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1. Knesset stimmt für Nationalstaatsgesetz

Mit knapper Mehrheit von 62 zu 55 Stimmen entschieden die Abgeordneten der Knesset für das umstrittene Nationalstaatsgesetz. Ziel des neuen Grundgesetzes ist es, den "Charakter Israels als nationales Heim des jüdischen Volkes", zu festigen. Das Rückkehrrecht für Juden aus aller Welt, nationale Symbole, jüdische Feiertage und Hebräisch als einzige offizielle Landessprache gehören dazu. Bisläng galt auch Arabisch als Landessprache. Der exakte Status des Arabischen soll noch geregelt werden. "Das Nationalstaatsgesetz ist zweifellos der Tiefpunkt der chronischen Krankheit, die die Demokratie plagt", meinte der arabische Abgeordnete Ahmad Tibi (Vereinte Liste). Ab sofort gäbe es zwei Gruppen von Bürgern: "eine Gruppe der Juden, die Rechte haben, und eine andere der tolerierten Gäste". Wenn das kein Rassismus sei, wisse er nicht, wie er es nennen solle. Tibi repräsentiert die knapp 20 Prozent arabischen Staatsbürger Israels. Da es sich um ein Grundgesetz handelt, war eine absolute Mehrheit bei der Abstimmung nötig. Staatspräsident Reuven Rivlin distanzierte sich auf für sein Amt ungewöhnlich scharfe Weise von dem Gesetz, das "dem jüdischen Volk in der Welt und in Israel" schaden könne. Auf breite Solidarität stieß vor allem die drusische Bevölkerung in Israel. An einer Demonstration gegen das Nationalstaatsgesetz, das Anführer der drusischen Minderheit initiiert hatten, nahmen am 4.8.2018 in Tel Aviv Zehntausende Bür-

ger_innen, unter ihnen auch viele Juden und Jüdinnen, teil. Mehrere Offiziere der Armee, die der drusischen Gemeinde angehören, quitierten aus Protest gegen das neue Grundgesetz ihren Dienst.

Don't soften it, bury it

(...) The problem with the nation-state bill is not only what's in it, but also what's not. The bill's authors made sure to remove any commitment to the principles of the Declaration of Independence, most prominently the principle of equal rights for all its citizens. (...) the clause which says the state will work to preserve its ties with Diaspora Jews was amended. The aim of the change is embarrassing: The government wants Israel to be able to continue to undermine these ties, for example, with its moves against Reform Judaism and the disputes regarding prayer at the Western Wall. (...) The fact that the state is defining itself as religious – a definition that was deliberately omitted from the Declaration of Independence – provides more encouragement for the caustic processes of religious coercion and the destructiveness inherent in the bill. There's no doubt that this will be used to justify demands to intensify the influence of religion on the state. The nation-state bill is a shameful initiative in any version (...). Israel doesn't need a law that defines it as the nation-state of the Jewish people, casts a heavy pall over its democratic character and harms its minorities and those who aren't considered Jewish under

Jewish law. This law must be immediately and irrevocably buried.

Editorial, HAA, 16.07.18

A Zionist constitutional revolution

(...) The new bill, which makes the Jewish character of the state a national value that can be enforced in various ways, restores the old and proper balance between the rights of the individual and the patriotic values of Israel as the only national home of the Jewish people. (...) The very fact that foreign ministries of certain Western countries and various groups in leading universities around the world consider Zionism to be a form of racism means that the nation-state bill says something that is anything but self-explanatory. The nation-state bill sends an important (...) message – that Israelis are all-in when it comes to the Zionist idea of having a Jewish national home (...). Since Israel's basic laws are its de facto constitution, the definition of Israel as a nation-state will now be at the pinnacle of Israeli law. (...) the new bill's main audience is Israel's judiciary, which has consistently eroded the state's Jewish character through various rulings. Israel's Jewish character was once considered a legal consensus, but lately, judges no longer seem to accept this. (...) today courts are struggling to uphold Israel's Jewish values. (...) Israel's basic laws currently deal extensively with governance and personal freedoms but make no clear statement that guarantees Israel's national character. Thus, the nation-state bill sends a Zionist message to the Israeli public on both sides of the political divide; it sends a clear message to backers and detractors of Israel abroad; it provides a strong embrace for our brethren abroad; and it creates a Zionist legal revolution that would restore the welcome equilibrium between the rights of the individual and Israel's character as the nation-state of the Jewish people.

