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1. Weiter Proteste im Gazastreifen

Brennende Autoreifen und Steinschleudern auf der einen Seite, Tränengas und Scharfschützen auf der anderen. Der ungleiche Kampf von palästinensischen Demonstranten und israelischen Sicherheitskräften im Grenzgebiet zum Gazastreifen dauert an. Wieder gab es Tote und viele Verletzte. Insgesamt ist die Zahl der Demonstranten seit Beginn der Unruhen allerdings stark rückläufig. Der auf sechs Wochen angelegte „Marsch der Rückkehr“ soll an das Schicksal der vor genau 70 Jahren aus Israel Vertriebenen erinnern. Menschenrechtsorganisationen und westliche Regierungen kritisierten das Vorgehen der israelischen Soldaten und den Einsatz von Scharfschützen. Mehr als 30 Menschen sind bei den Protesten seit Ende März erschossen worden, mehr als 3000 trugen laut Amnesty International (AI) Verletzungen davon. Alle Getöteten waren unmittelbar am Grenzzaun aktiv. Verteidigungsminister Avigdor Lieberman hatte davor gewarnt, sich den Grenzanlagen zu nähern. Empörung im In- und Ausland löste inzwischen ein Video aus, das einen Palästinenser zeigt, der unter Beschuss gerät und zu Boden fällt, während aus dem Off die begeisterte Stimme eines Soldaten zu hören ist, der ihn einen „Hurensohn“ schimpft. Allerdings war das Video, wie sich erwies, im Dezember aufgenommen worden und nicht bei den jüngsten Protesten. Lieberman bekräftigte seine Warnungen an die Hamas. „Ihr werdet uns nie brechen“, meinte er und riet, „nicht mehr darüber nachzudenken, wie

ihr den Staat Israel zerstören könnt, sondern wie ihr Seite an Seite mit Israel existieren könnt“.

The sick zero-sum game on the Gaza-Israel border

(...) whose lives would be endangered were Israel to allow Gazans to approach the fence? (...) Since Hamas took control of Gaza, a sick zero-sum game has developed, in which the basic question is: my kids or yours? (...) Like in the summer of 2014, Israel faces an impossible choice in Gaza (...): either accept the risks of allowing thousands of Gazans to approach the fence and enter Israel, recognizing that under cover of the thousands, individual murderers would enter Israel, or block the entry of the thousands, shooting to kill when tear gas failed to stop their movement. (...) I mourn the death of the 16 killed. At the same time, I recognize that had they not been killed, the result would have been the killing of our own citizens. Since the rise of Hamas to power, this zero-sum game has replaced sane discourse: kill or be killed. Hamas has imposed this cynical game on Israel. It doesn't have to be this way. (...) The only way to end this sick state of affairs is to remove Hamas from control in Gaza and to foster economic development there, giving its inhabitants a sense that they stand to gain from life without Hamas. Neither our children nor those of Gaza need to die.
Shawn Zelig Aster, JPO, 02.04.18

Dying on the fence of the Gaza prison

(...) Israel's ongoing control over millions of Palestinians is impossible without committing war crimes. (...) The scale of the casualties was clear to the Israeli leadership, but no one stopped it. Not after a hundred injured Palestinians, and not after many, many more. (...) Apparently our smart bullets (...) were able with surgical precision to determine that each of them presented a mortal danger and that there was no other course of action. (...) Even those shot in the back. (...) One-state is not an agenda—it is reality. (...) The one-state's Gaza province is managed from the outside like a huge prison. The wardens determine how much electricity, water, and food will reach almost two million non-citizens living non-lives. Live fire is used for crowd control. The prisoners have no right to protest. Their desperation is their fault. Their injury and death are solely their responsibility: our hands did not shed this blood, since they stormed forward into our bullets. (...)

