



**Schlaglicht Israel Nr. 22/19  
Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen**

**16.-31. Dezember**

**Die Themen dieser Ausgabe**

<b>1. Netanyahu bleibt Vorsitzender der Likud-Partei.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. IStGH will mögliches Kriegsverbrechen Israels prüfen.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3. Hanukkah – das jüdische Fest der Lichter.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>4. Medienquerschnitt.....</b>	<b>8</b>

**1. Netanyahu bleibt Vorsitzender der Likud-Partei**

*Israels Regierungschef Benjamin Netanyahu setzt sich in einer parteiinternen Wahl klar gegen seinen Herausforderer Gideon Sa'ar durch und bleibt weiter Chef der konservativen Likud-Partei. Netanyahu ist bereits seit 14 Jahren Parteichef und wird als Spitzenkandidat bei den Parlamentswahlen am 2. März antreten. Ungeachtet der Anklage in mehreren Korruptionsfällen und ungeachtet der Tatsache, dass Netanyahu schon zweimal an der Regierungsbildung scheiterte, halten die Likud-Mitglieder loyal zu ihrem Chef. Israel befindet sich wegen einer fortwährenden Pattsituation zwischen dem rechts-religiösen und dem Mitte-links-Lager in einer politischen Krise. Weder Netanyahu noch seinem Herausforderer Benny Gantz vom Mitte-Bündnis gelang es, eine regierungsfähige Koalition zusammen zu stellen. Die für März geplante Wahl ist die dritte innerhalb eines Jahres.*

**Likud needs a change of guard if democracy is to be served**

(...) something bad has happened here in Israel over the last decade. The ideal of democracy seems to have gotten lost as a handful of elected officials have taken over and begun ruling the country according to their whims. They have their own laws and they make up new rules as they go along. They apply democratic principles only when it suits them.

(...) now, after Netanyahu served as prime minister for over 10 years and failed to form a government after both of the elections (...) Sa'ar is demanding (...) that the Likud uphold its democratic character and hold primaries. This is not a putsch or a betrayal. (...) This is simply the necessary step that must take place in Israel's most popular party if there is to be any hope of a functioning, stable government being formed. (...) the time has come for change. (...) This form of action is the only option available for the Likud if it wants to survive. After the dust settles, Netanyahu's replacement will have to begin repairing all the broken parts and establish a proper political relationship with the political Left, the religious parties and representatives of the Arab sector. (...) There is no one today who is more fitting than Gideon Sa'ar to take over the Likud leadership. (...) He is capable of long-term strategic planning, is a great speaker and a courageous leader with the air of senior official. He is also the only figure who is capable of bridging the gaps between the various political camps and maintaining a functioning, stable government. (...)

Lior Akerman, JPO, 16.12.19

**Likud's busy week: Gideon Sa'ar vs. Amir Ohana**

(...) In the twilight of King Bibi's era two heirs are emerging, representing two different paths, one of which will be taken by post-Netanyahu Likud.(...) Sa'ar and Ohana. (...) Even now, when their hated

leader is tied up in three indictments and three consecutive political failures, they haven't dared to come out against him. (...) Ohana has leveraged Bibi'ism for his personal benefit. He has gone from being a Netanyahu follower to a lone assassin of the legal system. It stands to reason that his radical acts are conducted in accordance with and authorized by his master and his master's family, but it cannot have escaped even Netanyahu's eye that Ohana is working for himself as much as for the Balfour Street residents. Both Ohana and Sa'ar are radicals. (...) Ohana represents the Bibi'ist right, backed by out-law settlers. This camp lives in deep paranoia, believing the State Prosecutor's Office is a Satanic cult that frames people by staging institutionalized corruption in broad daylight. (...) Sa'ar, in contrast, represents the statesmanlike right, which is repulsed by the blatant lawlessness. Aware of the anti-establishment populist wave in Israel, as in the whole world, Sa'ar has also listed principles for a fundamental reform in the legal system, which is certainly not to the jurist elite's liking (...). The difference is that while Sa'ar's approach consists of ideas – harsh and obscene as they may be – that are legitimate to debate, Ohana's approach is a delegitimization of the whole system (...). It's an extremely rightist Likud politically, but it's also civilized, tie-wearing and more Ahkenazi, a Likud that saw most Mizrahi people as worthy voters but preferred a scholarly European leadership in the form of the princes' generation (...).

