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1. Im Vorfeld der Parlamentswahlen – die Fronten formen sich

Links und rechts in Israels Parteienlandschaft entstehen vor den Neuwahlen am 17. September neue Bündnisse. Um ihre Chancen zu steigern, entschieden sich die drei arabischen Parteien und die kommunistische Chadash zum erneuten Zusammengehen. Bereits vor vier Jahren waren die antizionistischen Parteien gemeinsam an den Start getreten und hatten damit Erfolg. Nun soll der neuerliche Zusammenschluss die enttäuschten arabischen Wähler_innen wieder zu den Wahlurnen bringen. Israels Ex-Regierungschef Ehud Barak entschied sich mit seiner eben erst gegründeten Partei Demokratisches Israel für ein Zusammengehen mit der Meretz, der aus der Arbeitspartei ausgeschiedenen Abgeordneten Stav Shaffir und Yael Cohen Paran, Co-Vorsitzende der Grünen Bewegung, die von 2015 bis 2019 Mitglied der Knesset für die Zionistische Union war. Spitzenkandidat ist jedoch nicht Barak, sondern Nitzan Horowitz, der offen schwul lebende Parteichef der Meretz. Shaffir steht auf Platz zwei der Liste. Unter der Führung der ehemaligen Justizministerin Ayelet Shaked gehen außerdem drei rechte Parteien zusammen in den Wahlkampf. Das neue Bündnis zielt auf eine Stärkung des jüdischen Charakters des Staates Israel. Die Gründung eines Palästinenserstaates lehnt das Rechtsbündnis, das erklärtermaßen eine Regierung

unter Israels amtierendem Ministerpräsidenten Benjamin Netanyahu unterstützen will, ab.

How to unify the left and save Israel

Shortly after the Labor Party's leadership primary, I feel I have to apologize to everyone who decided that I should move aside a bit. Really, what was I thinking, "a girl" who dares express herself in a clear voice on a playing field reserved for journalists and politicians who jealously guard the scepter for one another. (...) Israel has one of the few political systems in the world that continues to elect veteran politicians, not young leaders. (...) still belittle and ridicule women. (...) Thousands of Labor Party members voted for me despite the tricks and the blatant and covert misogyny, because they thought that I was worthy of leading the party. Not because I'm a woman, but because they knew I'd fight for them and wouldn't be deterred by the members of the club who are afraid of a change to the old order. (...) I work for the public and Israel's future. (...) The upcoming election will decide the future of Israeli democracy. (...) All people who understand that this is a choice between conservatives and Kahanists on the one hand and democrats and liberals on the other also understand that they must mobilize for the battle. A messianic and extremist group on the right has taken over politics not by flattery but by steadily accumulating power with the goal of winning the battle. (...) There is much discussion about the role of the Labor Party, but it's not the pundits who will

decide on this issue, it's the party leadership. This party has made mistakes in recent years but also fought for Israelis more than any rival and in the past led the country in its most crucial moments. It must decide that now too it will steer the ship – and win. The first step: to unite the camp. (...) We must create a strong tie between Labor, Meretz and Ehud Barak's Democratic Israel to build a strong Israeli left. The leaders of the camp must meet without preconditions and with a clear decision – we're running together. (...)

Stav Shaffir, HAA, 20.07.19

When bigger is better

(...) One of the most obvious problems with the election for the 21st Knesset was the number of smaller parties that ran. (...) Each similar party draws away potential voters of a larger list. (...) whoever is chosen to create the new government is more reliant on smaller parties that end up with disproportionate power, enabling them to determine who will be prime minister through coalition deal-making. This opens the door to political blackmail, not democratic plurality. (...) some smaller parties will not pass the electoral threshold. In an election in which every vote should count, large numbers of votes go to waste. (...) a large number of parties running for the limited Knesset seats is not necessarily a sign of a healthy democracy. It can be a sign that too many political egos are involved. Each person wants to head a list, not content to be in a high spot in a broader party. (...) The infighting within existing lists, such as Zehut and the National Union and Otzma Yehudit, is debilitating to those parties, and is one of the biggest problems preventing lists from merging. In this light, the decision by Levy-Abecassis to run together with Labor under Amir Peretz is a welcome development. That Kulanu has already found its place within the Likud is similarly a positive move. The creation of Blue and White earlier this year is part of this trend. (...) An effective opposition also needs to be able to unite and provide a credible political threat in the event of a no-confidence motion. (...) different sectors of society can be represented within larger blocs without the need for parochial small parties. (...)