Hagai El-Ad, YED, 02.04.18

Getting the story straight

(...) Not everyone in Gaza is Hamas, but everyone in Gaza supports the end of the siege on Gaza and everyone in Gaza supports their right to oppose Israel. (...) Hamas has been undergoing change. It is (...) not moderate, but it has often proven to be pragmatic. (...) Gazans have about three hours a day of electricity, which means they often do not have water. There is a very high rate of illness, including kidney disease and other ailments because of the poor quality of water. People are trapped, they have nowhere to go. (...) I am in awe of the ability of the Gazans to survive the reality that they live. (...) They do need new leaders. There is corruption there and their situation is far more hopeless than ours. Now they are being told that even nonviolent protest is not acceptable. What does anyone expect them to do, simply surrender their dreams of freedom and independence and lie down before their masters? The IDF needs to plan for the worst and that includes an attempt by masses to breach the border fence. (...) Escalation is written on the wall. The people of Gaza certainly don't want escalation and another war, and neither does the Israeli people, especially those living around the Gaza Strip. (...)

Gershon Baskin, JPO, 04.04.18

Hold your fire

(...) What happened last Friday must not be allowed to repeat itself tomorrow. (...) who approaches the border fence puts their life in danger. This attitude is

inhuman, immoral and illegal. The IDF (...) has neither authority nor permission to fire at unarmed demonstrators, who are not crossing the border fence. (...) The army has sufficient non-lethal means to stop the demonstrators from crossing the fence, without killing or wounding them through gunfire. (...) Most of those standing across from the army on the other side of the fence are neither soldiers nor terrorists. They are civilians who decided to wage an essentially non-violent struggle for their freedom. It's their right. (...) Another mass killing of demonstrators (...) could (...) spark a violent, bloody confrontation in Gaza and the rest of the occupied territories. (...) The army must do everything to prevent it.

Editorial, HAA, 05.04.18

Don't be fooled: Hamas is losing

(...) Images of thousands of Palestinians massing near the fence between the Gaza Strip and Israel, coupled with the news that almost 20 young men of fighting age were killed in the March 30 confrontation between Hamas and the IDF, looks like a public relations nightmare for the Jewish state. But as bad as the optics are in the short-term, what is unfolding is a win for Israel. (...) Hamas, a group that was previously able to terrorize Israelis with suicide bombings, kidnappings and rocket attacks, is now reduced to staging riots (...) Israelis are increasingly safe from Hamas attacks — and that's the story that matters. A terror organization historically dedicated to killing Jews in an effort (...) drive them from their homeland has failed in its quest (...). Salting crowds of civilians with armed Hamas operatives who use these civilians as cover as they attempt to pierce Israel's defensive barrier is a war crime that has gone unnoticed by the international media (...). The riots will continue and the death toll will rise, but eventually, Hamas will run out of young men to put in harm's way and the inhabitants of Gaza will get sick of being used as human shields for failed attacks on Israel and stop showing up at the fence. (...)

Dexter Van Zile, TOI, 05.05.18

For now, Palestinians are winning war of public opinion

(...) a new gimmick is expected next week: The protestors plan to carry olive branches and flowers. (...) As far as the IDF is concerned, in the balance of power vis-à-vis the Palestinians, the protests are a tactical problem, a security nuisance. This isn't a security threat (...). The fence protest is an outcry which isn't directed at Israel alone, but also at Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, at the United

States, at Egypt, at the entire Arab world. (...) The battle for public opinion depends on the military response to the protests, and it's a shame the IDF is using aggressive measures which have left 32 people dead and hundreds wounded so far. (...) where is the Israeli sophistication? (...) In the battle over public opinion, the Palestinians are winning. It may be time, with the Israeli interest in mind, to come up with a new strategy concerning Gaza that will include not only a security-aggressive response, but also an economic-social-diplomatic response. (...) Until then, we can launch rapid temporary activities, like placing a power plant ship off the shores of Gaza to provide electricity. (...) Fences, underground and aboveground walls, tunnels, snipers, tanks and aerial bombardments, force and more force—all this creates a tactical security response. Thinking that the Palestinians will be worn out after Nakba Day is an illusion. Israel disengaged from Gaza; Gaza didn't disengage from us. Whether we like it or not, it's our problem (...). Ronni Shaked, YED, 09.04.18

