



**Schlaglicht Israel Nr. 20/18
Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen**

1.-15. November

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1. Zwei Tage Krieg mit Gaza

Mit brennenden Reifen protestierten Bewohner der Stadt Sderot gegen die Ankündigung der Regierung, einem Waffenstillstand mit der Hamas zuzustimmen. Sie hätten es satt, immer wieder in die Bunker flüchten zu müssen, schimpften die Leute. Die verbreitete Befürchtung in den israelischen Ortschaften unweit der Grenze zum Gazastreifen ist, dass die Feuerpause nicht lange halten wird. Im Gazastreifen feierten Palästinenser die „Kapitulation der Zionisten“. Islamistische Kämpfer hatten Israel in nur zwei Tagen mit rund 460 Raketen und Mörsergranaten angegriffen. Umgekehrt attackierten Israels Luftwaffe und die Marine Ziele der Islamisten, darunter einen von der Hamas kontrollierten Fernsehsender. Auslöser der neuen Eskalation war die Aufdeckung einer israelischen Spezialeinheit im Gazastreifen. Das in Zivilkleidung agierende Sonderkommando war im Süden des Gazastreifens von Milizen der Hamas entdeckt worden. Bei anschließenden Kämpfen starben sieben Palästinenser, darunter ein führender Kommandant der Hamas. Auf israelischer Seite fiel ein Oberstleutnant. Israels Ministerpräsident Benjamin Netanyahu, der aufgrund der Entwicklungen im Süden seine Teilnahme an den Feierlichkeiten zum 100jährigen Jubiläum zum Ende des Ersten Weltkrieges in Paris abbrach, hatte zuvor versucht, mit einer Geldspritze im Umfang von 15 Millionen US-Dollar einen Krieg zu verhindern. Katar hatte das Geld zur Verfügung gestellt, um die von

der PA seit Monaten ausgesetzte Zahlung von Gehältern öffentlicher Beamter im Gazastreifen zu übernehmen. Mehrere israelische Minister wie auch Oppositionspolitiker kritisierten den Waffenstillstand. Yair Lapid von der Mittepartei Yesh Atid beschuldigte das Sicherheitskabinett, „die Bürger im Süden und Israels Abschreckungskraft zu opfern“. Verteidigungsminister, Avigdor Liberman, trat aus Protest gegen den Waffenstillstand zurück, nachdem Regierungschef Netanyahu behauptet hatte, dass es im Kabinett Einhelligkeit im Hinblick auf die Einstellung der Gefechte mit der Hamas gegeben habe.

The arrangement with Hamas will never happen

We've been told for a long time that the ceasefire is on the way. (...) For years the Gaza Strip has been a pressure cooker bound to explode. (...) according to politicians and commentators (...) Hamas needs an achievement, quiet, hudna, arrangement, in order to lift the blockade and improve the situation. (...) The logic of Hamas is different. Hamas does not want improvement. Hamas is putting in all the effort into preserving Gaza as the pressure cooker it currently is. (...) There is readiness for a ceasefire there. (...) The meaning of 'quiet' in the dictionary of the resistance is getting ready for the next campaign. The resistance will continue to fill and develop the weapons stockpiles for future campaigns," explained the official. And what is Israeli policy? There is no policy. Restraint is

appropriate, provided it does not become an actual policy. For years there has been no Israeli initiative. (...) It is in Israel's interests for the strip to prosper. Even if Hamas would have refused the offer, Israel would still have benefited from merely making such a proposal. There is no simple solution to attrition warfare. But when pursuing an arrangement, there is a need for a coherent policy and not illusions. What we have right now is the opposite. (...)
Ben-Dror Yemini, YED, 01.11.18