Editorial, JPO, 21.07.19

Political reality will soon take the bloom off Shaked's return

(...) Shaked, which means almond, is a fitting name for a campaign with a short-lived bloom, just like the nut's bright pink almond blossom. Behind the

scenes, there is already cautious discussion of a union of the religious bloc to the right of the Likud Party. But several of the rabbis won't have a woman as their leader, while others won't have a secular person. Some simply want the leadership for themselves; they might agree to unite under Shaked for show, but no more. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (...) and his wife are not fond of Shaked - and worse, they know that some of her votes are bound to come from the Likud itself. Netanyahu is fighting for his territory, and territory isn't something you compromise on. (...) Shaked and Bennett left the Jewish Home party to start the New Right (...) the two embarked on an independent path only to realize that despite their personal popularity, the product they were selling was obsolete. (...) The story of Bennett and Shaked encompasses the story of the entire right-wing. Their natural home is the Likud Party: that's where they both started their political careers, and that's to where they aspire to return. (...) But one thing prevents their return: the Netanyahu. (...) The old right, Netanyahu and the Likud, is well established. Its voters don't want a new right. And many religious voters are only interested in a sectoral party to protect their interests and voted for the Union of Right-Wing Parties instead. And there's one more problem. In the White House sits a president who's in favor of the settlement agenda, making it hard on people on the far-right to offer an attractive political agenda. The struggle for the territories was replaced by struggles over religious affairs, and that's what the current elections are about. However, neither Shaked nor Bennett have anything to offer in that regard. (...) The attempt to establish a Likud 2.0, with a tiny kippa and cool videos on social media, wasn't successful. The earlier attempt to combine Likud refugees with nationalist-ultra-Orthodox rabbis wasn't successful either and is not likely to be successful this time around.

Nahum Barnea, YED, 22.07.19

The Right must unite

New Right leader Ayelet Shaked (...) wants to become the leader of a united bloc of all right-wing parties to the right of the Likud. In her first speech as head of the party she (...) urged Habayit Hayehudi leader Rafi Peretz to step aside and let her lead a merged faction. (...) Peretz expected Bennett and Shaked to come courting with their heads bowed – not launch an election campaign that paints him into a corner. Only in Israeli politics can a party that failed to get elected demand a larger party yield to its demands. On the other hand, Shaked's electoral

appeal cannot be denied, and in her years in politics, she has been careful not to clash with elements she thought she would one day have to work with, like Netanyahu or the leaders of the smaller right-wing parties. (...) she made sure to only battle the opposition, taking credit where credit was due. (...The fact that Bennett chose to place the good of his party and the right-wing bloc ahead of his own ego cannot be understated. The decision couldn't have been an easy one, as a potential merger with the United Right could see him placed fourth on their slate. This may leave him without a portfolio in the next government – quite the fall from grace for the former leader of Habayit Hayehudi. (...) Bennett is now paying the price but it is one that he made himself pay.

Mati Tuchfeld, IHY, 22.07.19

Peretz, it's your turn now

After years of being crushed by the steamroller of right-wing, nationalist incitement that Benjamin Netanyahu has built and perfected during his far too many years in power, Israel's democratic bloc is finally starting to stand tall and fight back. The joint ticket formed by the Meretz party, Ehud Barak's Democratic Israel and Labor lawmaker Stav Shaffir, to be called the Democratic Union, is another important piece of the resistance puzzle that is gradually being assembled on the left side of the political map. The left can't afford to lose votes in the critical battle it is waging to prevent Israeli democracy from disappearing. Even if there are ideological differences among the joint ticket's members, and even if they don't see eye to eye on every issue on the agenda, it's important to remember that they are facing a prime minister concerned solely with his own political survival, one who won't hesitate to use any means to achieve this goal, including pushing avowed Kahanists into a right-wing joint ticket. (...) The fact that Shaffir was one of the driving forces behind the Barak-Meretz joint ticket, coupled with Labor lawmaker Itzik Shmuli's remarks in favor of a broader joint slate, shows the risk Peretz has taken both among his party's members and his voters. His union with Levi-Abekasis was a welcome move, but it wasn't supposed to block the formation of a large, strong, democratic left bloc that would reflect the growing resistance to Netanyahu's irresponsible policies. Peretz and Levi-Abekasis must recognize the urgency of the moment and join the rearguard battle for Israeli democracy.