The source of Gaza's woes

A straight line leads from Ariel Sharon's forcible removal of Israeli settlers from the Gush Katif settlement (...) to the recent demonstration at the Gaza border fence. (...) Promoted as a step toward peace with the Palestinians and ridding ourselves of the burden of Gaza, the disengagement was supported by the majority of Israelis (...). As night follows day, Hamas took over Gaza as the Israeli settlers were forced out and the Israel Defense Force withdrew. (...) The disengagement was bad for Israel and was no favor to the two million Palestinians living in the Gaza Strip. (...) Hamas let it be known that its goal was to use Gaza as a base for a battle meant to lead to Israel's destruction. (...) The destruction and despondency that Hamas has caused the population in Gaza has over the years attained the dimensions of a human tragedy. (...) Relieving the misery that Hamas rule has brought to the Gaza population is most certainly a worthy cause for Israel and the world, but it is unlikely to be achieved as long as Hamas continues to rule the Strip. (...) It will only provide Hamas with additional resources to pursue its objectives. As long as Hamas continues to rule in Gaza there will be no relief for the population there and no respite for Israel. (...) Moshe Arens, HAA, 09.04.18

If you were an Israeli sniper near Gaza, you would shoot too

(...) The latest video of a sniper shooting a Gazan near the border fence is causing a bit of a stir. (...)

once a soldier myself (...) I find it impossible to judge the soldiers involved. The order itself, to shoot anyone reaching the fence, is both logical and reasonable. (...) To prevent death or injury, a Gazan has only to keep 100 yards from the fence. (...) Soldiers on the border are in a constant state of both tedium and stress. (...) In a sniper scope, the Gazan near the fence is an enemy, a potential threat, and a target. (...) The unknown soldier that appears to regard shooting a person as no different than one looking on as a hunter shoots a boar. We can and should be embarrassed. Humans are not game animals. Yet we should also not be too outraged. (...) Israeli soldiers do not sneak into civilian homes to slit the throats of small children, as Arab terrorists have done all too often. (...) Our soldiers protect us and it is our responsibility to support them, not attack them. (...) Shlomo Toren, TOI, 10.04.18

Decreasing international support for Hamas will stop Gaza violent protests

(...) Hamas's goal is to instigate unrest in order to raise international awareness of the Palestinian cause. (...) To achieve its goals, Hamas intentionally uses its civilian population. (...) The international community must realize that it is Hamas as a sovereign entity which is responsible for the deaths of Palestinian civilians during the riots. Hamas intentionally (...) blurs the lines between terrorist and civilian. (...) these "protests" are not peaceful (...). An Israeli soldier required to act in the face of violent protests has difficulty making a split-second decision whether to treat an individual as a civilian or a terrorist. Misidentification and the killing of a civilian will lead directly to international condemnation despite the fact that the responsibility for the mistake falls on Hamas. (...) Even if many consider its cause to be just, the time has come for Hamas to be subjected to condemnation for its premeditated use of violent and dangerous actions and its intentional endangerment of the citizens under its control during demonstrations portrayed as civilian in nature. Only when Hamas (...) realizes that the sympathy shown toward it is decreasing, and that there is no international support for or recognition of its efforts, will it be possible to reduce the number of such violent protests.

Liram Koblentz-Stenzler, JPO, 11.04.18

It's time to end policy of coexistence with Hamas

(...) Netanyahu adopted the conception favoring a Hamas rule in Gaza for military, and mainly political, reasons. According to his perception, the hostility and split between the Hamas-led Gaza and the West

Bank under the Palestinian Authority's control weaken Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, affecting his ability to negotiate on behalf of all the Palestinian people. (...) Some people are deluding themselves that the strip could be demilitarized and that its economy could be restored in cooperation with Hamas. These are pipe dreams. Hamas won't disarm out of its own free will, and bitter experience shows that a large part of the civilian aid eventually reaches Hamas and is used to reinforce its military needs. The story of the terror tunnels is a good example. (...) There has recently been a change in Abbas and the PA's stance, and they are demanding to regain control of Gaza. (...) According to all estimates, the situation in Gaza is on the verge of explosion. Nevertheless, Israel is standing aside and avoiding taking a stand (...). Let's hope that the Hamas-organized protests (...) will finally make Netanyahu recalculate his route. And maybe, he will finally let go of his perception that there is no alternative to Hamas and realize that it's time to fulfill his promise (...) and—together with Egypt and Saudi Arabia—help the PA regain control of Gaza.