Ravit Hecht, HAA, 20.12.19

### **By deposing Netanyahu, Likud members can refresh a jaded brand**

(...) it's understandable that many in the Likud think Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is irreplaceable. Nevertheless, they are wrong. If they want to see a Likud victory next March, they should put sentiment to one side and vote for Gideon Sa'ar (...). No one in politics is indestructible. (...) Netanyahu has lost the last two elections, failing to form a government after the polls in April and September. (...) Netanyahu's candidacy is what defines Blue and White's whole existence – to be the anti-Netanyahu vote. One faction of Blue and White, Telem, really belongs inside the Likud. Its leader, Moshe Ya'alon, was a Likud defense minister under Netanyahu. Its Knesset members include Zvi Hauser, who once served as Netanyahu's cabinet secretary, and Yoaz Hendel, a former director of communications and public diplomacy for the prime minister. Were it not for Netanyahu's character failings, they would still be

Likud supporters and a natural ally of Sa'ar, who describes himself as to the Right of the prime minister. (...) Likud members can not only refresh a jaded brand with an untarnished new leader, but they can also severely undermine Blue and White's foundations. Without the anti-Netanyahu glue binding them, there is little in common between Telem members and Yesh Atid Knesset member Ofer Shelah's support for an eventual two-state solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict. And then, of course, there's the elephant in the room: the fact that Netanyahu is the first-ever prime minister to be charged, while still in office, with criminal conduct including bribery, fraud and breach of trust. Likud members rallied around Netanyahu in 2008 when he called on Ehud Olmert to step down, arguing then that a "prime minister who is neck-deep in investigations has no public or moral mandate to make crucial decisions." It's now time for those same Likud members to tell Netanyahu the same thing and send him packing, for the good of both the Likud and the country. (...)

Jeff Barak, JPO, 23.12.19

### **Likud primary election offers a choice between two bad options**

(...) Ten straight years of Netanyahu in power provide living testimony that power corrupts. The political deadlock is borne of the legal straits of the prime minister, who has become morally corrupt. Still, the Likud leadership battle exposes how radical the party has become ideologically. Likud supports annexing the occupied territories and creating the basis for an apartheid regime, while demonstrating contempt for international law. Sa'ar's campaign (...) made it clear that it is challenging Netanyahu from the right. (...) it seems that Sa'ar is demonstrating the same contempt for the rule of law that became the norm under Netanyahu's corrupt and corrupting regime. This contempt is also evident in his unrealistic declaration that if he wins, he will work to get Netanyahu elected president in Knesset. The proposal is indicative of Sa'ar's flaccidity as a leader: He has essentially no problem with the three indictments that Netanyahu is facing. The proposal also shows that Sa'ar is at peace with Netanyahu's leadership of the unrestrained campaign against the very idea of statesmanship, as seen in the attack on the law enforcement system and the press, and his incitement against the Israeli Arab minority and the left, which is now being turned against Sa'ar himself as well as his family, as Sa'ar's wife indicated. Sa'ar wants to make the national instigator president? (...) Likud leadership election offers a choice between

two bad options, and they are a resounding reminder of how pathetically low Israel's ruling party has sunk.

Editorial, HAA, 26.12.19

### **Netanyahu's Likud win is a tenuous victory**

Gideon Sa'ar's challenge of Benjamin Netanyahu's leadership of the ruling Likud Party (...) was either a tactical error or else perhaps part of a long-term strategy. Sa'ar - who is clearly an experienced politician and a determined man - must surely have considered all options, including Netanyahu receiving 70% of primary voters' support to his own measly 27%. But still, the contender forged ahead. It appears his true intention was not to triumph over Netanyahu (...) but to cement his position as his heir with a bloc of supporters already in place, giving him an advantage over all other competitors as the next leader of Likud. (...) This primary challenge does not predict the result of the general elections. Only 56,000 people voted (...) less than half of registered party voters. (...) Staunch Netanyahu supporters will stay with him no matter what, but he will need millions of votes if he is to win the general election in March and get the recommendation of the 61 Knesset members needed to form a coalition, having already failed to do so twice in the past 12 months. (...) It is not just his political future that is at stake; he may end his life wearing prison garb. In the course of his primary campaign, Sa'ar suggested that Netanyahu be made president – thus delivering an insult in the guise of an offer of an honorable exit. (...) This politician, who in his campaign ignored the prime minister's three criminal charges and only considered his political electability, will easily find a way around this obstacle as well. Politicians are agile enough when it serves their purpose. (...)