Dr. Aviad Bakshi, IHY, 17.07.18

The Nation-State Law's gift to the ninth of Av

(...) The rabbinic teaching about the reason for the destruction of the second Temple – wanton hatred – suddenly is not theoretical. Prophetic denunciations of social depravity, cruelty and injustice leap off the pages of ancient texts into our consciousness as we absorb the news (...). Israel's version of a constitutional amendment(...) declares realities that are known (...) what is the problem? (...) To Druze and Bedouin citizens of this country, (...) to Muslim and Christian Arab citizens (...) there was nothing theoretical or trivial in the clear message that they are

second-class citizens. (...) Indeed, this law reeks of national insecurity. For there is no credible doubt about Israel as the nation-state of the Jews. After all, we have a robustly national – as well as democratic and egalitarian – Declaration of Independence, and a Law of Return that make all this very clear, as do many other formal and informal institutions of life, including the established calendar and language (...). There is no reason why Arabic should not be taught seriously in schools here (...). This is not "only" because 20% of the population is Arabic-speaking, but because we live in the Middle East. It would behoove us to understand the cultures, plural, of those among whom we live and certainly of those who are citizens here and who we wish to be loyal citizens. If nothing else, it would serve our security if we did not alienate and demean 20% of the population. (...) We, of all people, should be sensitive to minorities here and treat them with respect (...). There is absolutely no need for this law, except to stoke the electoral base of craven, cowardly politicians, and stir fear, division and hatred in the run-up to the next elections.

Shulamit S. Magnus. JPO, 23.07.18

Is the nationality law a wolf in sheep's clothing?

(...) why would people for whom Israel's Jewish identity plays a vital part in the shaping of their being, such as myself, oppose it? (...) a closer examination shows that it is a case of a wolf in sheep's clothing. The bill seeks to change the existing law, suggesting, inter alia, to downgrade the status of Arabic from an official language to one with a "special status"—a move which is meant as an act of defiance against the Arab minority. The (...) bill's most dramatic damage is the violation of the balance between the Zionist enterprise's particular aspect and its universal one. The bill proposal extensively reviews one side of the equation—the Jewish identity of the state—without mentioning its democratic element. (...) A unilateral nationality law contradicts the vow we made to ourselves and to the world in the Declaration of Independence, Israel's constitutive document, which says the state is the national home of the Jewish people, but at the same time it commits to "maintain full equality in social and political rights for all its citizens, regardless of religion, race or gender." (...) The nationality bill contradicts constitutional norms across the world. Countries that enshrine into their constitutions their status as a nation state always balance it with a constitutional provision addressing the "other." (...) After 70 years of resounding success in the physical

aspects of the Israeli existence—security, economy, science, and more—it is time to deal with our identity aspects with a careful, balanced, generous and trusting hand. It cannot be done while denying all that is dear to us—our humanity, our Judaism, our Israeliness and our membership in the international community. Let us not shame ourselves.

Yedidia Stern, YED, 19.07.18

Nation-state law: More than a declaration

(...) a political firestorm raged over the approval of the nation-state law – an operative defense measure. While Israel is busy defending itself on various levels on the ground, the traditional chorus of critics asserts that passing legislation that defines Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish people is "racist, fascist, discriminatory, declarative and hollow." How did these haters turn a legitimate democratic decision into a "fascist" declaration? (...) there is nothing new in the nation-state law. A Palestinian state never existed here, but a Jewish state did (...). Even Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, in one of his pre-Oslo Accords speeches in the early 1990s, acknowledged that Israel is a Jewish state. So why did we need the nation-state law to begin with? (...) As far as the Palestinians are concerned, Palestinian nationality is permitted but Jewish nationality is forbidden. This is why the nation-state law is imperative and it is not merely declarative: The law defines Israel as the "nation-state" of the Jewish people, thus putting the brakes on the Palestinian's subversive plans. Let's see the High Court of Justice repeal that.