Haim Ramon, YED, 13.04.18

2. Kriegsschauplatz Syrien

Die Entscheidung, „gegen den Einsatz von Chemiewaffen vorzugehen“, treffe auf seine volle Zustimmung, erklärte Israels Regierungschef Benjamin Netanyahu und betonte im gleichen Atemzug, dass das „Hauptelement, das den Nahen Osten mehr als jedes andere untergräbt“, der Iran sei. Die syrische Führung müsse die Gefahr erkennen und eine militärische Präsenz „des Iran und seiner Handlanger“ unterbinden. Der aktuelle Konfrontationskurs der beiden Weltmächte könnte sich als hinderlich für Israels Anliegen erweisen, denn Netanyahu setzt auch auf diplomatische Anstrengungen und auf die Hilfe Moskaus. Russlands Präsident Vladimir Putin hätte die Macht, die Revolutionsgarden nach Hause zu schicken. Nur hat Jerusalem umgekehrt aktuell wenig zu bieten. Im Gegenteil: Mit den sich verschärfenden Fronten zwischen Washington und Moskau schlägt sich Israel auf die Seite der Westmacht. Einen Vorgesmack darauf, wie gefährlich die iranischen Milizen Israel werden können, bekam die Luftwaffe erst vor wenigen Wochen, als eine einzige iranische Drohne von Syrien aus in Richtung Tel Aviv flog und so einen Schlagabtausch mit Syriens Armee auslöste, der schließlich den Abschuss eines israelischen Kampffluges nach sich zog. Der israelische Luftangriff Anfang April auf den syrischen Militärflughafen T-4

galt zentral den iranischen Drohnen. Das russische Verteidigungsministerium reagierte mit ungewöhnlichem Unmut auf den Angriff der israelischen Kampfflugs, der 14 Menschen das Leben kostete, die Hälfte davon Angehörige der iranischen Truppen. In Militärkreisen besteht die Sorge, dass es fortan veränderte Regeln für den Kriegsschauplatz Syrien geben wird und Moskau der israelischen Luftwaffe nicht mehr den Handlungsspielraum lässt wie bisher. Der Vergeltungsschlag der USA, Frankreichs und Großbritanniens auf syrische Ziele kommt erschwerend dazu.

Syrian situation calls for caution

The airstrike on the Syrian airport, attributed to Israel, was not a “routine” strike, one of hundreds it has carried out. Its timing could draw Israel into a war that it may not have planned for. (...) The possibility of escalation into a war of multiple participants involving Israel has become more tangible than ever. (...) Is Israel ready for a war that includes ground forces? Can it count on U.S. involvement, or at least support? These questions have no conclusive answer, especially given the confused policy of U.S. President Donald Trump (...). Nor can Israel ignore a scenario in which Russia turns from an ally of Israel that coordinates aerial activity in Syria into a power that confronts it. (...) What is needed now is to modulate the belligerent talk, holster its weapons and fully explore all diplomatic options. The cliché that war is easy to start but difficult to end is truer today than ever. Editorial, HAA, 11.04.18

Putin may limit Israel's operations in Syria in retaliation for U.S.-led strikes

The dilemma faced by decision-makers in the United States, Britain and France wasn't whether to strike Syria (...). The dilemma was how to carry out a measured attack under the given political conditions. (...) The speed with which U.S. Defense Secretary James Mattis announced that the assault was a “one-time shot,” (...) was meant mainly to send a tough message – but not much more than that. (...) In Israeli eyes, the attack doesn't resolve Israel's “private” issue with Syria and Iran. These are two different matters, but they affect each other. (...) Russia is in no hurry to retaliate militarily, but it can punish the main aggressor's ally. (...) Between Syria, Russia and Iran, it's the Islamic Republic that finds itself in the most sensitive position. (...) The swift plunge in the Iranian currency, the domestic unrest over the economy and the struggle against new economic sanctions all force Iran to tread with caution vis-à-vis Israel (...). Syria

has no real capability to respond to the triple attack, and it doesn't seem it plans to open a front against Israel. Therefore, the burden of response now falls on Russia. (...) Traditionally, Russia engages in a policy of diplomatic prevention (...) to thwart the West's punitive steps against Syria. (...) A sudden response to the strike on Syria could (...) give Western countries a new reason to intervene.
Zvi Bar'el, HAA, 14.04.18