Editorial, HAA, 26.07.19

Let Ayelet, and Israel, win!

For many years, a key element in the Israeli psyche has been missing. Gone is the passion (...) for our leadership. For both those in power and those in the opposition, enthusiasm has waned considerably. (...) Some don't even want to waste their time voting ... again, only to reach the same results as the previous election. (...) Ayelet Shaked brings back the passion. She holds the promise of bold leadership. In her previous position as justice minister, Shaked (...) brought in conservative judges, sought to give the Knesset the right to effectively overrule in cases where the Supreme Court declared a bill unconstitutional, and pushed the Knesset to pass a law shifting jurisdiction in Palestinian land claim cases out of the Supreme Court. This shifted jurisdiction in such cases from a court which tended to adjudicate with a bias against Israelis living in Judea and Samaria to the Jerusalem District Court, finally putting the burden of proof on the Arabs and thus decreasing the numerous false claims that had been flooding the Israeli legal system for years. But her mission is far from complete and she is eager to finish what she started. Along with her experience, she brings a spark to the table (...). She conveys promise, idealism, and an uncompromising and unapologetic passion for our country. This, along with her determination to create better and stronger policies of deterrence, inspires a boost to our collective morale. Many see in her a courageous spirit reminiscent of past leaders such as Menachem Begin. (...) Shaked is seen as having her heart in the right place, and she has made no secret of her respect for the Torah and for our ancient ties to the land of Israel. (...) Let Ayelet Win. In doing so, with a united right-wing bloc under her leadership, Israel wins. (...)

Zahava England Shapiro, IHY, 30.07.19

Israel's left-wing alliance needs to show some political savvy

(...) The Meretz platform, calling for an end to occupation and a peaceful solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, has apparently been put on the back burner in favor of Barak's agenda, which can be summed up as a call to remove Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu from office. But that spot has already been taken. The speeches made at the festive event presenting the Democratic Union's list of prospective Knesset candidates were practically identical to those made when the Blue and White Party launched just before the last round of elections

in April. The same pathos, the same fire and the same lack of real policy messaging appeared on both stages. (...) the Blue and White party has proven itself a viable alternative to the ruling Likud Party, winning 35 Knesset seats in the April vote. The newly formed Democratic Union has yet to prove itself. (...) polling conducted immediately after the joint press event marking Barak's merger with Meretz predicted the joint endeavor would win 10 seats. Polls since then have shown that number dropping (...). The decline in interest in the new party begs the question, what would the party stand for if Netanyahu were suddenly to announce his resignation. (...) Israel's radical Zionist left has disappeared altogether from the political map. (...) In its place there is only Netanyahu-bashing and an abundance of it. The Democratic Union has no valid reason to exist separately from the Blue and White party, so all involved should put aside their personal animosities and show some political savvy instead. (...)
Sever Plocker, YED, 31.07.19

2. Vermeintliche Vergewaltiger wieder auf freiem Fuß

Zehn Tage nach der mutmaßlichen Gruppenvergewaltigung einer 19-jährigen Britin auf der Insel Zypern sind sieben Israelis aus der Untersuchungshaft entlassen worden. Stattdessen wurde die Britin wegen „Falschaussage über eine erfundene Straftat“ festgenommen, wie die Polizei mitteilte. Insgesamt waren eine Woche zuvor zwölf junge Israelis festgenommen worden. Die britische Touristin hatte ausgesagt, sie sei am 17. Juli in ihrem Hotel in dem Ferienort Ayia Napa im Südosten der Mittelmeeresinsel vergewaltigt worden, änderte diese Version indes vor Gericht. Die Anhörungen fanden unter Ausschluss der Öffentlichkeit statt. Ayia Napa zieht wegen seines Nachtlebens vor allem junge Tourist_innen an. Die meisten stammen aus Großbritannien, jedes Jahr reisen rund 1,3 Millionen Brit_innen nach Zypern. Auch für israelische Abiturient_innen wird der Ort stetig attraktiver.