Who is afraid of Hamas? Another military round is inevitable

(...) As the cabinet did not decide to remove the Islamic despots in Gaza, Israel can find itself fighting another war with no significant diplomatic or military gains. (...) The problem is (...) with the cabinet ministers rather than with the army. With no decision to end the misery of masses of Gazans who live under a ruthless dictatorship, any war might end with diplomatic and even military defeat to Israel. Without destroying the Jihadists, it is probable that the situation of the people of Gaza will only be worsened. (...) Arabs in Gaza are enslaved and oppressed by their Islamic tyrants. (...) Following the lack of any decision to put an end to 12 years of Islamic rule in Gaza, many innocents are victimized and abused by armed Islamic militias that serve the "holy" cause of building an Iranian-style caliphate near Israel. Another military round in Gaza is inevitable. Hamas will continue to construct terror tunnels, threaten the Israelis with homemade rockets, torture and oppress its people through the most vicious means and get funding from the mullahs in Tehran. Sooner or later, Israel will have to deal with Hamas and put into deeds the threats made by senior cabinet ministers who promised to knock down the organization and destroy it. (...)

David Merhav, JPO, 03.11.18

Solving Gaza crisis with water and energy

(...) Declarations and threats against Hamas (...) are not particularly effective, especially when it comes to acts of violence carried out by desperate and radicalized young people, encouraged by bad actors who are immune to Israeli, Palestinian, and international public opinion. What is required instead is a commitment on the part of the State of Israel to long-term strategy and bottom-up, high-impact, sustainable solutions for Gaza, not just declarations. (...) Thanks to modern science and technology, we have means to provide water and electricity even to remote dry areas like the Arava desert (...). There is

no technical reason why the almost 2 million residents of Gaza don't have these basic services. (...) we cannot let politics or even terror get in the way of supplying the people of Gaza with basic humanitarian services. Not if we want to stop the cycle of violence. There has been no stronger voice for solving the humanitarian crisis in Gaza despite the ongoing violence, than that of the Israeli Defense Forces. (...) There are Israelis and Palestinians with the technical knowhow and experience ready to provide Gazans with drinkable water, water for agriculture, wastewater treatment and reuse facilities, and reliable sources of energy from the sun. What is lacking is not the knowhow but the political will. (...) The Israeli government must make a strategic commitment to solving the humanitarian crisis in Gaza as it did when confronted with missiles and tunnels, for the threat of a large neighboring population living without hope is just as great.

David Lehrer, YED, 03.11.18

Toppling Hamas is not the solution

(...) Netanyahu's government today is (...) deep in negotiations with Hamas, seeking a long-term cease fire that will provide Israel with quiet in the south and maintain Hamas' rule over the Gaza Strip. (...) Israel has no alternative but to accept Hamas control in Gaza. (...) Without having the political courage to say so openly, it seems as if our prime minister has reached the same conclusion. (...) Netanyahu made it clear that the humanitarian problem in Gaza was the most pressing issue there, not Hamas. (...) Sending in tanks and troops will not solve the need to restore Gaza's infrastructure nor resolve the deep economic crisis in the Strip. (...) Could it be, that come the 2019 election campaign (...) for the first time in a decade we will be spared Netanyahu's (...) empty threats to destroy the Hamas?

Jeff Barak, JPO, 04.11.18

Let the IDF win

Prior to the tragic (...) death of an IDF soldier in Gaza, it seemed as if Peace Now has been reborn within Likud. (...) On the other hand, the Israeli left is also suffering from a split personality disorder—supporters of peace and compromise suddenly endorsed a military operation with the possibility of having hundreds of dead on the Palestinian side (...). The reality here confuses everyone. (...) Those who do not want to resolve the situation militarily will find themselves in a military operation without a possible resolution; if not right now, then soon. The

Israeli government has had only two options since the end of Operation Protective Edge: the internationally funded Marshall Plan in the Gaza Strip with the subsequent demilitarization, or a well planned military operation intended to resolve the issue once and for all—destroying Hamas's centers of gravity—a military language that at one time, everyone was able to understand. There is no interim solution worth \$15 million. It's an illusion. The enemy state on our southern border must be restrained through deterrence, either by giving them something to lose or by eliminating the regime, in order to clarify the price they have to pay for their terror. (...) no one is willing to tell us what the strategic goal is? (...) What does the State of Israel seek? (...)

