter Strafe gestellt werden. Der israelische Geheimdienstminister Yisrael Katz forderte Netanyahu auf, den israelischen Botschafter aus Polen abzuziehen. Polens Regierungschef Mateusz Morawiecki verteidigte das Gesetz. "Auschwitz-Birkenau ist kein polnischer Name, und 'Arbeit macht frei' ist kein polnischer Satz", twitterte er.

I used to care about Polish sensitivity to charges of Holocaust complicity. Not anymore

(...) The proposed Polish law (...) came as a shock to many. (...) It is indisputable that many Polish people were victims of the Nazis. But it is equally impossible to dispute that many of them were victimizers of their Jewish neighbors, cooperating all too eagerly with the murderous policies of their German occupiers. And it is simply a fact that (...) the largest ghettos and extermination camps were located in Poland. Should the law pass in the upper house (...), it will surely have a boomerang effect. Journalists who once acceded to Polish sensitivities, and bent over backwards to find wording that is both considerate of their concerns and true to history and respectful of the suffering of victims of the Holocaust, won't do so in the future. At least, I won't. (...)
 Allison Kaplan Sommer, HAA, 28.01.18

Polish atrocities can't be erased

(...) the Poles, it seems, were and still are anti-Semites. I was 11 years old when the war broke out and at 12 I entered the Lodz Ghetto. The Poles would snitch to the Germans about who was Jewish, willingly pointing us out to turn us in to the German soldiers. (...) The Polish law in question is preposterous. The Poles were full partners with the Nazis. (...) The crime the Poles committed against the Jewish people cannot be erased with a stupid law. History recounts

different facts. They took the Jews' property and belongings and the only thing they gave back after the war were the synagogues. The Poles were cruel to Jews who tried returning to their homes, many times killing them. That was after the war. Over 1,000 people were murdered at the hands of Poles after the war, completely irrespective of the German extermination camps. (...) Despite their best efforts to bury their Nazi past – they cannot outrun history. (...) they won't ever be able to erase the horrors they perpetrated, not while Holocaust survivors are still alive, and not as long there are Jews in the world who can tell the story.

Chaim Kozenicki, IHY, 28.01.18

The politics of memory: Poland and beyond

(...) The historical debate and our collective memory become tainted by an imbalance, as certain elements are celebrated, while others that do not fit the overarching narrative are relegated to the margins of public discourse, castigated, and now penalized. (...) nation's history must be discussed openly and dispassionately. (...) Every voice is important as long as it adds to the ongoing debate. Nobody should be excluded, much less penalized, for taking part in the exchange of views about history, regardless of whether such views go against the mainstream (...) narrative, which is often rather more about politics than historical truth. (...) With the new legislation, the signal is being sent that far from being internalized, the lessons of history are selectively instrumentalized to serve the new political masters' vision. (...) my argument against an imposed understanding of history favors an inclusive historical memory that brings together and exposes all national experiences and narratives. Building a historical debate calls for never-ending "pacting" among the past, present and future (...) toward a more critical reading of the where we come from. A nation that is not ready to embark on a comprehensive journey into its past is impoverished and unable to move forward with true understanding of who "we" really are. (...) True historical debate must resemble democracy, where all voices are heard. (...) Unfortunately, in Poland the past continues to be seen as a collection of indisputable truths, not open to divergent interpretations and historical debate. (...)

Tomasz Tadeusz Konsewicz, JPO, 29.01.18

Under Law and Justice party, Poland is becoming a darker place by the day

(...) It's important to note that this legislation does not reflect an anti-Semitic approach or Holocaust denial.

It puts an emphasis on the Holocaust, holding the Nazi Germans exclusively accountable for it. The legislation, ridiculous in itself, fits into the general trend of the current Polish regime, a nationalist-Catholic-conservative regime, which is making an effort to completely rewrite the history of the German occupation and the Holocaust on Polish soil (...) The main point in the new narrative that the ruling party is spreading and fostering (...) is absolving the Polish nation from the accusation of aiding the Nazis by turning Jews in during the years of the German occupation and even directly killing them. (...) Poland, under the Law and Justice regime, is becoming a darker place by the day. This affects us not only as Israelis or Jews, but as citizens of the world and supporters of democracy.