Sima Kadmon, YED, 29.12.19

## **2. IStGH will mögliches Kriegsverbrechen Israels prüfen**

*Fatou Bensouda, Chefanklägerin des Internationalen Strafgerichtshofes (IStGH), sieht ausreichenden Grund für eine Untersuchung zur Lage in den Palästinensergebieten und Ost-Jerusalem. Sie sei überzeugt, dass dort Kriegsverbrechen begangen wurden oder werden. Geprüft werden sollte allerdings zunächst, inwiefern das Gericht für die Palästinensergebiete rechtlich zuständig ist. Die Regierung unter Palästinenserpräsident Mahmud Abbas wirft Israel vor allem den Bau von Siedlungen in den besetzten Palästinensergebieten vor sowie die Tö-*

*tung von mehreren hundert Demonstrant\_innen im Grenzgebiet zum Gazastreifen. Palästina ist seit 2015 Mitglied des Internationalen Strafgerichtshofes. Damit wäre das Gericht im Prinzip auch für Verbrechen zuständig, die dort begangen wurden. Israel gehört dem Gericht hingegen nicht an, ist dadurch aber nicht vor einer Strafverfolgung geschützt. Das Gericht könnte im Zweifelsfall internationale Haftbefehle gegen israelische Offiziere ausstellen. Hanan Ashrawi, Funktionärin der Palästinensischen Befreiungsorganisation (PLO) begrüßte die Entscheidung Bensoudas als „einen guten Schritt vorwärts“. In Jerusalem wurde der Schritt hingegen scharf kritisiert. "Dies ist ein schwarzer Tag für Wahrheit und Gerechtigkeit“, kommentierte Israels Regierungschef Benjamin Netanyahu. "Der Internationale Strafgerichtshof hat nur eine rechtliche Zuständigkeit für Petitionen, die von souveränen Staaten eingereicht wurden.“ Einen souveränen palästinensischen Staat aber habe es nie gegeben.*

### **Israel's final warning from the ICC**

The decision of the Office of the Prosecutor at the International Criminal Court (...) should not have surprised anyone. During the five years in which the preliminary examination by ICC prosecutor Fatou Bensouda was underway, the Israeli government provided her with more and more material. (...) Israel has demonstrated crude and continued contempt for international law. At the same time, in the absence of negotiations, Israel has pushed the Palestinians directly into the arms of international institutions. The only surprising thing is Israel's own response. Attorney General Avichai Mendelblit rushed to release, just a moment before the prosecutor's announcement, an urgent legal opinion whose main point was the old claim that the ICC does not have the jurisdiction to hear the matter because Israel never confirmed its membership in the treaty, and because Palestine is not a real state and therefore cannot provide the court with the criminal judicial authority required. (...) In practice, Israel does not deny the carrying out of war crimes but is focusing on the question of who is authorized to judge it, if at all, and accuses the ICC of politicization. Even harder to understand is the claim that the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict must be left for dialogue and negotiations and the legal process will only harm it, while it is clear to all that there is no such process on the table because the Israeli government is not interested in it. (...) The prosecutor's decision is the final warning alarm for the Israeli government and its institutions that are interested in

denying the reality of the occupation. In the next few months the court will decide whether to open an investigation. Alongside the fear of the possible results of the investigation, it is regrettable that Israel is not capable of recognizing the tragedy that it has brought upon itself through blindness and arrogance – the occupation and the settlements – and it is regrettable that only an external threat might open its eyes.