Winds of war in a complex region

Winds of war are blowing through the Eastern Mediterranean. (...) The decision over the scope of the pending attack in Syria presents Trump with a tough dilemma. If he settles for launching dozens of missiles at a Syrian military base, as he did one year ago after Assad used sarin gas, the American president's credibility will take a considerable hit, mainly because the Syrian president was not especially troubled by that attack and continued slaughtering his own people. On the other hand, a broader attack by the U.S. and its allies against regime targets, and perhaps even Russian and Iranian targets, might only escalate the conflict. (...) The dilemma for the Russians is also complicated. After fully backing Assad's denial about the chemical attack in Douma and vowing to defend the Syrian regime, can Putin show restraint in the face of a strong American strike in Syria? And what will happen if Russian forces are hit? (...) Although Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's senior adviser, Ali Akbar Velayati, threatened to attack Israel in retaliation for its alleged airstrike on the T4 military base (...) Tehran has not repeated it (...). Israel has been right, despite the aforementioned complexities, to prepare itself, and also to make it clear that if the Iranians dare attack, Israel won't limit itself to hitting Iranian targets (...). As all this has unfolded, meanwhile, the winds of war have begun blowing from a different direction.
Oded Granot, IHY, 12.04.18

U.S. Options on Syria, to strike or not

(...) The United States has the backing of a strong and willing coalition to push forward a military option which includes France, the United Kingdom and even Saudi Arabia. (...) The second option President Trump has at his disposal is the diplomatic leverage the US can use towards Russia due to the pressure of a possible military strike- Russia's commitment in Syria is deeply rooted in its military presence along the Mediterranean, not with the Assad regime. The United States can guarantee to Russia it can maintain its bases without US interference, and in return the Trump administration can demand the full ousting of

the Assad regime and the removal of all Iranian proxies inside Syria including IRGC and Hezbollah. (...) A banishment of the regime from Syria is a swap Russia can tolerate because it simply does not have the appetite to be driven into a whole new war against the United States. The removal of Iranian proxies and their military bases will prove to the extent Russia truly controls Syria, if at all. (...)
Diliman Abdulkader, JPO, 13.04.18

Assad can breathe easily

(...) The Western allies did intend to deter Assad—to make it clear that using chemical weapons will cost him dearly (...). It can be determined now, however, that what took place will not achieve these lofty aims. (...) so long as he rides on Russia's coattails, Assad will not be deterred from using chemical weapons against his own people and possibly—in the longer run—against Israel as well. The leaders of the US, Britain and France—Donald Trump, Theresa May and Emmanuel Macron—intended to give both Assad and Russian President Vladimir Putin a red card, but it turned out to only be a pale yellow. (...) Assad ignored the previous strike, and double the number of missiles on chemical weapons facilities will not change his attitude. The message will continue falling on deaf ears (...). Assad speaks only one language—that of might—and his regime's senior officials only fear one thing: loss of control over Syria. (...) Even if we assume that the strike has achieved its goal, and not a single research lab or "medication factory" were left standing, Syria still has vast scientific knowhow to manufacture additional chemical armaments and dozens of scientists who have made unconventional arms their specialty. (...)
Ron Ben-Yishai, YED, 14.04.18

3. Holocaust-Gedenktag

Für zwei Minuten lang stand in Israel der Verkehr still. Die Fahrer stiegen aus ihren Autos, Fußgänger hielten an und verharrten in Gedenken an die Opfer der Shoah. Israels Ministerpräsident Benjamin Netanyahu nutzte die Gelegenheit seiner Ansprache in der Holocaust-Gedenkstätte Yad Vashem für eine Warnung an Teheran. „Ich habe eine Botschaft an die iranischen Herrscher: Stellt die Entschlossenheit des Staates Israel nicht auf die Probe.“ Netanjahu verglich das internationale Atomabkommen mit dem Iran mit dem Münchner Abkommen von 1938. Frankreich und Großbritannien hatten damals zugestimmt, dass Nazi-Deutschland sich die Sudetengebiete einverleibt. Gut 70 Jahre nach Ende des Zweiten Weltkriegs

leben in Israel nach Angaben des zuständigen Finanzministeriums noch rund 220.000 Holocaust-Überlebende. Die Behörde hatte zuletzt ihre Definitionen erweitert. Demnach erhalten heute auch Juden aus arabischen Staaten, die vom Nazi-Regime verfolgt wurden, Entschädigungszahlungen.