Sever Plocker, YED, 29.01.18

There is both light and darkness in Poland's WWII history

The Poles, indeed, suffered heavily under German occupation, but that does not excuse them for their excessive anti-Jewish behavior during the occupation. (...) many Poles paid with their lives, as did the Jews that they sheltered, when apprehended in the act of aiding one or more Jews. These thousands of Poles are indeed a mark of honor on the record of Polish history, and all Poles can take pride in them. But there is also a darker side to the story – the intense antisemitism prevalent among large sections of Polish society before, during and after the war, that made it doubly difficult for the kind and goodhearted Poles to extend a helping hand to Jews. They had to be wary not only of the Germans who would punish them with death, or at best with incarceration in concentration camps, but of fellow Poles who could betray them to the authorities so as to benefit from some paltry reward. (...) There were also thousands of plain Poles roaming the streets of Warsaw and other cities, known as Szmalcownikis (...), trying to detect Jews on the run, with the aim of denuding them of whatever valuables they possessed and then turning them over to the Gestapo for an additional reward. (...) the thousands of Poles, those known and those not accounted for, who risked their lives to save Jews are on the top of the list of the Righteous from all other European countries – for they faced greater risks, both from the brutal German occupiers and from fellow Poles who were only too happy to see the Jews disappear from the Polish landscape, with some, especially among elements in the underground, and in many villages, lending a hand in that sordid undertak-

ing. On the other hand, the Poles are right in demanding that the death camps on Polish soil not be termed Polish camps, as they were constructed by the Germans without consulting the conquered Poles. (...) the Poles did not ask that these killing centers be on their soil, so this cannot be imputed to them. (...) Mordecai Paldiel, JPO. 30.01.18

2. Mike Pence in Israel

Noch vor Ende des kommenden Jahres, so versprach US-Vizepräsident Mike Pence, soll die Botschaft der USA von Tel Aviv nach Jerusalem verlegt werden. Mit anhaltendem Applaus dankten ihm fast alle Parlamentarier_innen der Knesset. Nur die arabische, antizionistische Vereinte Liste protestierte. „Jerusalem ist die Hauptstadt Palästinas“, stand auf Plakaten, die die Politiker_innen der drittgrößten Knesset-Fraktion in die Luft hielten, mit dem Bild der beiden Moscheen auf dem Tempelberg. Das vorgeordnete Aufsichtspersonal brauchte keine Minute, um den Protest zu beenden und die Unruhe stiftenden Parlamentarier_innen aus dem Plenarsaal zu führen. Nach Ägypten und Jordanien war Israel das dritte Land, das Pence im Verlauf seiner Nahostreise besuchte. Palästinenserpräsident Mahmud Abbas kündigte bereits im Dezember, dem ursprünglichen Reise Termin des US-Vizepräsidenten, an, dass er ein Treffen mit ihm ablehne. Israels Ministerpräsident Benjamin Netanyahu hingegen pries den willkommenen Staatsgast und die guten Beziehungen der beiden Nationen. „Amerika hat keinen größeren Freund als Israel, und Israel hat keinen größeren Freund als die USA.“ Umgekehrt widmete Pence in seiner Rede weite Teile der Leidensgeschichte des jüdischen Volkes und den Errungenschaften Israels seit der Staatsgründung. „Die Wunder Israels sind eine Inspiration für die Welt.“ Die USA seien stolz darauf, als „Verbündeter Israel zur Seite zu stehen“. Ein Analyst des öffentlich-rechtlichen TV-Senders Kan bezeichnete die Rede von Pence als eine „Liebeserklärung an Israel“.