Editorial, HAA, 22.12.19

### **Fatou Bensouda: From dictator's legal adviser to ICC chief prosecutor**

Although the Gambia native has had a long and distinguished career, many don't know some interesting details about her fruitful past. For instance, she served as a legal adviser for one of the most ruthless dictators in the world. (...) Bensouda was once considered to be a firm ally of the State of Israel. In 2010 she faced immense pressure to investigate Israel following the Gaza flotilla raid that left nine foreign activists killed on one of the ships and 10 IDF soldiers wounded. She again fought off extreme pressure to investigate Israel back in 2014, following the Gaza war known as Operation Protective Edge. (...) Bensouda was born in the African country of Gambia and in 1987 was appointed as state counsel and deputy director of public prosecutions by former Gambian Prime Minister Dawda Jawara. In 1994, a military coup drove Jawara into exile and a military junior officer Yahya Jammeh took control of the country. The new leader was living a lavish and decadent lifestyle, crushing opposition, suppressing the country's LGBT community, and effectively eliminating women's rights. Jammeh, nevertheless, chose Bensouda as his solicitor general and legal adviser in 1994, a position which she held for two years. In August 1998 she became Gambia's justice minister, before being dismissed in March 2000. Her time under Jammeh's rule has earned Bensouda a fair share of criticism, with many accusing her of turning a blind eye to the atrocities committed by the Gambian dictator. Additionally, there are those who claim that Bensouda's work under Jammeh should not have allowed her to be considered for such a prestigious position in the Hague. On the other hand, Bensouda is continuously praised by many around the world, including human rights groups, as an adamant justice seeker, who works tirelessly to preserve the rights of people even when faced with a dictatorship.

Daniel Batini, Tamar Shabak, YED, 23.12.19

### **When I met with ICC Chief Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda in The Hague**

When I met with International Criminal Court Chief Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda in The Hague in February 2016, she was a completely unknown quantity in Israel. (...) Bensouda herself is a relatively understated woman, who can sometimes speak extremely slowly, as if she is choosing her words carefully so that someone will not fall off a tightrope into a ravine. This is understandable given the microscope under which many countries put her. Though she is a Muslim from The Gambia who sometimes wears traditional African-style garb, she is equally comfortable in modern Western-style business clothing (...) to the extent she ruled against Israel last week in moving toward a full war crimes probe, she was acting as part of a group of internationalists who focus on getting justice for civilians killed in conflict zones regardless of the context. If Bensouda is being hard on Israel, she is also being hard on the US and the United Kingdom, not to mention Russia and many African nations. These internationalists tend to criticize Israel, the US and just about any country that uses force, not out of antisemitism or anti-Americanism per se. Instead, it may come more from a naïve view that the world would be more peaceful if Israel and the US used less force. This ideological group tends to downplay the role of terrorism and aggressive, nondemocratic countries in destabilizing and threatening Israel and other countries as something that simple dialogue can resolve. (...) Last week, she adopted the majority globalist view of the settlements being illegal under international law, ignoring the Israeli and current US administration position. (...)

Yonah Jeremy Bob, JPO, 24.12.19

### **There are no judges in The Hague**

Israel's strategy for dealing with the International Criminal Court has collapsed. Fatou Bensouda, the ICC's chief prosecutor, has already adopted doubtful legal arguments made by the Palestinians (...). Therefore, we already know what the results of the "investigation" will be and what "evidence" will be collected. Meanwhile, the many crimes by the Palestinians, from torture and anti-Jewish apartheid policy to acts of terrorism and killing and the intent to commit genocide are not considered enough of a basis for the ICC prosecution to launch an investigation. The restriction that Bensouda attached to her decision to proceed with an investigation into alleged Israeli "war crimes" only makes the situation worse. When she announced the investigation, she

asked three judges to confirm that a state of Palestine existed that was sovereign over all parts of the Gaza Strip, Judea and Samaria as well as east Jerusalem. (...) the Attorney General's Office had warned Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu not to take steps to apply Israeli law to the Jordan Valley, out of concern that the ICC would decide to launch an investigation against Israelis for that "crime," too. (...) This was not the first time that legal authorities in Israel, including some at the top ranks of their profession, have operated in a manner than unintentionally spurs on the ICC to proceed with its anti-Israeli actions. (...) As long as Israel continues to treat the ICC as a legal entity, and as long as it maintains relations with ICC staff under the assumption that their intentions are good, as long as Israel continues to make legal arguments as if anyone in the ICC is listening, it will continue to lose the battle. (...)