Yoaz Hendel, YED, 11.12.18

Qatar flashes cash at Gaza while Hamas continues its brutality

(...) Hamas has driven Gaza into the ground. (...) the bloodthirsty killers in control of the strip are overdue for an official reclassification. (...) Enter Qatar. As the world's richest per-capita nation and Hamas' staunchest ally, the emirate is in a position to make a difference for the people of Gaza. (...) They could, for example, force Hamas' leaders to bow out of their obsession with violence. They might force them to redirect government funds and attention from carving terror-tunnels and fashioning missiles to improving infrastructure and casting whatever lines they need to provide their citizens with sufficient health care, energy and water. (...) The colorless, terrorism-supporting monarchy chose to confront these issues with the only thing they've ever been able to offer: cold, hard cash. (...) there is nothing innately wrong in government workers being paid for their work. Nevertheless, Qatar's actions herein provide nothing of a solution to the suffering citizens of Gaza. After all, this cash will only fortify the root of all Gaza's perils – the heartless, child-sacrificing deathcult that is Hamas. Every ounce of agony within the Gaza Strip can be traced back to Hamas. (...) Public executions have been as brutal as they have been routine, with suspected traitors being dragged through the streets of Gaza City from the backs of motorcycles. Homosexuality is a capital offense and boys are encouraged to murder their own sisters should suspicions of "dishonoring" the family arise. (...) Yet, Qatar believes itself to be helping ordinary Gazans by keeping these monsters around. Even if Qatar were to send \$90 billion into Gaza, the scourge of Hamas oppression and

mismanagement would not be even partially alleviated. (...) Palestinians don't need their money. They need their freedom.
Shmuley Boteach, JPO, 12.11.18

Israel must make a decision on Gaza

(...) Without a coherent strategy, Israel has had to limit itself to tactical responses. (...) The result of prioritizing political expediency over strategic national security interests has been to put the fate of the residents of the northwestern Negev in the hands of Hamas and lame duck West Bank leader Mahmoud Abbas. Abbas wants to regain control of Gaza. (...) The only way to end this cat and mouse game (...) is for Israel to make a decision. It must choose whether its interests lie in perpetuating and formalizing Gaza's separation from the West Bank, or in seeing it return to full PA control. (...) A reunification strategy would require a toppling of the Hamas administration. (...) unless Israel can be assured it will not be saddled with the responsibility of reoccupying and administering Gaza, it would be folly of the first magnitude to undertake such a task. (...) This means Israel must hammer out an international agreement that includes an iron-clad commitment to provide an international force that would assume responsibility for Gaza, ensuring public security and providing the level of competent governance required for its physical rehabilitation. (...) A separation strategy might seem to be more politically palatable, but this is not necessarily the case. Any agreement giving Hamas the international recognition, legitimacy, and financial aid it craves must include at least partial demilitarization. If it does not do so, it is a sucker deal, as far as Israel is concerned. (...) Israel has left itself without any effective strategic option for ensuring the peace and welfare of southern Israel, since as long as it limits itself to tactical measures, it can neither topple Hamas nor reach an acceptable and viable agreement with it. (...)

Jonathan Ariel, TOI, 12.11.18

Civilians without protection

(...) Too many residents of the southern cities' older neighborhoods live without a security room or a public shelter nearby— or with a shelter that cannot accommodate all the area's residents. (...) The requirement to build residential buildings with security rooms has been in effect since the early 1990s. But in Netivot, Ofakim, Be'er Sheva, Ashdod, Ashkelon and other cities there are many structures built years earlier that don't have security rooms.

(...) Sderot has successfully proven that homes can be protected. But residents of other cities deserve this same basic right. The state must advance convenient and speedy solutions for the residents of all those areas lacking protection. The Iron Dome anti-rocket system cannot deal with everything, and human life can't be abandoned.