Cyprus Rape Case: Israel's boys struck at dawn

Our forces went into action as night fell. There were 12 of them, each the salt of the earth, hailing from the Haifa area, from the eternal capital Jerusalem and from the capital of racism, Afula. Some of them, amazingly, were even about to join elite army units. Your heart cries out to them. Just let them return home in peace. They're now under arrest, in the hands of Gentiles, and who knows what they're

going through there. (...) The usual Israeli narrative is clear in most of the reports from Ayia Napa in Cyprus: The whole world is against us. We (again) are the victims. If they weren't Israelis no one would have arrested them. Twelve Jewish kids under arrest in the Diaspora – do you realize what that means? They're children, obviously. (...) The rape victim is a young woman, not a child, even though she's the same age as the perpetrators. But with us Israelis, people between 16 and 19 are children. Only we love our children, which is why they're the children of us all. (...) The victim is obviously making it up, the suspects are victims, the entire Israeli story encompassed in one night in room 723. If they were suspected of raping an Israeli-Jewish woman, your heart wouldn't reach out to them the same way. But they're suspected of raping a female goy, a shiksa, a little whore, and that's an entirely different story. This isn't stated explicitly, obviously, but it's planted deep within the subtext of the reports, enveloped in a thin veneer of decency and correctness under which the true emotions seethe and bubble. (...)
Gideon Levy, HAA, 21.07.19

Cyprus and the Neanderthal Man: The crisis facing our youth

(...) This is the stuff real life nightmares are made of. (...) It's not easy to be an Israeli teenage boy in 2019. But puberty and raging testosterone levels are nothing new. What is relatively new though is a different type of peer pressure, a pressure so insidious, which, coupled with the menacing internet, warped Hollywood messages so vividly depicted in TV and movies, and advertorial media campaigns, is starting to rupture the fabric of Israeli society. (...) Our sons are not born in a vacuum. They are very much the products of the society in which they are raised, a society to which we too have the dubious honor of belonging. A society which constantly and consistently teaches them that to be a real Israeli man, a gever (...), is to be victorious in every sphere, that life is essentially a war and they are a warrior, who can and must never stop conquering across every sphere, economic, social and political. (...) As a woman, I wouldn't want men telling me how to be, how to exist and how to function in the world as a female. In fact, I would find such advice to be an unwelcomed, unwanted, unwarranted offense. And I would never presume to tell any man how to behave. I want no part of that smug, superior, self-righteous priggish moralizing. (...) On the other hand, I believe that the time has come for us, as parents, to step up in both the areas of education

and dialogue. If you are going to give your kids access to all things Internet and all things social media without any sort of filters, don't. Just don't. But, if you (...) have a 12 year old son, you need to sit down with him and have an honest conversation about Consent. About mutual respect and affection which should pre-date an intimate relationship. But most of all, about mutual consent. (...)
Gila Isaacson, TOI, 23.07.19

The lesson we should all learn from the Cyprus affair

(...) Here is Shabbat Ayia Napa style: Group sex recorded on camera and shared on social media on Friday, and heads covered by a lily white silk kippah on Saturday. Because that's how it is when we only have a binary index to measure criminality: Either you're a despicable rapist who should be thrown into jail, or you're a tortured martyr. (...) It is good that these teenagers are back in Israel and not facing jail sentences, but they really should not have been met with a warm embrace or singing and dancing, nor should their parents quote Bible verses when praising their release. Perhaps it would have been better to admit that they were youths without boundaries who thought that an orgy caught on camera was no big deal, and that they were just letting off steam before beginning their military service. (...) what happened in Cyprus is just a distilled version of a rotten culture, in which consent is deemed to be the yardstick, not desire or active willingness. It is a culture in which intimacy is practically a dirty word and has been replaced by obsessive documentation, humiliation, a herd mentality. It is a culture in which there are no limits and everything is permissible, for from elementary school, children are exposed to porn - the crudest, most violent and most exploitative version of human relationships. It is up to us, without exception, now to sit our kids down as soon as possible and talk about relationships based on the values we hold dear. We cannot wait for the next rape or class at school, and we should not be speaking from a place of fear. (...) Boys and girls alike need to hear from us about the wonder of intimacy, and the need to practice sensitivity and gentleness from an early age. For it is only like this that will we rid ourselves of the twisted concept of "good boys," and ensure that all of our children are truly fine and good.