Prof. Avi Bell, IHY, 24.12.19

### **Who cares about the International Criminal Court?**

(...) Who cares (...) what this politicized organization, with its stench of anti-Semitism, thinks about us? So Israeli officers won't be able to wander the streets of Europe. Somehow, we'll manage. (...) The ICC prosecutor's decision is neither upsetting nor surprising. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has long since become a tool for channeling anti-Semitism, in its modern, anti-Zionist incarnation. This conflict has no solution not only because of its religious and cultural nature, but because anti-Semitism will always exist and will therefore always need some kind of representative or public relations agent. (...) If there's a problem with Israel's policy, it is weakness and cowardice. (...) We aren't evicting residents of the illegal Bedouin settlement of Khan al-Ahmar. We aren't demolishing illegal construction by the European Union and the Palestinians in Area C of the West Bank, areas that according to the Oslo Accords are under exclusive Israeli control (...) and so on and so forth. But anti-Semites will always find their way to the Jew, even when he makes himself small. And so now, we're being accused of "war crimes." Therefore, Israel's conclusion ought to be exactly the opposite: Not only should Israel refuse to cooperate with the ICC process, but it should start taking resolute action, with no guilt feelings. It should raze all the illegal construction in Area C, refuse to return the bodies of terrorists, worsen prison conditions for jailed terrorists, annex the Jordan Valley and the rest of Area C, and stop send-

ing truckloads of goods into the Gaza Strip and allowing Qatar to send millions of dollars to Gaza. We're war criminals? Then forward march. Let the Egyptians take care of the Palestinians in Gaza and the Europeans protect Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas from Hamas. (...)

Nave Dromi, HAA, 25.12.19

### **Just another way for the Palestinians to avoid peace**

The announcement by Fatou Bensouda (...) was a significant victory for those who have sought to use the court to help delegitimize the Jewish state. Bensouda has asked the tribunal in The Hague for authorization to probe the conduct of the Israel Defense Forces during the 2014 Gaza War, as well as throughout Hamas's efforts to breach the border fence as part of its "March of Return" Friday-afternoon campaign during the last two years. What's more, Bensouda is also seeking authorization to treat Jews living in the West Bank and parts of Jerusalem as a war crime. (...) the brief that she seeks shows that her goal is to attack Israel, rather than to defend justice. (...) As outrageous as her stand may be, the reason this is happening is not just because a Gambian lawyer whose résumé includes a stint as the chief legal adviser to a brutal dictator decided to target the Jewish state. Rather, it's just the latest evidence that the Palestinian Authority, which originated the complaint, would rather seek to wage legal war against Israel than to negotiate with it (...). Bensouda's effort makes a mockery of both international law and justice. It is based on the notion that there is currently a state of Palestine that exercises sovereignty over all of the West Bank, Gaza and the portion of Jerusalem that was illegally occupied by Jordan from 1949 to 1967. Only such a sovereign state can invite the ICC to prosecute war crimes in Gaza or the territories. (...) The biased nature of Bensouda's reasoning is made all the more clear by the fact that the ICC has already pointedly refused to treat Russia's moving of its citizens into Crimea, which it illegally seized from Ukraine in an act of aggression in 2014, and the presence of Turks in Northern Cyprus – the result of the Turkish invasion of that island in 1974 – as worthy of prosecution. (...) This is just one more example of a hypocritical international community that judges Israel and the Jews by a double standard applied to no other nation in the world. (...)

Jonathan S. Tobin, IHY, 25.12.19

### **Political games at The Hague**

(...) The ICC was created in the context of the negotiations that ended in 1998 with the Rome Statute, and already then, it was clear that Israel was a primary target, particularly for the Arab states and for the anti-Israel groups that claim to promote international law and human rights. The façade may be legal, but in practice, this is a political institution. (...) In theory, the ICC's objective is to provide a framework for holding the world's worst tyrants and war criminals to account, particularly in countries where there are no functioning courts or governments to hold them to account. The massive campaign designed to artificially force Israel to the center for the court's agenda not only erases the history of the conflict, but more importantly, is fundamentally immoral. (...) the decision of the prosecutor was largely predictable. Unfortunately, the Israeli government was slow in understanding the threat and the requirements for a successful strategy. The defensive approach, led by lawyers in the IDF and elsewhere, was based on attempts to show the court that the Israeli judicial process made external intervention redundant. But because the ICC is a political body, these efforts were ignored. In contrast, an aggressive political and diplomatic strategy, based on threatening the ICC's already thin budget and perhaps its survival, can still defeat this effort. (...) If countries like Holland, Norway, and Denmark tell the court that their survival depends on ending this anti-Israel, and, many will argue, anti-Semitic witch hunt, they can undo some of the damage.