Editorial, HAA, 14.11.18

2. Annäherung zwischen Israel und arabischen Staaten

Ungeachtet der Eiszeit im Friedensprozess mit den Palästinensern findet eine Annäherung der Beziehungen zwischen Israel und arabischen Staaten statt. Regierungschef Benjamin Netanyahu reiste unlängst nach Oman, Kulturministerin Miri Regev besuchte Abu Dhabi und Kommunikationsminister Ayoub Kara Dubai. Geheime Kontakte gab es mit den meisten dieser Länder schon lange. Neu ist, dass die Treffen auf Staatsebene der Öffentlichkeit nicht länger vorenthalten werden. Hauptgrund für diese Entwicklung dürfte der gemeinsame Feind Iran sein. Viele der arabischen Länder sehen, ähnlich wie Israel, die nukleare Aufrüstung Teherans als Bedrohung für die gesamte Region. Davon abgesehen spielen wirtschaftliche und Sicherheitsinteressen eine Rolle. Israelische IT-Produkte sind auch in arabischen Ländern begehrt. Der Protest der palästinensischen Führung, die die Glaubensbrüder dazu anhält, von einer Annäherung an Israel abzusehen, solange die Besatzung andauert, stößt bei den arabischen Regierungs- und Staatsschefs zunehmend auf taube Ohren.

How far can Netanyahu take Israel's romance with the Arab world?

The last few weeks have seen a flurry of apparent breakthroughs in Israel's foreign relations with the Arab world. (...) Israel's position in the world is stronger today than it was for most of the country's history. Netanyahu deserves some credit for this, but the groundwork for this shift occurred over two decades ago. (...) The heady days of the Oslo peace process saw officials in the Labor governments of Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres as guests in many countries that lacked relations with Israel. Like Netanyahu, Peres and Rabin visited Oman (...). Bahrain hosted an Israeli minister in 1994. As prime minister, Peres also traveled to Qatar. (...) Rabin and Peres were riding the wave of optimism surrounding a reinvigorated peace process. That diplomacy yielded real, lasting improvements. (...)

Netanyahu is instrumentalizing the products of a peace process he vehemently opposed two decades ago and has partly helped upend today. (...) Netanyahu has also benefited from regional tensions between Iran and Saudi Arabia and its allies. (...) A common enemy can produce some meetings and covert collaboration, but only a final status agreement with the Palestinians can inspire normalization. (...)

Evan Gottesman, HAA, 05.11.18

Has the golden age of American Jewry come to an end?

(...) Here are four reasons why there has never been a greater time in our history to be a Jew. (...) we are blessed with a strong Israel, with its top military and strong economy, that has restored the honor, dignity and security of every Jew. We are blessed with the support of 650 million Evangelical Christians, committed to the Jewish people and the state of Israel. We are blessed to witness a realignment in the Arab world as Israel and the Gulf states are on the cusp of establishing diplomatic relations. Prime Minister Netanyahu's recent visit to Oman, the playing of Israel's national anthem Hatikvah for the first time in Abu Dhabi in the presence of Minister of Culture and Sport Miri Regev after Sagi Muki won the gold medal at the Judo Grand Competition, Minister of Transportation Yisrael Katz's announcement that he is going to Oman to discuss building a railroad between Israel and the Gulf and Oman's announcement that it is time to accept Israel. (...) We are living in a time of extraordinary cooperation between Muslims and Jews in America (...) Has the golden age of American Jewry come to an end? Certainly not! Once unthinkable, the prospect of diplomatic relations between Israel and the Gulf would be one of the greatest achievements in recent history. (...)

Marc Schneider, TOI, 07.11.18

Israel's renewed affair with Oman

(...) Israeli ties with Oman are not new; their first encounter was in the early 1970s, after Sultan Qaboos seized power. (...) in the 1960s Israel also assisted the royalists in northern Yemen in their struggle against Egypt, and therefore it is no surprise that Israel helped Oman as well. Besides the fact that Israel sought allies in the Middle East, Oman's importance derives from its geographical and strategic location in the Arab Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz. (...) Oman supported the 1978 Camp David Accords between Israel and Egypt (...).