Chen Srur Artzi, YED, 07.29.19

Brit Milah, Pinchas and Cyprus

In Parshat Balak, the leaders of the Jewish people engage in public sex with the women of Moav. They engage in the worship of a god known as Peor. Peor means to 'expose' or 'express.' The people are worshipping the values of self-exposure, or perhaps self-expression. G-d is furious with their actions. Even if the women of Moav (or Cyprus) were willing, the engagement in public sex with random women was fundamentally unacceptable. (...) On one level, intimate relations serve a critical role in Judaism. Reproductive activity is an opportunity to create new life (...), but it is also an opportunity to continue our relationship with G-d over our generations. Nothing makes this clearer than brit milah (circumcision). Brit milah marks the male reproductive organ. While women alone can bear children, men alone have positive reproductive will. Men alone can plant the seed while women alone can enable it to grow. (...) When we mark our 8-day-old sons' male reproductive organs, we are passing them the obligation to use their reproductive will in the service of the divine relationship. We are instructing them, almost from birth, that they are responsible for the proper use of their reproductive will. (...) If we think it is important to mark our 8-day-old boys in this way, then certainly we should condemn teenage boys who misuse their reproductive will – no matter how willing the participants. (...) these boys did not simply engage in inappropriate sex. They did so publicly – sharing videos of their behavior. They engaged in Peor – exposure. (...) By engaging in these acts, these boys failed in their sacred responsibilities. By sharing these acts, they lowered themselves (and the girl). (...) They committed all the sins of Ba'al Peor. In the story of Ba'al Peor, G-d commanded Moshe to kill the leaders of the people and Moshe commanded the people to kill those involved in the sin itself. But the people did nothing. Only Pinchas acted. And our relationship with G-d was fractured as a result. We must not do nothing. Instead, we must be zealous in defending the values of our people. We must condemn the behavior of these boys. And we must raise our own sons and daughters to follow a more G-dly path.

Joseph Cox, TOI, 31.07.19

No more or less a whore

The "boys," we are told, come from "good families." They were on a pre-army frolic and things, well, got a little out of hand – which is why 12 Israeli youths, aged 15 to 18, found themselves in a jail cell in Cyprus for around two weeks while authorities investigated the allegations of a 19-year old British

woman that the lot of them had gang-raped her. (...) Some were blowing off steam before their imminent draft dates, others were, well, doing God knows what. It shocked many Israelis to learn that this “thing” – where teenage boys pop off to tourist destinations and the whole point of being there is to drink and do drugs and have sex orgies – is, well, a very regular thing in some circles. This has, somehow, become “normalized” to the point that once vindicated of gang rape, these fine young men received a hero’s welcome at the arrivals hall of Ben-Gurion Airport (...). They should have slithered home with their faces hidden in shame. Somehow, the boys, their families and a large part of Israel, it seems, have confused technical legal formalities with moral decency. (...) These parents knew. They approved and applauded. Until, that is, the boys were caught. (...) These fine young men (...) have expressed no remorse for their conduct, regardless of the legal outcome, and seem to think it’s all fine and dandy for them to have filmed and disseminated their group’s sexcapades by telephone without the consent of the woman. That act alone – forget the rest of it – is illegal in Israel. (...) The British woman is no more or less a whore than they are. However, she does have an edge on the boys. We have yet to see her clutching religious symbols and invoking the protection of her higher power, whoever it may be. These “good families” are raising a generation of men who see “other” women as receptacles for their manhood and are rewarded for their behavior. If these parents are so keen to initiate their young sons into the mentality of misogynist extremes, they should save their shekels and take them to a local brothel – and go along and film it themselves. The fact that these parents were not present in the hotel room makes them no less morally disgusting, depraved and culpable than their sons. (...)
 Vivian Bercovici, JPO, 31.07.18