Gerald M. Steinberg, IHY, 26.12.19

### **Refusing to play the Palestinians' ICC game**

(...) the Palestinians have continued to operate with this dual branch-and-gun strategy. While publicly insisting they are willing to compromise and negotiate peace in good faith with Israel on all the issues at the center of the conflict, they have also always tactically held other cards, often violent ones, with which they menacingly threaten us. (...) Since September 2012, when the Palestinians' status was upgraded in the United Nations to an observer state, their intent has been clear. Repeatedly, they have warned that if Israel does not submit to their demands in the so-called final status negotiations, they will turn to the International Criminal Court in The Hague and formally submit war crimes complaints. (...) Israel correctly argued that she has an independent, strong and active judiciary, is investigating every incident small and large, and does not hesitate to prosecute and frequently convict whenever

there is even the shadow of a violation of law. As such, the ICC has no authority to act as a super-review court for the Israeli justice system and has no need to duplicate Israel's own jurisdiction. (...) there is nothing sexier for Bensouda than the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. On several occasions in the past, she did not hesitate to express this opinion publicly, whether in opinion papers or in the annual reports she issued. (...) The US made it clear, in no uncertain terms, that the prosecutors and judges of the ICC would be targeted personally if they investigated American officers or servicemen. While Israel, obviously, does not have the same diplomatic clout or political might as Washington, it must marshal all of its supporters and political ties worldwide to pressure the court to abandon any thought of targeting the IDF or Israeli officials. As for the Palestinians, (...) Economic measures should be implemented, VIP passes should be canceled and all travel, work and medical permits should be suspended. Israel needs to finally send a clear message to the Palestinians and their supporters in the UN and EU – we will no longer play their branch-and-pistol game.

Nitsana Dashan-Leitner, JPO, 27.12.19

### **Israel and the ICC**

(...) The final status of the West Bank (or Judea and Samara) and Gaza Strip can only be determined in a permanent settlement between Israel and the Palestinians. (...) Bensouda wrote in her report that the question whether Israel can be trusted to investigate itself for the allegations against it is still being examined. I believe the answer is that Israel does not evade investigating itself, but that, as an understatement, not all these investigations end up uncovering the whole truth. (...) it is quite possible that the ICC is not partial when it comes to Israel, and therefore Israel has every right to do everything in its power to prevent the case against it from coming up before the court, even though some of the charges against it might well be legally founded. However, both Israel and the media should be careful with flimsy attempts to portray the ICC as anti-semitic and even anti-Zionist, and that Fatou Bensouda herself as being responsible for crimes against humanity (...), at the time that she served as Minister of Justice of Gambia in the years 1998-2000, when the dictator Yahya Jammeh was president and his regime was notorious for its corruption, authoritarian methods and systematic breach of human rights. (...)

Let's watch our step.

Susan Hattis Rolef, JPO, 29.12.19

### 3. Hanukkah – das jüdische Fest der Lichter

*Das hebräische Wort Hanukkah heißt übersetzt „Einweihung“. Gemeint ist die erneute Einweihung des Tempels. Gefeiert wird an acht Abenden, die jeweils mit dem Anzünden von zunächst einer Kerze, dann zwei bis acht Kerzen des Hanukkah-Leuchters beginnen. Der Leuchter steht repräsentativ für das Hanukkah-Wunder, als eine kaum ausreichend mit Öl ausgestattete Öllampe den Tempel wider Erwarten acht Tage lang mit Licht versorgte. Hanukkah geht zurück auf die griechische Besatzungszeit im Zweiten Jahrhundert vor Christus. Die Seleukiden setzten die Juden unter Druck, sich von ihrem Glauben abzuwenden und die heidnischen Riten zu übernehmen. Eine Widerstandsgruppe unter der Führung von Judas Makkabäus ging zunächst gegen die Abtrünnigen im eigenen Volk vor und organisierte schließlich den Widerstand gegen die Seleukiden. Höhepunkt der Kämpfe war die Befreiung des Tempels. Traditionell wird an Hanukkah in Fett Gebackenes gegessen, wie Berliner und Kartoffelpuffer. Das Spiel mit dem vierseitigen Kreis gehört ebenso zu dem Fest. „Nes gadol haya po“, steht auf den vier Seiten: „Ein großes Wunder fand hier statt.“*