The Holocaust and Assad

If Syria, Russia and Iran are right and Israel did in fact carry out an attack on a Syrian air base (...), the Jewish state should be proud. On Holocaust Remembrance Day (...) it is essential for the world – and the Assad regime – to know that indiscriminate acts of barbarism will not be tolerated. (...) What makes the Syrian use of chlorine gas all the more despicable is that it was motivated not by desperation but by depravity. (...) the ruthless murder of civilians is rarely if ever a deciding factor in war. (...) Syria's Assad and Putin's Russia must know that they are not above the moral reckoning of the community of civilized nations. The two men lied when they claimed to have handed over all of Syria's chemical weapons to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in accordance with a deal reached between the Obama administration, the UN and Russia in 2013. Now they must pay for their lies. Failing to act will send a message to other rogue states and autocratic strongmen that it is possible to lie and deceive in international forums without consequences. (...) Holocaust Remembrance Day is not just a time to commemorate those lost to genocidal hatred, it is a time to remember the many failures of the community of nations that made the Holocaust possible, so that they are not repeated.

Editorial, JPO, 11.04.18

Israel still hasn't learnt the most important lesson of the Holocaust

We were once the vulnerable, stigmatized, stateless people, shorn of legal protections, who are now fodder for populist attacks in Trump's America, Hungary – or in Israel and Gaza. (...) We know the names of the survivors still living with us, but they are (...) beginning to fade. (...) For those of us descended from survivors (...) it inevitably means part of our personal and national connection to it will be lost in the universalization of the Holocaust as a historical symbol of dehumanization. (...) as we lose living witnesses, we will also have to let go of the "you can't compare" rule. (...) The Final Solution may not have a historical equivalent, but the dehumanization of entire ethnic groups and communities and the systematic erosion

of norms, laws and institutions that safeguard humanity have. (...) The Holocaust should inform and influence the way we look at contemporary politics and affairs of state. (...) we have a duty not to allow politicians to dehumanize the stateless people living there. (...) Because of the lessons we should learn from the Holocaust (...) We have no choice but to be on the frontlines of protecting civil and human rights and the institutions of democracy. And where those institutions are lacking, to play our role in building them ourselves. Israel still lacks a very basic one. (...) It is our duty, as descendants and heirs of all those generations of Jews who were denied their basic rights to live. A duty not just of Israelis, but of all Jews in whose name Israel was founded and who can and should bring their influence, experience and knowledge to bear in this project. (...)

Anshel Pfeffer, HAA, 12.04.18

Our Holocaust, their genocide

Shortly after learning the extent of the Holocaust, we launched an effort to convince the world that our unique disaster justifies a unique solution—the establishment of a Jewish state. At the same time, an accompanying voice said that the Holocaust should be seen as a warning against the satanic component in the nature of man and society. (...) Jews won't be its only victims. These two messages don't contradict each other, but the awareness of the masses seems to have trouble accepting them without one pushing the other one aside. (...) The Holocaust has become yet another genocide, one of many. (...) In light of the modified meaning of the term "Holocaust," persistent historians have been trying to teach us that the annihilation of Jews was a unique act. There was no instance before the Holocaust in which a state had planned and systematically executed the murder of a public for reasons that cannot be rationally explained. Colonialists eliminated millions of people to take over their lands and their nature resources; followers of one religion violently destroyed the believers of a competing religion; slaves dropped like flies on ships transporting them from Africa; nations slaughtered their neighbors for fear of being attacked by them; and tyrants murdered to secure their rule. None of these explanations applies to the Nazis' actions. The Jews didn't compete with the Nazis over material resources, they weren't turned into slaves to make use of their labor force, they weren't members of an exploitative class that had to be removed from power, and they didn't hold a shared ideology that jeopardized the government's worldview. They were annihilated (...) to liberate humanity from animals who are

not humans (...). Will these scholarly explanations succeed in clarifying to many people why the Holocaust is such a unique event? I doubt it. In a few years' time, the details will get lost in the sea of oblivion. (...)