3. Protest nach tödlichen Schüssen

Dutzende Verletzte forderten gewalttätige Unruhen nach dem Tod eines 18-jährigen Israelis äthiopischer Herkunft. „Wir sind alle Salomon Teka“, riefen Demonstrant_innen, die an der Stadteinfahrt von Tel Aviv den Verkehr lahmlegten, ohne dass die Polizei eingriff. Landesweit protestierten Jüd_innen äthiopischer Abstammung gegen Rassismus und Polizeigewalt, blockierten Straßen und zündeten Autoreifen an. Zigtausende Autofahrer_innen steckten über Stunden fest. Die Demonstrant_innen griffen zum Teil auch Autofahrer_innen an, die

versuchten, mit ihren PKWs die Sperren zu umfahren. Mehrere Wagen gingen in Flammen auf. Salomon Teka war von einem Polizisten in Zivilkleidung erschossen worden, der angab, den Streit mehrerer junger Männer habe schlichten zu wollen, die ihn daraufhin angegriffen hätten. Aus Angst um sich und seine Familie habe er seine Waffe gezogen und den 18-jährigen Teka tödlich verletzt. Staatspräsident Reuven Rivlin solidarisierte sich mit der Familie des Toten und rief dazu auf, die Gewalt zu beenden. Jetzt gelte es, „innezuhalten und gemeinsam darüber nachzudenken, wie es von hieraus weitergeht“, um eine weitere Tragödie zu verhindern. Der Tod des jungen Teka, der vor sechs Jahren nach Israel kam, riss bei vielen jungen äthiopischen Jüd_innen alte Wunden auf. Erst Anfang des Jahres war ein 24-jähriger Mann von Sicherheitskräften erschossen worden, weil er Passant_innen mit einem Messer bedrohte. Viele junge Menschen äthiopischer Herkunft fühlen sich diskriminiert, weil der Staat den Nachzug von Familienangehörigen aus Äthiopien verzögert, sie sich regelmäßig mit Übergriffen rassistischer Polizist_innen konfrontiert sehen und weil die Integration der rund 150.000 dunkelhäutigen Einwanderer aus Äthiopien immer noch sehr zäh voran geht, obwohl viele von ihnen seit über zwei Jahrzehnten in Israel leben oder gar bereits im Land geboren wurden.

Why did they shoot him?

(...) Teka is another victim of the police being too quick to pull the trigger when confronted by youths of Ethiopian descent. (...) A special committee headed by the Justice Ministry director general found that hundreds of criminal files opened against young Israelis of Ethiopian descent were the result of police-initiated friction. Such incidents often begin with the officer asking the youths to identify themselves. The situation then deteriorates into a confrontation. Teka’s mother wondered why the policeman didn’t shoot him in the legs. But the real question is why he shot at him at all, and whether he would have behaved similarly if a light-skinned teenager had been involved. Public Security Minister Gilad Erdan (...) tried to demonstrate responsibility, promising an investigation and saying that lessons would be learned. Acting Police Commissioner Moti Cohen added that the incident “demanded a thorough examination.” (...) Despite the declaration of the acting police commissioner, he and the other top officials around him know that this isn’t a singular occurrence but a deeply rooted problem. The Ethio-

pian community's protest is justifiably directed at the police, but the blame for the fact that even the second generation of Ethiopian immigrants is having a hard time assimilating into Israeli society lies with the government and the one who heads it. So long as this issue isn't made a national priority, it will continue to claim victims.

Editorial, HAA, 02.07.19

Racism hurts: 2 nurses — 1 Ethiopian, 1 American, both Israelis

In the wake of yesterday's nationwide protests against the fatal shooting of Ethiopian-Israeli teenager Solomon Teka (...) Ethiopian-Israeli midwife Teri Tassama appeared on Israel Channel 12's morning news. Tassama, who works at Ichilov Medical Center in Tel Aviv, (...) recalled a woman who stood up from labor when she entered the room to scream to the other nurses, "I don't want this kushit [the Hebrew n-word]." Tassama noted that she carries the feelings of "humiliation and hurt" that followed this incident to this day. (...) Tassama told anchor Nesli Barda that in the 14 years she had been a midwife at Ichilov, a blatantly racial slur and refusal of her services had taken place only once and that she refused to serve that mother only because she believed that her presence would be detrimental to the mother's labor. She said that most of her patients treated with her respect, but that she had been subjected to more subtle forms of racism – questions like, "How long have you been a midwife? Where did you study?" etc. (...) I too heard blatant and subtly racist comments in my career in the Arab-Israeli sector. I was frequently asked in an astonished tone, "You speak Arabic?" — to which I always replied, "No, I speak Yiddish to the Bedouins." And once in a crowded elevator in the winter in Soroka Hospital — when the not unpleasant scent of citrus campfires clung to my clothes and those of my Bedouin driver — someone commented, "There's a stinking Arab in the elevator." When we got to our floor, I promptly turned around and shrieked at everyone in the elevator, "No, it's a stinking Jew!" (...) I doubt that Teri Tassama can ever shake her "humiliation and hurt." She said this morning, "They think we're stupid. No. We're simply patient and tolerant. We came from a cultured place." I can't tell you how many times I — who came to Israel from the US — have said the same words. Racism hurts.