Boycott Mike Pence and his fellow Israeli apartheid enthusiasts

(...) as dozens of meetings took place between Palestinian and American officials, it became clear that the U.S. would never address issues of substance. (...) what an 'ultimate deal' could be might be good for negotiation between Likud and the Yisrael Beiteinu parties of the right, but it's useless in terms of achieving peace between Israelis and Palestinians. (...) Mr. Greenblatt and Mr. Friedman have

made public comments about every Israeli casualty, while ignoring Palestinians killed, injured and arrested by Israel, including children. They also ignore, and even have justified, Israeli settlement expansion. They are partners with the Israeli government and have encouraged the systematic denial of Palestinian rights. (...) Trump and his team have contributed to the further destabilization of the Middle East. They have disqualified the U.S. from playing any constructive role when they have made clear that they don't see Palestinians, Christians and Muslims, as equals to Israeli Jewish citizens. (...) As Mr. Pence visits PM Netanyahu, his friend, let him have his dream apartheid party. Let him encourage those who want to turn a political conflict into a religious war. We, though, resist that 'vision'. We (...) will continue working for a just and lasting peace that ends the occupation and allows for Israelis, Palestinians and the rest of the region to live in peace and security.

Ahmad Tibi, HAA, 21.01.18

Driving the peace train

Welcome to Israel, Vice President Pence. We Israelis have much to thank you for — (...) the cause of peace. (...) Never has the Arab-Israeli conflict been closer to resolution! Israel is ready. (...) All we need is a Palestinian interlocutor with whom we can get down to the nitty-gritty of deal-making. (...) Palestinians are angry about US cuts in aid to UNRWA, the agency whose purpose is solely serving Palestinian refugees and their descendants. (...) The Administration's steps send an important signal. That after decades of driving the peace process dismally down the same predictable road of failure after failure, the US is (...) challenging sacred cows that probably should never have been sacred in the first place. (...) President Abbas's bizarre tirade against America, against Israel, against the Jews was greeted by global indifference. (...) For peace to prevail, realism must prevail first. The simple, honest truth must prevail. (...) Country after country understand this. With so much else to worry about in the region and around the world, they recognize that the Middle East must move on. It is moving on. The peace train is leaving the station, and one way or another, all parties must eventually climb aboard before it's too late. (...)

Antony Korenstein, TOI, 22.01.18

Mike Pence's 'Seinfeld visit': A visit about nothing

(...) He believes in the six days of creation, not in evolution. (...) As far as he's concerned, there's no irrefutable evidence that the Earth is round, and there's

no proof of global warming. Abortions should be illegal, just like same-sex marriage. He won't be alone with women in the same room, unless he has his wife by his side. He's likeable, sympathetic, a football fan, and—by his own admission—an evangelical Christian first, and only then an American. He loves the Jewish people because of their historic purpose, and he loves Israel because it serves as the Jewish people's temporary home before they become Christian after Armageddon—the final battle between good and evil. (...) And now he's visiting Israel. (...) It's actually a "Seinfeld visit." A visit about nothing. A visit with no goals, with no required achievements, with no continuation in a chain of visits that are part of an organized policy. It's just a visit. (...) there is no clear American policy in the Middle East. (...) There's simply nothing. (...)

Alon Pinkas, YED, 22.01.18

Pence and peace

It is difficult to imagine a more pro-Israel speech than the one given by US Vice President Mike Pence. (...) The miraculous circumstances of Israel's rebirth were not missed on Pence. (...) Nor did he miss the biblical promise that this miracle fulfilled (...). When Pence reiterated the US's commitment to Israel's security with Jerusalem as its capital, his words resonated with sincerity because they came together with deep religious, moral and historical underpinnings of conviction. (...) It is undoubtedly true that the remarkable ties and similarities between Americans and Israelis do not exist to the same extent between America and the Palestinians, yet Pence made it clear that the US is nevertheless committed to advancing peace for the sake of both Israelis and Palestinians. (...) History has shown that chances for peace are greatest when America leaders are most willing to recognize the special ties that unite the US and Israel and when there is "no daylight" between the two nations. We hope Palestinians will see Pence's pro-Israel speech as a new opportunity – not to abandon the peace process, but to re-engage.