Dr. Reuven Berko, IHY, 23.07.18

The Right against Israel

(...) After all these laws are really not a disaster. (...) The most poisonous of its articles was removed. This is proof of the effect democratic discourse could have. So was the law to regulate surrogacy, which is under contention in most democratic nations. There is not general consensus that this is even an appropriate procedure—because of the exploitation of women—and there is no basic right for gays to be able to use a surrogate mother to become parents. (...) Israel is a Jewish state. It appears 29 times, no less, in the UN Partition Plan. (...) So why exactly did we need this law? Well, we didn't. And the more days that pass, the more it appears the damage is much bigger than first believed. (...) There's no need to agree with every word in the different statements. But it appears Is-

rael's parliament scored an own goal. The Nationality Law has one more dubious achievement: it undermines the very important relationship between the Jewish majority and the Druze in Israel. (...) this is a Basic Law. It has no discrimination, but it does have a defiant tone, unnecessarily so. Why did we need this? The Nationality Law is a Basic Law, and there is no chance of changing it under the current coalition. The High Court won't rush to pull the chestnuts out of the fire, either. And only one thing is clear beyond any doubt. A week ago, there was consensus about Israel being a Jewish and democratic state. This week, this consensus is far less stable.

Ben-Dror Yemini, YED, 23.07.18

Here is what's really Jewish about a Jewish state

(...) The Judaism of the "Nation-State Bill" is a shallow and mean thing, reduced to a flag, an anthem, a star on a map marking Jerusalem as our capital, and a sour insistence that Hebrew is Israel's only official language, and the Jewish holidays its only official holidays. (...) what bothered me most about the law was its too-shallow notion of Judaism in a Jewish State, which it summed up as a bunch of symbols, a plot of land, and ability to muffle non-Jews. There has got to be more to it than that. (...) A Jewish State is a state that sees in Tisha B'av not just a memorial to an ancient tragedy caused by ancient hatreds, but a chance to reflect, together, on today's hatreds. It is a state that seeks to take the deep Jewish tradition of family, and adapt it to a time, ours, when our notions of family are wider than our grandparents' notions, and theirs. It's a state that tries to learn something from Jewish history that coaxes from us our chauvinisms, rather than indulge them. (...)

Noah Efron, TOI, 23.07.18

Today, I Am Ashamed to Be an Israeli

(...) The founding fathers of the State of Israel who signed the Declaration considered the principle of equality as the bedrock of the society they were building. (...) 70 years later, the Israeli government has just passed a new law that replaces the principle of equality and universal values with nationalism and racism. (...) Can we ignore the intolerable gap between what the Declaration of Independence promised and what was fulfilled, the gap between the idea and the realities of Israel? Does the condition of occupation and domination over another people fit the Declaration of Independence? Is there any sense in the independence of one at the ex-

pense of the fundamental rights of the other? (...) I still believe that despite all the objective and subjective difficulties, the future of Israel and its position in the family of enlightened nations will depend on our ability to realize the promise of the founding fathers as they canonized it in the Declaration of Independence. (...) Instead, we now have a law that confirms the Arab population as second-class citizens. It therefore is a very clear form of apartheid. (...) I don't think the Jewish people survived for 20 centuries, mostly through persecution and enduring endless cruelties, in order to now become the oppressors, inflicting cruelty on others. This new law does exactly that. That is why I am ashamed of being an Israeli today.

Daniel Barenboim, HAA, 22.07.18

Where are the voices?

(...) The silence is "deafening." Where are the voices... the voices of Israeli Jews... to cry out, to scream loudly in protest to the mal-treatment of the Druze communities, our most honored, beloved and loyal non-Jewish citizens? (...) They have never raised a hand against a Jew. (...) Their dedication to the State of Israel, their fierce and constant loyalty, has made the Druze people one of the most honored and respected communities in our country. (...) They ask very little of us. All they want is our respect. And until now they have had 100% of it. Until the tragedy of an unnecessary new Basic Law of the Jewish Nation-State succeeded in becoming the law of the land only a few short days ago. Alarmed by the law's content and fearful of becoming second-class citizens, the Druze have turned to the High Court of Justice petitioning for amending the discriminatory clauses in the new law. Where are the voices of Israel's Jews? (...) If we do not hear the voices raised in defense of the Druze, Ahmad Tibi was correct when he declared on the floor of the Knesset that democracy in Israel is dead. (...)