Varda Spiegel, TOI, 03.07.19

A call for restraint

(...) It is saddening and hurtful that in our enlightened Israel, tragic events are taking place and the media is tagging the demonstrators as "Ethiopian protesters." Haredi society is comprised of various communities, and I have never heard their countries of origin mentioned when they protest. (...) protesters must not be tagged as belonging to one ethnicity. (...) Any intelligent person should act to rip out the bad apples in the Israel Police who are sowing the seeds of hatred, having invented for themselves their own code of conduct, and one that does not align with the laws of the state. Those same people who call themselves community activists should use their heads and not just be governed by their emotions. They must think of the consequences of their actions. Establish a think tank comprised of all kinds of people with experience in a variety of fields and consolidate plans of action that will benefit the community. We (...) must act with restraint and not use violence or block roads. The police have an interest in provoking us in order to justify their actions. (...) There is a sense of alienation and neglect among members of the younger generation born and raised here in Israel and unwilling to suffer in silence. The state and the local authorities must, therefore, put their heads together and find a permanent solution to the many complex problems. (...) We must not go easy on members of the community either. The Ethiopian community needs to continue to foster cohesion, and not just in times of crisis. We must open our eyes to what is happening. (...) anarchists are elbowing their way into the protests with the aim of harming the community and our country. We must not forget: This is our country, and our actions have consequences. The public and the government need to understand that the community does not see these demonstrations as a popular pastime. They are aimed at giving a voice to the pain and sadness that we feel over the killing and the bleeding wound in our bodies and in our souls. Inno Farda Sanbato, IHY, 03.07.19

The traffic jam worth being stuck in

Opinion: Those who think they've suffered in the tailbacks caused by the demonstrations of Ethiopian youth against police brutality that took place across Israel should imagine spending a day in their shoes, where simply walking down the street can get you arrested Tuesday's traffic jam on the Ayalon Highway was one of the calmest I've ever seen, with maximum understanding and minimum honking. It turns out the drivers who were rushing to get home after a long workday knew very well the people who

were blocking the road were fighting a fair and just battle - the battle for their lives. If you think you've experienced suffering by sitting in one of the traffic jams caused by the demonstrations of the Ethiopian community against police brutality, then imagine what it's like living in Israel as a young Ethiopian man, at least for one day. Imagine how many times you'd be asked to show your ID when you're simply walking down the street. How many dirty looks you would get from strangers who probably think that bike that you're riding is stolen. How many times police officers would ask you where you got that designer shirt you're wearing. Former Israel Police commissioner Roni Alshich himself at one point admitted that when a police officer sees an Ethiopian, "it's natural" that he is treated with more suspicion. In a reality where over-policing of the Ethiopian community is normal, the anger will keep growing. This anger came to a boiling point after the fatal shooting of an Ethiopian teenager, Solomon Tekah, by an off-duty police officer in Haifa on Sunday. There was a lot of time to contemplate as I sat in that traffic jam. Thus, I started thinking about a close friend of mine, who is of Ethiopian origin and who not only served as an officer in an elite IDF unit but also lost a leg in a military operation. Try to guess the number of times he's been unnecessarily pulled over by the police who were suspicious of an Ethiopian man driving a luxury SUV vehicle. This is a reality in which an Israeli hero has to live. This situation reminds me of a mini-series currently being streamed on Netflix, called "When They See Us" about the Central Park Five. The show tells the story of five black teenagers wrongfully convicted for raping a white woman and brings to the surface the police brutality addressed toward the African-American youth in the United States. What happens in Israel is another version of that American reality, like in an episode of another Netflix show, Black Mirror. It presents a particularly ugly and desperate picture of our society. If Tuesday's traffic jams prompt the government to finally start dealing with this burning issue, or if at least one police officer thinks twice before pulling a gun on another Ethiopian youth, every minute of them was worth it. Asaf Gur, YED, 03.07.19