Yaron London, YED, 12.04.18

4. Medienquerschnitt

Netanyahu's Zickzackkurs für die Geflüchteten

PM Netanyahu absolutely right in annulling migrant deal

Admitting a mistake is not zigzagging. (...) Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's decision to withdraw from the agreement with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, then, is worthy of all plaudits. The annulled agreement was very bad and could have set Israel seven years back when it comes to dealing with the problem of infiltration from African countries. (...) Fence or no fence, hundreds (...) of infiltrators enter Israel every day, only in this instance they have been dubbed "illegal migrants." While the fence makes their lives a little harder, it in no way prevents them from coming in. (...) if you're a true refugee, who is really persecuted in your country of origin, then asylum in another, relatively tranquil African country is a reasonable response to your plight. If you have chosen to immigrate for economic reasons, however (...) transference to another African country with similar economic standing is falling from bad to worse. (...) The agreement with the UN's agency (...) would have changed the map of infiltration incentives completely. Had Israel become a stopping point before continuing to Germany and Italy, it would have been incredibly worthwhile to try and infiltrate it. (...) Putting together a new solution this time (...) must be accompanied by a redefining of relations between the High Court and the political system. (...)

Shlomo Pyutrekovsky, YED, 04.04.18

Migrant policy

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's indecisive handling of the African migrant crisis raises serious questions about the ability of this government, and the man who stands at its head, to shape a coherent immigration policy. (...) African migrants – some of them with small children – are left in limbo wondering what Israel's next step will be. (...) We hope Netanyahu remains committed to Israel's original migrant policy that left no room for doubts and that worked (...) In contrast, the deal reached with the UN seemed bad.

Israel was to give residency status to illegal migrants (...). This has the potential to encourage thousands more to brave the trek to the Jewish state in the hope of receiving residency. (...) And even if Israel managed to deport 16,250 to Europe, it is unclear how it will deal with those who refuse to go. (...) Anyone human cannot remain indifferent to the plight of migrants seeking a better life. But (...) it is impossible for free, Western countries to solve the problems of the colossally dysfunctional societies of Africa and the Middle East by absorbing tens of thousands of migrants. (...) Israel, a tiny country of Jews (...) surrounded by hundreds of millions of hostile Muslims and with its own minority Arabs, is less well positioned than Europe to absorb Africans. (...)

Editorial, JPO, 03.04.18

Kronprinz Mohammed bin Salman und Israel

Our fair weathered Saudi friend

Have we entered a new period of sweetness and light with our Arab neighbors? (...) Not really. (...) it certainly appears that the prince has a religious-based objection to the existence of Israel. (...) Since at least 1979, the Saudis have invested billions of petrodollars in spreading Wahhabist Islam throughout the world. (...) While Muhammad's statement is refreshingly straightforward, its meaning is less so. (...) Certainly, it would be significant if the Saudis stopped funding the radical mosques they founded worldwide. (...) Muhammad said nothing revolutionary. (...) The most significant thing that came out of the interview is that Saudi Arabia's crown prince is very keen to cooperate with the US and with Israel in everything related to defeating what he refers to as the "triangle of evil." (...) it is fantastic that the Saudi leader wishes to cooperate with Israel in defeating our common foes. But Rhode warns that we need to take his commitment to tactical cooperation with Israel with a grain of salt. (...) Muhammad's regime is built on shaky foundations. (...) Under these conditions, there is a significant danger that Muhammad will be sabotaged by forces within his own extended family. Israel must take this danger into consideration with every step it takes in Muhammad's direction. Even if Muhammad acts in good faith, there is reason to suspect those around him will use his cooperation with Israel to harm him – and Israel. (...)

Caroline B. Glick, JPO, 04.03.18

Gesetz zur Umgehung des Obersten Gerichtshofs

The government's goal: Bypass the law

Israel's 70th Independence Day celebrations will be marked by repeated efforts to contravene the justice system's independence. (...) The constant threat to enact a law that bypasses the High Court of Justice, which would give the Knesset tremendous power and enable it to pass any legislation it pleases, took another turn this week. (...) This is a model that effectively denies the court the authority to review legislation (...). Israel has one legislative house and the state is not subject to the European Human Rights Convention or to such an international judiciary authority. Obviously, if the Supreme Court is deprived of its most important power, the Knesset and cabinet will have unlimited power. History has already shown that there is nothing more dangerous than an unrestricted, uncontrolled government.

Editorial, HAA, 13.04.18

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Hermann Bünz,

Leiter der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Israel

Redaktion:

Susanne Knaul

Judith Stelmach

Homepage: www.fes.org.il

Email: fes@fes.org.il