Esor Ben-Sorek, TOI, 27.07.18

Thank you to our Druze brothers

This time MKs and ministers cannot complain against the High Court of Justice or the left for obstructing governance, or for lacking in patriotism. When they enact racist legislation, which undermines Israel's basic values, they are wholly responsible. The only required step is (...) a total annulment of the law, which blatantly discriminates against some of Israel's citizens. The outcry to adapt the law so that it doesn't harm the Druze, and perhaps also the Christian Arabs, the Circassians

and the Bedouins serving in the army, and are thus included in the "good Arabs" classification, attests more than anything else to the undemocratic, un-Zionist worldview characterizing the rightist lawmakers. (...) Dividing the state's residents into "good" and "bad" was meant to crush the Arab minority's culture and turn Zionism, which stood for equal rights for all Israel's residents, into a racist doctrine. (...) The Nation-State Law stipulates that from now on, even the illusion of equality poses a danger to Israel's Jewish identity. The absurdity is that now even Jews, secular and religious, who strive for democracy and human rights, who still believe in enlightened Zionism and see the state as a joint, egalitarian framework for the majority and the minority – that is to say, most of the public – depend on the success of the minorities' struggle against the law. (...)

Editorial, HAA, 27.07.18

The most anti-Israeli law

(...) The authors of the Nationality Law (...) didn't have a clue how to drive on the road. But outside of this narrow circle, everyone gets it. The law removes all those who do not belong to the tribe from the Israeli core. It turns the Druze community in Israel from friends into an embittered population. It says to Bedouin, Christians, Muslims (...) you have no part in life here. At best, you are leftovers. (...) It is outrageous in every single respect—morally, historically and practically. (...) The question of "what are we" has accompanied the State of Israel since its founding. Its founding fathers spoke about a Hebrew state—a Hebrew language, Hebrew work, Hebrew military, a Hebrew post office. (...) is no coincidence that Ben Gurion chose a broader name which contains more—Israel. The choice allows, among other things, for Druze officers in the army to speak in Israel's name and to feel completely at home. (...) Their identity cards are Israeli, their nationality is Israeli. Israeliness is the common denominator apart of which everybody who lives in Israel can live. (...) The persistent erosion of Israeliness is our biggest failure, a searing failure. The Nationality Law turns this failure into ideology. (...) When the scale of values is overturned, there is no escape from going to the square, not only for the sake of our Druze brothers but also for all Israelis and for Israeliness.

Nahum Barnea, YED, 30.07.18

Israel's nation-state law is good for the Druze

(...) I have felt uncomfortable with the Druze-Jewish connection. At a rather early stage I understood that

the deal made between the two sides is improper, if not to say odious. (...) the dominant and strong Zionist-Jewish power has manipulated us helpless Druze, entirely for the good of the Zionist enterprise and the Jewish state (...) leaders of the Jewish pre-state community planted the illusion among the Druze that they are partners and brothers in arms. In reality, the country has disinherited the Druze from their lands, makes it difficult for them to build on those lands that remain, closes the door in their faces when it comes to everything concerning employment in government companies and does not invest in infra-structure and jobs in the villages (...) Druze youths feel betrayed by it and the day may even come when their disappointment and frustration will be translated into a Druze intifada (...) the law is not a surprise at all because it is a form of a precise photograph of practices long employed by Israel toward us Druze and the rest of the Arabs. In this respect, putting matters in a legal framework does not harm us because it does not change the reality of our lives, anyway. All the more so, the law is good for us and bad for the country. It is good for us because it establishes the discriminatory, and even racist, reality in a basic law so we will no longer be forced to exert ourselves to prove our claims about institutionalized discrimination. It is bad for the country because it defames it among the enlightened nations of the world. (...) the law will not be amended and the wailing will be answered by weak pats on the shoulder, at the most. But this will not be the end of the matter. The big crises between the Druze community and the country seem still to be ahead of us. (...) The law puts an end to this twisting and turning and states that Judaism comes before democracy. The law discriminates and is even racist, but at least it is clear and does not try to square the circle as the liberals and self-righteous are trying to do, when they claim the country can be both.