4. Medienquerschnitt

Gefahr eines Krieges noch nicht gebannt

Israel's clarion call on nuclear Iran

The Iranian government (...) has violated the 2015 nuclear deal twice. Once by enriching uranium over the agreed-to 3.67% and the second time by increasing the amount of enriched uranium it holds to more than the 300 kilos stipulated in the 2015 agreement. But the real violation was that of the Trump administration, which decided to pull out of the nuclear deal altogether and renew sanctions on Iran. Israel for its part is clear: the nuclear deal outlined a timetable that would enable Iran to breakout and proceed towards a viable nuclear weapon within a year. (...) there is no doubt in Jerusalem's mind that Iran means to obtain nuclear capability by any means and at any cost. But Europe regards Tehran's recent actions as nothing more than negotiation tactics; Iranians continue behind the scenes discussion in an effort to bring the parties back to the table and ultimately remove the crippling new economic sanctions imposed on them by the Trump administration. (...) Israel will have to convince world leaders that Iran's violations of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) are not merely tactical. It will have to show that Iran is in fact accelerating its charge towards a nuclear weapon. Israeli leaders should ask the JCPOA signatories to invoke a clause at their disposal demanding the Iranian leadership fall back in line with the agreement. Failing that, they too should reimpose sanctions. The IAEA - which is in fact the operational arm of the JCPOA - will have to decide whether to accept the Israeli position. If it does not, the blow to both Israel's government and the Trump administration will be great. Israel's defense community is back to considering military options to stop a nuclear Iran from becoming reality after the realization that Europe cannot be counted on to block such an eventuality.

Alex Fishman, YED, 08.07.19

Europe could pay high price for ignoring the Iranian/Hezbollah threat

Since 9/11, and more so since the civil wars in Syria and Iraq, Europe has seen in the Sunni jihadi groups and organizations the major threat to its members states. The territorial defeat of the ISIS caliphate has not changed this perception. (...) Strangely though (...) European media and the information provided by the various European law enforcement authorities have given ample space to the Iranian, and in a minor measure, Hezbollah terrorist plots and subversive activities during 2018. (...) What, if anything, is the EU doing in order to curtail Iran's criminal and terrorist activities in Europe? (...) In a major development, in February, the UK decided to name Hez-

zbollah as a terrorist organization and not only its military wing. (...) It was recently published that Argentine President Mauricio Macri will sign a decree that designates Hezbollah as a terrorist group. This long overdue step is being taken, symbolically, in the same week as the 25th anniversary of the deadly bombing of the AMIA Jewish community center in Buenos Aires, in which 86 innocent victims and one suicide bomber died, and more than 100 people were injured. The latest Iranian and Hezbollah terrorist activities in Europe – against the backdrop of the present tension concerning the nuclear deal and the situation in the Gulf between the United States and Europe and the Iranian leadership – demand a stronger reaction from the EU – and at least a unanimous decision to designate Hezbollah a terrorist organization. Europol for its part could publish a special paper about these nefarious activities.

Ely Karmon, JPO, 18.07.19

Apartheid und Homophobie

Is Israeli apartheid fine as long as it's not homophobic?

(...) Rabbi Rafi Peretz is (...) a nice man. He headed a yeshiva in Atzmona, a settlement Israel pulled out of when it withdrew from the Gaza Strip in 2005. Peretz chose to lead his students from their homes quietly, accepting the government's decision with civic responsibility, unlike his more extreme neighbors who resisted the move. (...) Peretz found himself in politics after the Jewish Home leadership of Naftali Bennett and Ayelet Shaked walked out on the party before the April elections. (...) He supports annexation of the entire West Bank (...). Only Jews will have the vote. (...) Peretz also spoke freely about his views on homosexuality, claiming "conversion treatment" can cure the ill. (...) how can such an ignorant man with views so far removed from mainstream Israeli society be the minister of education? (...) he belongs in a yeshiva and not in the cabinet. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was quick to push back on the conversion therapy remarks. He has gay voters after all, and a gay justice minister. But not a word of protest was said about Peretz's annexation program; so while we can expect to have an apartheid state that prevents millions from voting, at least it won't be homophobic.

Nahum Barnea, YED, 15.07.19

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JPO = Jerusalem Post
IHY = Israel HaYom
TOI = Times of Israel
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