Editorial, JPO, 23.01.18

Not one Israeli opposition member stood in solidarity

(...) If members of the opposition want to know why they fail time and again in their efforts to pose an alternative to the Netanyahu government, they should pause for a moment over their decision to stand on the sidelines when the Arab Knesset members were removed from the hall during U.S. Vice President

Mike Pence's speech. (...) A simple inquiry would reveal the deep dark secret, the sought-after explanation for the peace camp's political powerlessness: If this is how the opposition behaves, then what's wrong with Benjamin Netanyahu? The opposition MKs' thunderous silence harmonized perfectly with the loud applause by senior ministers in the most right-wing and dangerous cabinet in Israel's history (...). This common denominator is too narrow to include Israel's Arab citizens. (...) All the other opposition members, by their spontaneous apathy, proved that their leader is none other than Netanyahu, and that they deserve their marginal role in the nationalist puppet theater that the prime minister manages.

Editorial, HAA, 24.01.18

3. Solidarität mit Geflüchteten

Je näher der Stichtag für die Ausweisung afrikanischer Geflüchteter rückt, desto stärker regt sich der Protest dagegen. Tausende Migrant_innen zogen vor die Knesset in Jerusalem und vor die Botschaft von Ruanda, eins der möglichen Drittländer, die die vertriebenen Menschen aufnehmen könnten. Einige Männer legten sich Ketten auf die nackten Oberkörper und simulierten einen Sklavenmarkt. Bis zum 1. April, so der Beschluss der Regierung von Benjamin Netanyahu, müssen die rund 40.000 Afrikaner_innen entscheiden, ob sie „freiwillig“ Israel verlassen oder auf unbestimmte Zeit ins Gefängnis gehen. Menschenrechtsaktivist_innen kündigten an, die Leute bei sich zu Hause zu verstecken. El-Al-Pilot_innen wollen den Transport der Menschen ins Ungeheure verweigern, und renommierte Autor_innen, darunter Amos Oz und David Grossman, appellierten an die Regierung, „moralisch, menschlich und mit Mitgefühl“ zu handeln. Kaum ein Dutzend der Geflüchteten ist bislang als Asylant_in anerkannt worden, dabei kommen die meisten aus Eritrea und dem Sudan, wo sie Krieg und Gefängnis erwarten. Inspiriert von der Geschichte der Anne Frank, dem jüdischen Mädchen, das sich mit Hilfe von Nachbar_innen in Amsterdam über Jahre vor den Nazis versteckt hielt, appellierte die Reformrabbinerin Susan Silverman an Israels Bürger_innen, die Menschen in Not bei sich aufzunehmen und zu verstecken, sollte es ernst werden. „Ich kann mich vor Anfragen kaum retten“, sagte Silverman. „Es ist, als hätten wir einen Korken gelöst.“ Nicht nur Einzelpersonen zeigten sich zur Hilfe bereit, sondern „komplette Gemeinden, Kibbutzim und Moschavim“.

A state founded by refugees does not expel refugees

(...) Living in the land of Israel today are some 27,500 asylum seekers from Eritrea and 7,800 from the Darfur region of Sudan, who came to Israel via similar tortuous routes. Many experienced rape and beatings in notorious "torture camps" in the Sinai desert, while their families raised tens of thousands of dollars for their release. (...) because of my father's own history as a refugee, I was shocked and disgusted when I read, (...) that the Israeli Knesset had approved a bill advocating the expulsion of asylum seekers. (...) How is it that a country founded by refugees advocates the expulsion of refugees? (...) I wish that Interior Minister Aryeh Deri, who has said that he intends "to use any possible means to increase the rate of deportation to another country," would listen to these women and ask his own conscience whether he can justify such hateful words and deeds. (...) I hope that the schoolchildren who listened to my father will grow up and think about what it means to be a refugee in need of a home. (...) We have plowed and sown, but we have not reaped the lessons from our own appalling history.