Rabah Halabi, HAA, 30.07.18

2. Keine Leihmütter für homosexuelle Männer

Israels LGBT-Gemeinde zürnt. Grund ist die Entscheidung der Knesset gegen das Recht für schwule Paare und alleinstehende Männer, den Dienst von israelischen Leihmüttern in Anspruch nehmen zu dürfen, wie es heterosexuellen Paaren schon lange und jüngst auch alleinstehenden Frauen erlaubt ist. Rund 80.000 DemonstrantInnen protestierten gegen diese offene Benachteiligung. Mitauslöser für die Aufregung war zudem ein Messerüberfall auf eine

transsexuelle Person in Tel Aviv. Im internationalen Vergleich genießen die Mitglieder der LGBT-Gemeinde in Israel sehr weitgehende Rechte. Gerade Regierungschef Benjamin Netanyahu rühmt Israel gern für die Liberalität und sexuelle Freiheit vor allem im Vergleich zu den muslimischen Nachbarländern. Nicht zuletzt lässt es sich mit dem LGBT-Tourismus gut verdienen. Der diesjährige CSD in Tel Aviv ließ es mit über 200.000 Teilnehmer_innen in den Kassen klingeln. Netanyahu hatte anfangs sogar in Aussicht gestellt, die Gesetzesreform zum Thema Leihmütter auch für alleinstehende Männer und schwule Paare zu unterstützen, machte am Ende jedoch einen Rückzieher. Aus Solidarität mit ihren schwulen Mitarbeitern kündigten mehrere Unternehmen an, einen Teil der Kosten für die Leihmütterschaft im Ausland zu übernehmen. Die israelischen Filialen von Microsoft und eBay schlossen sich dem Streik an, den die Histadrut, Israels zentrale Gewerkschaft ausrief. „Der Kampf für gleiche Rechte der LGBT-Gemeinde“, so argumentierte Gewerkschaftschef Avi Nissenkorn, „ist ein wesentlicher Kampf für Israels Gesellschaft.“

A model for the next battle

The LGBT protest, which brought down even the apolitical wall behind which Israel's business community is entrenched, should inspire the liberal camp and fill it with hope. It underscored the political and economic power that the camp commands as well as its unrealized potential to halting Israel's degeneration. The forces behind the protest (...) must join the protest against the nation-state law. (...) The pattern of the struggle should be copied exactly: corporate press releases, paid notices of support in the media and allowing employees to join the protest strike without forfeiting wages or vacation days. (...) In deleting the principles of equality and individual rights from the definition of the state, the Knesset has declared its exit from the club of liberal countries and entry to the bloc of ultranationalist and ethnocentric countries. The time has come to launch a civil protest that will call for the repeal of the nation-state law and express solidarity with Israel's Arab citizens. (...)

Editorial, HAA, 23.07.18

Israel's Surrogacy Law 'HB2' moment is bad, but not anti-Zionism fodder

(...) The legislation passed in the Knesset on Wednesday could have been revolutionary. While falling far short, it still does expand the state's socialized-medical coverage for surrogate pregnan-

cies, from infertile heterosexual couples to unwed mothers as well. (...) I am an American transgender woman dating an Israeli transgender guy. As I never had a uterus and the testosterone he takes deactivates his, surrogacy (using my previously chilled sperm and eggs he can preserve), as well as adoption – which itself sees queer access disparity in Israel – are very real options for us to build our future with (...). State support for us becoming parents equal to any other couple for whom it is physically less complicated, would not only affirm the love and warmth we could offer our children, but also allow us to begin that journey sooner. Instead of saving up for surrogacy itself, we could invest in a college fund. (...) There is no other country in the Middle East where these ideals are as possible to contemplate, let alone stand up to demand. Homosexuality is still an arrestable, if not capital offense nearby. It is hard to imagine calling a surrogacy bill for single women “not going far enough” in places where single women cannot even walk the streets, drive unescorted, or keep their intact clitorises into adulthood. This week was a step back-ward in Israel (...)
Hannah Simpson, JPO, 23.07.18

Surrogacy and equality: The acute emotional pain of childless families

(...) It was wise of the LGBT groups to move the focus from simply the surrogacy issue to the greater question of equality for all. The law raises serious issues concerning the right of all to parenthood. If surrogacy is allowed for heterosexual couples and single women, it should be extended for homosexual couples. (...) Israel is more than child-friendly, it is child-obsessed. The emotional pain of those who want to have families and can't – married or single, regardless of sexual orientation – is acute. (...) Very few options are available for single men or male couples seeking to pursue the surrogate option. (...) Making this option available in Israel would bring it under strict supervision. Here, every effort could be made to ensure that women who offer their wombs are protected and compensated without fear of the enterprise descending into the dark-organ trade fueled by commercial interests. (...) Every effort must be made to find a way to allow those who want to fulfill their desire for parenthood, regardless of gender, to do so – while at the same time protecting the rights of the women whose wombs are used to nurture the unborn children. (...)
Editorial, JPO, 23.07.18