After the Madrid Conference, the signing of the Oslo Accords and the peace treaty with Jordan, there was a turning point in Israeli-Omani relations. (...) secret contacts (...) prepared the ground for the meeting between prime minister Yitzhak Rabin and Sultan Qaboos, on December 27th, 1994, two months after the signing of the Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty. This was the first official meeting between an Israeli leader and an Arab ruler in the Gulf. (...) In January 1996, Israel and Oman signed an agreement to open trade missions. (...) The most important project carried out by Israel and Oman was the establishment of the Middle East Desalination Research Center (...), inaugurated in 1997. (...) Netanyahu's visit to Oman symbolizes the renewal of an old "romance." At the same time, Oman's willingness to reveal the meeting is indicative of boldness and self-confidence, especially against the backdrop of the deadlock between Israel and the Palestinians. In the local press, Qaboos is portrayed as a "man of peace." In light of his fatal illness, perhaps this is the legacy he wants to leave behind. (...) two reasons may explain the visit's aims: One, an attempt to offer an Omani mediation to the dormant Israeli-Palestinian peace process. (...) Second, Israel may have wanted to use the good offices of Oman, which enjoy good relations with Iran and/or Syria. (...) Qaboos can use Israel to reach out to the United States and the West in general. (...) Elie Podeh, JPO, 08.11.18

Why the Sultan of Oman invited Netanyahu

(...) why did the sultan agree to an official visit by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu two-and-a-half weeks ago? (...) The sultan is trying to promote an arrangement that will cool off the Israeli-Palestinian crisis, and mediating without direct talks is not mediating. (...) Oman can help U.S. President Donald Trump precisely because it keeps its distance from the conflict. (...) Helping Trump is important because he can provide Oman with American security guarantees. After all, American-Iranian tensions are escalating; last week the U.S. imposed a new phase of economic sanctions. Due to its economic and political ties with Iran, Oman is exposed to American retaliatory measures. It is therefore important for the sultan to show Trump that Oman can help his administration in the Israeli-Palestinian context. (...) The sultan will probably not pay a domestic price for Netanyahu's visit (...). Iran wasn't happy about the visit, but it needs Oman. In the Arab world, Qaboos has been castigated by Islamists and extremist intellectuals, but not by the regimes. The chances of

Oman's mediation advancing the peace process are low, but even if it fails, Qaboos' move has already helped his country's security. It is also possible that technological and intelligence cooperation with Israel will help Oman, and in exchange there will be trade relations. The visit improved Netanyahu's position and eroded Abbas' status. It will also encourage similar steps by other countries. (...) Dr. Amatzia Baram, HAA, 14.11.18

3. Liberman tritt ab

Aus Protest gegen die Feuerpause im Gazastreifen hat Israels Verteidigungsminister Avigdor Liberman seinen Rücktritt erklärt und die Regierung damit in eine Krise gestürzt. Der als Hardliner geltende Minister bezeichnete die Waffenruhe mit militanten Palästinensergruppen am Mittwoch als „Kapitulation vor dem Terror“. Liberman verließ die Regierung zusammen mit der kompletten Fraktion und forderte dazu auf, rasch einen Termin für vorgezogene Neuwahlen festzulegen. Die Partei Yisrael Beiteanu hält im Parlament fünf Sitze. Theoretisch könnte die Regierung mit der knappen Mehrheit von nur einer Stimme bis zu den im Herbst 2019 anstehenden Wahlen weiterregieren. Oppositionspolitiker Yair Lapid von der Mittepartei Yesh Atid drängt ähnlich wie Liberman und Arbeitspartei-Vorsitzender Avi Gabbay zu baldigen Neuwahlen. Lapid und Gabbay sehen sich selbst als mögliche Nachfolger von Ministerpräsident Benjamin Netanyahu im höchsten Regierungsamt.