Josie Glausiusz, TOI, 21.01.18

Extending my hand to Africans in Israel

Horror stories from the visa office were peppered with the darkest gallows humor. As far as jokes go, I told them, you're officially Jewish now. (...) They came to Israel as teenagers, with no family, each with their own horror story about the dangerous trek across the desert. (...) They were all taken in by Israeli high schools, and after finishing school, with the help of good hearted people who looked after and advocated for them, they did a year of volunteer civil service. (...) The three of them, each one on his own, decided that they wanted to study Judaism more deeply, and after years of their stubborn insistence in the face of many attempts to discourage them, Zion partnered with the Hartman Institute to find them a teacher. (...) this past Tuesday, the fear and hopelessness were so palpable that we were finding it impossible to learn. (...) For so many of us, 37,000 Africans in Israel are "infiltrators," a faceless, nameless, threatening mob. But I was lucky enough to have the opportunity to get to know just three of them. (...) They are beautiful, special people, who have survived horrors that I cannot fathom, and yet remained resilient, optimistic and loving. They are not a threat. (...)

Avidan Freedman, JPO, 23.01.18

A campaign of lies

The public outcry over the deportation of illegal infiltrators from Israel and south Tel Aviv is based on a campaign of lies. And now that the state has finally, after years of deliberations in the courts, decided to rid us of the young, the unmarried, the criminals and all those infiltrators whose requests for asylum were rejected, we are witness to a nasty and well-oiled propaganda campaign whose entire aim is to ensure the "moral elite" get to keep their busboys. (...) let's talk about humanity, compassion and morality (...) it is so easy to grow a conscience at the expense of people they do not and do not want to see – the residents of these neighborhoods and the infiltrators alike. So here is what I have to say to the pilots and the academics, the filmmakers, the doctors, the authors, the managers, the lawyers, and so on and so forth: We are keeping your letters with the lists of your names. And we will soon demand you put your money where your mouth is. Because all those exempt from the deportations – the women, children, earners and the sick -- will not remain in our neighborhoods. You will be taking them home instead.

Sheffi Paz, IHY, 25.01.18

Our grandchildren will ask what we Israelis did during the expulsion

(...) Israel is not an exception: Only rarely do peoples learn from their own history and we too have not learned anything. Like "our" Africans, the Jews were foreigners, another race. (...) From a practical standpoint, the deportation of the Africans is an act of complete stupidity. (...) They are willing without any hesitation to work alongside and in the stead of the foreign workers we bring en masse to Israel, because Israelis – mostly the Jews among them – don't like to get their hands dirty. We don't need to bring the Africans, they are already here. True, manpower companies will not make any money on them, and that is bad for the companies. But simple economic logic says that these tens of thousands of people can be hired at minimum wage, we can receive the taxes they pay until they can return home to their countries. (...) the problem is after all not economic, the problem is skin color.

(...) If we want to be loved by Africa, we will accept these refugees, these "infiltrators" – may God have mercy on us – and take pride the same way we were proud, justifiably, when we accepted Vietnamese and Bosnian refugees. (...) They will not become Jews, they do not want that, but maybe they will become friends of the Jews, and that is more important. The moral approach here is also the pragmatic political

approach. If all these justifications do not help, then we must appeal to those who stand to carry out the deportations: The police officers who will arrest the refugees, the Population Authority officials, the bus drivers who will transport them, the airline pilots who will fly the deportees and the ground crews at Ben-Gurion International Airport. (...) Don't do it. (...) Your grandchildren will ask: What did you do, grandma and grandpa? (...)