Gay rights don't need to come at the cost of trafficking women's organs

(...) the problem with the surrogacy law is broader than just gay men. What really ought to be protested is that in allowing surrogacy at all, the government has been sanctioning the trafficking of women's organs for the past 22 years. (...) In Israel, the law says that neither side of a surrogacy agreement can “receive or give compensation in money or in the equivalent of money... except for payments authorized by the authorization committee.” In theory, the law allows women to carry someone else's child only out of altruism. In practice, however, that is not what actually happens. (...) there tends to be a major class difference between the people who pay for a surrogate and the women who agree to carry their babies. (...) There is also the emotional toll of carrying a baby for 10 months (...) and then not keeping it. And then there are the health issues. In the absolute joy of a new baby being born, the lasting effects of pregnancy on a woman's body are rarely part of the public discourse, but that doesn't make them less serious. (...) Are the people renting out a woman's womb also following up with the woman throughout her lifetime and paying for medical care for all of those issues? Not usually. (...) Why is that only the case for surrogacy and not for organ donors? (...) An argument can be made for a truly altruistic surrogacy system, like the organ donation system, which would be fair. But until that happens, this is another form of discrimination, even of the commodification of women, of calculating their worth by their childbearing abilities. (...) gay parenthood (...) does not need to come at the expense of trafficking in women's bodies.
Lahav Harkov, JPO, 23.07.18

3. Kriegsgefahr noch nicht gebannt

Die Situation im Gazastreifen droht unverändert zu eskalieren. Zwar gingen die seit Ende März regelmäßig abgehaltenen Demonstrationen im Grenzgebiet deutlich zurück. Trotzdem kommt es sporadisch immer wieder zu Toten – zuletzt auch erstmals wieder auf israelischer Seite. Das israelische Militär beschoss mehrere Militärposten der islamistischen Hamas, nachdem israelische Soldaten unter Beschuss geraten waren und dabei ein Soldat tödlich getroffen wurde. Ein Sprecher des Gesundheitsministeriums im Gazastreifen erklärte, bei dem Beschuss seien drei Palästinenser getötet worden. Sie hätten den bewaffneten Kräften der Hamas angehört. Die israelische Armee erklärte, ein palästinien-

sischer Scharfschütze habe auf die Soldaten gefeuert. Dieser habe seinen Angriff "unter dem Schutz von 20 Kindern ausgeübt, die als Lockvögel" an die Grenze geschickt worden seien. Aufgrund andauernder Brandanschläge ließ die Armee vorübergehend den Warenübergang Keren Schalom sperren.

The moment of truth in Gaza

(...) One factor pushing Hamas toward an escalation is (...) the economic crisis afflicting the population in Gaza under its rule. (...) the terrorist organization would rather charge into the unknown, in the assumption that anything, even a military skirmish or war, is preferable to the current dead-end – which could turn the population against it. (...) Hamas has been digging in its heels and is seeking to impose a balance of power on Israel (...) Israel for its part cannot come to terms with these restrictions on its freedom to act in Gaza. (...) the true, long-term challenge facing Israel does not lie in the Gaza Strip, but rather in Iran and its efforts to establish a presence in Syria. Therefore, Israel's attention and focus was and still is aimed northward, and it is clear that any distraction or sideways glance southward will allow Tehran to deepen its military foothold in Syria. Israel's mission is to find an answer to arson terrorism, maintain diplomatic and economic pressure on Hamas without collapsing Gaza, and mainly to defeat Hamas in the psychological sphere. (...)