Lieberman's resignation is no great loss

(...) Lieberman was right in claiming that the Cabinet's decision (...) was a "surrender to terrorism." (...) the very resignation (...) is not helpful. It gives a very important asset to Hamas free of charge, which will encourage them no less than the cabinet's decision. (...) However, Lieberman's resignation does not really undermine national security. (...) Lieberman had only (...) common sense and political skill. (...) His influence on the IDF's structure, organization, and equipment was also not great, to put it mildly. In the political sphere, that is, in the cabinet, he was one of equals, and not as important and influential as he should have been on issues of war and peace. (...) Lieberman gave the chief of staff and the generals of the General Staff almost complete freedom of action (...). In matters of the Defense Ministry, he was much more active, (...) such as the issue of providing protection to the towns in the shadow of the conflict and the defense indus-

tries. The plan for fortification and emergency preparedness currently being implemented is in fact the main achievement of the Lieberman period in the Defense Ministry. (...) There was, however, one main obstacle that Lieberman brought with him to the Defense Ministry: his statements on the Gaza issue, including his viral statement about the 48 hour ultimatum he gave to Hamas leader Haniyeh. These came back to him as a boomerang, again and again. In the end, it was the matter of Gaza that exploded in his face and caused him to leave prematurely. (...) Repeated pronouncements intended to give him prestige in his political "base" ultimately made him seem pathetic at best, and at worst ridiculous. A defense minister who repeatedly declares that the army and the cabinet do not accept his positions and his mudslinging with Minister Bennett have turned him from a decision maker into a member of an uninteresting debate club. Lieberman, like Moshe Arens before him, did not know how to transform from a citizen and a politician into a decision-maker possessing vision.

Ron Ben Yishai, YED, 14.11.18

Elections now

(...) the erosion of the governing coalition should be used to move up the next general election. (...) Netanyahu's government has no vision or peace plan; it wants to perpetuate the occupation and has no interest in talks with the Palestinians. Netanyahu has brought Israel closer to illiberal democracies and populist governments at the expense of its liberal friends in Europe (...). Netanyahu has been leading a campaign against the rule of law. (...) Netanyahu incites against the media, the police, the opposition and human rights groups. (...) Netanyahu exploited his position to pass laws that will ensure he can stay in power even if he's indicted. (...) the police recommended indictments in the so-called submarine affair (...), one involving Netanyahu associates including his personal lawyer, who is also his cousin and former envoy. If this government remains in place, Netanyahu will be more vulnerable to pressure than in the past. Politically he'll have to prove he's more right-wing than Habayit Hayehudi, and economically he'll have to contend with Finance Minister Moshe Kahlon handing out money and gifts that will further increase the 2018 deficit. Netanyahu has damaged Israel's civic fabric. He's not interested in promoting a diplomatic solution with the Palestinians but is preoccupied solely with his political survival. Now is the time to end the farce of this noxious government.

Editorial, HAA, 15.11.18

Netanyahu's dilemma: Surrender to his arch-nemesis or be forcefully dragged into elections

(...) Netanyahu stood by and watched as Naftali Bennett, his annoying nemesis, attacked, insulted and disparaged Lieberman over a policy for which the prime minister was primarily responsible. (...) The friction and disagreements spread to almost every security issue they discussed (...). For the second time in the past decade, Gaza has ended up defining Lieberman, one of Israel's top politicians. (...) But Gaza is just the hook. Since Lieberman has taken over as defense minister, his party has been losing ground in the polls and he hasn't gotten any electoral dividends. (...) Understanding that elections will take place soon, perhaps in March or May, Lieberman decided to throw himself off the deck to try to save Yisrael Beiteinu from electoral death. It's doubtful this will happen. He may have missed the boat. (...) Netanyahu has begun consultations with the coalition heads to stabilize the government. The man who periodically wanted to advance the elections and was blocked from doing so by his partners now seems to be fighting tooth and nail to hold on to his post. (...)