Yehuda Bauer, HAA, 26.01.18

Black, white and the gray void between them

(...) For someone who doesn't have to deal with noise, overcrowding, and vagrancy (...), connected with the migrants, I find it impossible to hate them and unsavory to dislike them. What I do see is a potential future when the same children holding their mother's hands grow up and become quasi Israelis and contribute to Israeli society. Will they feel at home? (...) if indeed, the "refugees" are economic migrants, then Israel's proposed measures will discourage others from coming. (...) the plan is to concentrate on single working-age males and not to expel families with children. The children have a chance of becoming "Israelis," even exemplary citizens (...). I hope that the government will implement the new law with leniency, selectively and as with as much sensitivity as possible. Yet, what my heart does not sanction, my reason demands. The government plan must be implemented and the law upheld. There is no justice for Israel's own civilians in keeping all the existing migrants in Israel. They entered Israel illegally and it is Israel's right, even responsibility to have most of them to return to their own countries. And the sooner, the better for us all.

Shlomo Toren, TOI, 29.01.18

money, bribes, transfer of government land to officials for private use and more, he said. (...) The Trump administration (...) understands that perpetuating previous failed US policies could be catastrophic, especially with Abbas at the helm. (...).

Earl Cox, JPO, 18.01.18

Abbas' fiery speech has cleared up 24 years of hypocrisy

(...) The United States cannot be, and has never been, neutral in mediating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It is the leader of the world's democratic community of nations and cannot assume a neutral position between democratic Israel and the Palestinians, whether represented by an autocratic leadership that glorifies acts of terror or by Islamic fundamentalists who carry out acts of terror. (...) resolving the conflict requires direct negotiations between Israeli and Palestinian representatives. There is no substitute for that. (...) Most Israelis do not favor an Israeli withdrawal from Judea and Samaria at this time, but rather express their desire to be rid of as many Palestinians as possible in due time. As for Israeli settlements in Judea and Samaria, the lesson learned from the forceful uprooting of the settlers from Gush Katif and the Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip is that there will be no repetition of such acts in the future. Nor will any Israeli government, present or future, prevent Israelis from settling in Judea and Samaria. Jews in these areas of the Land of Israel are there to stay. (...) A democratic Palestinian state that adopts Western values would see a Jewish minority within its borders as an asset that can contribute to the economy of a state that will face difficult economic problems. (...)

Moshe Arens, HAA, 22.01.18

4. Medienquerschnitt

Abbas und Trump

Abbas, you can't have your cake and eat it, too

(...) The PA has long misappropriated US and European aid to support jailed terrorists and their families, to the tune of more than half its annual budget (...). PA leaders also siphon off foreign assistance for personal enrichment, for family members and cronies, at the expense of the Palestinian people. (...) Abbas's son Tarek secretly owns, in partnership with the PA, a holding company in the British Virgin Islands worth more than \$1 million. In addition to money laundering and tax evasion, there has also been theft of public

Kein Shoppen am Shabbat

The Sabbath gentile's grand return

(...) the Shabbes goys represented the happy side of Gentile-Jewish. (...) The permission for a Jew to enjoy a fire kindled on the Sabbath by a non-Jew was but one milestone in the evolution over the centuries of the Gentile of Sabbath. (...) The Shabbes goy was a by-product of galut, the era when the Jews were a perennial minority whose jurists no longer thought of how to shape the public sphere (...) let alone how to run a state. (...) Where we live, Orthodox lawmakers don't need a Shabbes goy because the Knesset is locked on Shabbat, as are all government offices, municipal services and courts of law. It's a Jewish

state, one that asks daily how to reconcile faith and state, rather than how to serve the mostly small-time causes that the Shabbes goy ordinarily solved. (...) Consumer demand to let restaurants, theaters and cafés open on Shabbat proved too big to ignore. That is why the politicians delegated such decisions to local government, which mostly secular cities like Tel Aviv and Ashdod expanded also to minimarkets. Now, however, the ultra- Orthodox parties had the Knesset grant the usually ultra-Orthodox interior minister the power to overrule municipalities and shut down the minimarkets that local city councils think should be open. Violators, as Gafni gloated, will be caught by the Shabbes goy, whose original role – to help Jewish observance – will morph into helping Jewish strife. This is reckless. (...) The historic change ultra-Orthodox politicians refuse to accept is that most Jews are not Orthodox, and millions now shape their own Shabbat without rabbinical mediation. (...)