Eyal Zisser, IHY, 17.07.18

A zero-sum game

(...) The current escalation in Gaza has once again brought our deep misunderstanding of Muslim theology to the fore-front. (...) The Left continues to be held captive by the romantic notion that the people in Gaza are nothing but desperate victims who are forced to contend with predatory Zionism with nothing but a slingshot in their hands. Of course, the opposite is in fact true. The reality is that the gasoline fueling the incendiary kites is not a sign of desperation but the aspiration of conquering the land from the north to the south. The Right, too, with its calls for the government to reach a one-and-done solution and topple the Hamas regime has been tainted by an arrogance that amount to contempt for the enemy. While our security forces can topple Hamas, the question is what will take its place. (...) in the absence of centralized leadership, several groups will rise up and set the border on fire in return for a symbolic payment from the Iranian patron. Even if Israel is forced to return to Gaza, and even if

it retakes the territory, we must be honest with ourselves and recognize that any such action would be cosmetic only. The people in Gaza will not be deterred by the Right's stick, nor will they be satisfied with the carrot offered by the Left. (...) For the people in Gaza, this is a zero-sum game: It is either us or them. The only thing left for Israel to do then is manage the conflict, because a resolution just isn't on the table.

Galit Distel Etebaryan, IHY, 19.07.18

More potential for escalation

(...) Israel must keep the peace on the southern border, for the north is much more challenging. Achieving peace on the southern border requires taking a step that Israel has yet to take: recognizing that the Gaza Strip can only be rehabilitated in cooperation with the government in Gaza, even if Hamas is still in charge. Reopening the Kerem Shalom border crossing is not the answer. (...) A long-term quiet along the southern border can only be achieved by making a deal with the Gaza government, without any pretense. The price we have to pay is political and public, but it is a small and equal price. (...) for the past 13 years, we have been locked in a propaganda war with Gaza. We have repeatedly declared that Hamas is a terrorist organization and therefore, we will not negotiate with it. The prime minister can hardly stray from this line, since it carries an internal political price—the price of cutting ties with his most important political base. (...)

Giora Eiland, YED, 26.07.18

Gaza's indifference will spell its end

(...) I live in Dir al-Balah, a quiet, lovely city, situated in the heart of the Strip. (...) We live in an apartment on the second and top floor. Our bad luck is that it faces southeast, which means it is exposed to the sun from the morning hours almost until sunset. (...) At least I have an apartment. (...) The lengthy power cutoffs affect the pumping of water into homes throughout the Gaza Strip and this has become even more serious than usual. For two days we've had no water at home. (...) we are waiting to bathe even in cold water, to get five minutes of refreshment. This is the dream of every Gaza resident in the summer of 2018. (...) people are taking everything in stride. The main concern is to get through the day, to survive the moment and not think about tomorrow. (...) Everyone rightly asks about Gaza's infrastructure, which has deteriorated badly, and seek to brainstorm about how they can be repaired

or rebuilt so that they can at least meet the residents' basic humanitarian needs. This is a critical need that requires the immediate mobilization of all the influential forces in the region. But my small city, which has become a sad, dark city, has taught me something new. It, like Gaza as a whole, needs not only its infrastructure rehabilitated, but first and foremost the rehabilitation of the men, women and children who live in it.

Mohammed Azaiza, HAA, 30.07.18

4. Medienquerschnitt

Ahed Tamimi aus Haft entlassen

Strange bedfellows

Ahed Tamimi, the Palestinian teen, (...) has jumped aboard the bizarre coalition against the nation-state law – from Saeb Erekat to Tzipi Livni (...). Tamimi used the word "apartheid," and she is moderate compared to those describing the law as "Nazi," such as A.B. Yehoshua, who asked: "Why is the word 'Jew' constantly mentioned?" (...) It is frightening that a letter penned by senior officers is lending a hand to the dangerous politics of extortion and separatism. (...) For many years now, Israel has been undergoing a revolution. This revolution isn't Bolshevik in nature and the military isn't attempting a coup; it is slow, over a long period of time, more in the vein of trench warfare. All signs indicate that many of the state's organs no longer heed the elected government. They only follow the commands of the alternative hegemony, headed by the Supreme Court. And the Supreme Court is just as interested in having the power to govern as in upholding the rule of law. We must wait and see whether the Druze leadership can take a step back from the ledge. Perhaps Tamimi will help them understand who their new friends are.

Amnon Lord, IHY, 30.07.18

HAA = Haaretz

YED = Yedioth Ahronoth / Ynetnews

JPO = Jerusalem Post

IHY = Israel HaYom

TOI = Times of Israel

GLO = Globes

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