Yossi Verter, HAA, 15.11.18

Slogans don't win wars

Defense Minister Avigdor Lieberman's resignation)...(awarded Hamas an important achievement;)...(he adopted the terrorist group's "recommendation" and stepped down. Social media cynics were quick to point out that (...) it was Hamas that sent Lieberman packing after only two days of fighting. Reality is far more complicated, of course (...). Lieberman made his frustration known and (...) will surely push the narrative that his position was based on his perception of how the war on terror should be waged but it is hard to escape the feeling that his decision was heavily tainted with political motives and a desire to carve out a better electoral position for himself and his party, Yisrael Beytenu, ahead of the next election. (...) Lieberman really did give IDF officials the necessary leeway to do their job, (...) but the downside was that the defense establishment needs a strong minister to head it (...). The way he handled the selection of the next chief of staff was also very professional. Lieberman's departure from the Defense Ministry will not leave a vacuum, but the question of his successor is one to look out for. (...) The list of those chomping at the bit to be named defense minister is

long (...) at this time, we need someone steady and experienced at the helm. Two names come to mind as natural candidates for this position: Construction and Housing Minister Yoav Gallant, formerly GOC Southern Command, and former IDF chief of staff Benny Gantz. (...) they would integrate into the system seamlessly (...). as seasoned military men, they already know what (...) wars cannot be fought, let alone won, with mere slogans.
Yoav Limor, IHY, 15.11.18

Lieberman handed Hamas a free win

(...) If Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has to choose between calling early elections and appointing Habayit Hayehudi leader Naftali Bennett as defense minister, we would be best served by opting for the former. (...) To Lieberman's credit, he has been a better defense minister than his immediate predecessor Moshe Ya'alon. (...) Lieberman changed the way the IDF responded to Hamas provocations, be it riots on the border, excavation of tunnels or rocket fire. The IDF responses became much more forceful. The technological breakthrough that allows easier detection of cross-border tunnels was also made during his tenure, and many such tunnels were destroyed. (...) The most fascinating thing about Lieberman's time as defense minister is how (...) this did not improve his popularity. In fact, the opposite is true. His resignation stems from a desire to outflank the Likud from the right ahead of the elections. (...) whatever misgivings one might have over Netanyahu's handling of security matters, his stature is on the rise. Netanyahu has managed to convince the public that he has an objective he wants to achieve, especially in the north. This proves that he is head and shoulders above the rest.
Amnon Lord, IHY, 15.11.18

4. Medienquerschnitt

U-Boot-Affäre

Submarine affair is opportunity for reform

It would be hard to overstate the dramatic implications of the so-called submarine affair. (...) It is now obvious that this is the worst defense-related corruption case in Israeli history and a real earthquake that should have everyone who cares about Israel worried. (...) The public feels that everything is for sale, that nothing is sacred – even the most sensitive procurement deals – and that every strategic body is run by a corrupt individual who cuts a profit for his

strategic interests. (...) The tragedy is that the submarines that were bought in those shady deals are in fact essential. The submarines are among the best and they are the most suitable for the Israeli Navy. (...) Germany has so far not nullified the deal despite its prior warning that it would do just that if it turned out that the Israeli negotiators were acting unlawfully. (...) That said, the fact that so many high-ranking officials in so many sensitive positions allegedly engaged in such activity should have all of us lose sleep, including the prime minister. The findings should prompt the Diplomatic-Security Cabinet to convene an emergency session to set clear guidelines that would introduce new oversight mechanisms. It should also grant the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee greater powers so that it can vet those who serve as mediators in procurement deals and make sure that former officials cannot meddle in official affairs. (...) The submarine affair is an opportunity to revamp the entire system. (...)
Yoav Limor, IHY, 09.11.18