Amotz Asa-EI, JPO, 20.01.18

US stoppt Zahlungen an UNRWA

The USA should stop funding UNRWA

(...) it's not at all difficult to recognize the Palestine refugee camps. They are the ugly slums that lie just beyond the reasonably livable neighborhoods where most people live. Palestinians are bribed to live in them with subsidies. (...) UNRWA does not help refugees return to living a normal life; instead, UNRWA is in the business of perpetuating their refugee status (...). UNRWA is the willing captive of Arab extremists. (...) The world should rescue the Palestinian refugees from UNRWA. UNRWA abuses them by casting them in the role of perpetual victims. (...) What would happen if the US, UNRWA's most significant funding source, stops supporting UNRWA? (...) Then instead of trapping the Palestinians in everlasting refugee status they would finally be allowed to live normal lives, and the tension their growing refugee presence causes in the Middle East will be eased. (...) The PA/PLO is trying to morally blackmail the West. The message is that unless the West supports UNRWA the PA won't spend any of its own money on feeding its own children and it will be the fault of the West if these children starve. With that kind of logic, they can take over the world. They can say unless you give me everything I want, I will allow my children to starve and I will tell everyone that you are responsible for it. (...)

Barry Werner, JPO, 22.01.18

Zum Tod von Haim Gouri

Israel needs a tea party – remembering Haim Gouri z"l

Israel needs a Tea Party. (...) The kind where you remember your founding fathers and mothers. (...)

We need to remember what they dreamed for us before and after the poets and musicians lured them across the sea from lands where they shoveled icy driveways and invented dances where feet wouldn't touch ground that was not this hallowed, bloody soil. (...) They did not dream of "relative peace" or a bull market or a culinary mecca or the open skies of economy airfare. They dreamed of real peace, real security, of national determination, and the real freedom to create Jewish culture, revive a Jewish language, practice and express Judaism as they wished, and write and rewrite Jewish song. Many of them and many of us died for this dream. Haim Gouri died last night. The poet, journalist and filmmaker who won the Bialik Prize for Literature and the Israel Prize for Poetry (...) is undoubtedly among the leading lights of Israel's founding generation. (...)

Varda Spiegel, TOI, 31.01.18

Sara Netanyahu's Zornausbruch

After hearing Sara Netanyahu recording, we can no longer say we didn't know

(...) One can only imagine the lady's responses to much more acute and stressful events she had to deal with, and the kind of recordings or testimonies we might have been exposed to had the witnesses to these incidents had the courage to share them with the public. (...) If this is how the prime minister's wife spoke to a veteran advisor, a strong and independent person who could have slammed the phone down at any given moment and disconnected himself from the Netanyahus, imagine what hard-working employees had to go through, knowing that their livelihood depended on her and that if they opened their mouth they would be sentenced to a life of humiliation and condemnation. (...) The high voice, the intonation, the unclear sentences, the accusations, the delusion of grandeur. When it became clear that the speaker was Sara Netanyahu, even those who were familiar with the stories were shocked. (...) listening to the recording, one can't avoid thinking about the atmosphere the prime minister is living in, operating in and handling the most important issues concerning our life and future. (...) we can pity the prime minister, admire him for functioning under impossible conditions—but

we must take into account that Netanyahu is a prime minister under an influence, especially as we know about his wife's involvement in the most critical and fateful decisions concerning our life. Now, after hearing it with our own ears, we can no longer say we didn't know.

Sima Kadmon, YED, 30.01.18

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