US-Sanktionen gegen Iran

Trump's Sanctions and Iran's Other Nuclear Option

(...) the Iranian government may have a recourse in kind up its sleeve. (...) Iran has the breakout potential to (...) blockade maritime trade (...). It's essential that American and Israeli leaders in the business, political and military spheres understand Iran's economic redlines (...) as well as Iran's past and current military capabilities. (...) Iranian officials have bragged how Iran controls four Arab capitals; Beirut, Baghdad, Damascus, and Sana'a. Iran has proxy forces, influence, or direct control over these political centers. (...) Using the Houthis and its own naval forces, Iran could cut Saudi and Gulf Arab maritime trade down to a trickle, and force global shippers to make expensive reroutes. Even a Nasser-like false claim of mining the straits would force ships to re-route. Each vessel, besides its cargo, is worth millions, far too dear for shipping companies to risk. A reduction in traffic in the Red Sea would greatly affect southern maritime trade into Israel. (...) Iran possess the option of blockading major trade routes and severely damaging the world's economy. The straits remain vulnerable targets, and Iran might be inclined to lash out at them for vengeance. Both the US and Israel need to be wary of this strategic option. (...) Otherwise, despite any attempts to avoid

open conflict, sanctions will not be a prelude to “economic war”, but an unforeseen military conflagration.

Michael Starr, TOI, 04.11.18

Abbas belohnt Terroristen

On ‘Pay for Slay’ the UN and Abbas are misleading the world

When Mahmoud Abbas addressed the recent UN General Assembly he (...) was specifically defending the Palestinian Authority’s (PA) law and policy – known collectively as the PA’s ‘Play to Slay’ policy – whereby the PA uses more than 7% of its entire annual budget, over 1.2 billion shekels, to financially reward terrorists. Abbas’s message was clear – the PA, under his leadership, will continue squandering its limited resources to finance its putrid policy. Abbas’ message was suspiciously lost on the UN translator. Instead of translating what Abbas actually said, Palestinian Media Watch has exposed that the translator misled the listeners by saying that Abbas said, “I pay tribute to all freedom loving countries and peoples and our martyrs”. Now the UN Secretary General’s Special representative to the Middle East, Nickolay Mladenov, is apparently joining the UN translators. (...) Mladenov has warned Israel’s government that implementing a law passed by Israel’s parliament in July 2018 will cause the “collapse of the PA.” (...) Israel is itself providing the funds to the PA to reward the Palestinian terrorists who murder Israelis. The new Israeli legislation sought to put an end to this absurdity. It requires that the Israeli government deduct any funds that the PA spends to reward terrorism from the monies it collects and transfers to them. (...) Abbas is threatening to cease PA-Israeli security coordination if Israel implements the new law. (...) Abbas’s threats (...) should be seen in their wider context, most particularly, the clear fear that instead of rewarding terrorists the PA will have to start compensating the victims. It’s time the UN, Mladenov and Abbas realize that rewarding terrorists was never and will never be acceptable. (...)

Maurice Hirsch, TOI, 06.11.18

Protest gegen das “Loyalität in der Kultur”-Gesetz von Kulturministerin Regev

A rallying call for the arts

(...) Despite her governmental role, Regev has once again chosen to follow the path of division and incitement. In her view, what’s at issue isn’t the contemptible “cultural loyalty” law she is pushing (...) but that same desire for vengeance against all those “patrons of culture,” a euphemism for leftist Ashkenazim from Tel Aviv, who for years were responsible for “the ugliest injustices of all.” (...) The protest against her is about her incessant efforts to use art and culture as a tool of right-wing politics, and her desire to use public funds as an economic whip against anyone who wishes to criticize the state through art. (...) What is at issue today is a governmental effort to gag the field of public culture. Therefore, anyone to whom culture is dear must participate in this struggle. (...)

Editorial, HAA, 09.11.18

HAA = Haaretz

YED = Yedioth Ahronoth / Ynetnews

JPO = Jerusalem Post

IHY = Israel HaYom

TOI = Times of Israel

GLO = Globes

Veröffentlicht im: November 2018

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