#### Bringing Hanukkah home

(...) The story of Hanukkah takes place during a dramatic period of Jewish history. The ancient Greek Empire conquered and occupied Israel, and proclaimed various laws prohibiting the practice of Torah. There were many brave people who defied these laws and fought for their religious rights and freedoms – who continued to live in accordance with sacred Jewish values and practices. Through the bravery of the Maccabees, blessed by the miracles of God, Israel was eventually liberated from the Greek occupation and tyranny. (...) This episode is a microcosm of the epic battle of ideas between Judaism and Hellenism. Both systems valued wisdom and knowledge and learning – and yet, they were fundamentally different. The ancient Greek worldview prized the pursuit of intellectual greatness, but in secular academic terms, disconnected from God and from His values. Torah, on the other hand, has awesome intellectual power, but it's a wisdom not removed from the human experience. It is a system of laws and ethics, given by God (...). In essence, Torah is a formula for translating Divine wisdom into a way of life, and in so doing, transforming ourselves as people and elevating the world in which we live. (...) as we light our Hanukkah candles, we reflect on (...) those (...), who fought

bravely for Torah values, taking on a great empire. We celebrate the fact that we continue their awesome legacy. And we remember that his call to make our homes places of Torah learning reflects his struggle with the ancient Greek Empire. Torah is living wisdom – it's a wisdom that doesn't sit stagnant in books and libraries and ivory towers. It's a wisdom we live with each day of our lives. It's not just an intellectual curiosity, it's a transformative experience. And it's this transformational wisdom for life that we bring into our homes – the places where we live, where Torah comes alive. (...)

Warren Goldstein, HAA, 19.12.19

#### The Hanukkah challenge for young Jews

Hanukkah's popularity with American Jews was largely the result of a futile though determined effort to compete with Christmas. While enjoying freedom, prosperity, and influence that was unprecedented in the history of the Diaspora, American Jews needed a holiday that would allow them to play a part in the annual December festivities without abandoning their identity altogether. That is why Hanukkah has become far more important to American Jews than it was to their ancestors in Europe and elsewhere, who regarded it as a minor winter festival. That also explains why it became a blue-tinsel version of Christmas. (...) There are those who will decry this, along with the orgy of gift-giving and conspicuous consumption that is an American Hanukkah, as a symptom of the assimilation that is causing the implosion of the non-Orthodox population in the United States. They may have a point, especially when this is manifested in "Chrismukkah" celebrations that are ostensibly about equal time, but which also demonstrate a lack of respect for both faiths while creating a form of Jewish identity that's neither transmissible nor worthy of much interest or respect. (...) Far from being irrelevant to modern Jewish life, the message of the commemoration of the Maccabees' war on Hellenism is actually a survival mechanism for young Jews that should not and cannot be ignored. (...) If we truly want to honor the original spirit of Hanukkah, then we should not be encouraging Jewish students to build bridges or sit down for a dialogue with those who spread anti-Semitism. Instead, we should be helping them to find the courage to stand up to their tormentors and answer the lies with the truth about Israel and its enemies. (...) The true miracles of Hanukkah are a reminder that it takes the extraordinary efforts and faith of ordinary Jews to keep the flame of Jewish civilization alive in every generation. Doing so now requires Jews, both

young and old, to find the courage to embrace a sense of Jewish peoplehood that is waning in the face of assimilation and pressure from those who denigrate sectarian identity, as well as to stand up for Israel and Zionism. Anything less than that is not merely abandoning the field to the enemies of Jews, but betrays the true meaning of the miracle that is Hanukkah.

Jonathan S. Tobin, IHY, 22.12.19

### **The special time of Chanukah**

This Shabbat coincided with Chanukah, Rosh Chodesh, and weekly portion Mikeitz. There exists no coincidence but what then was the connection and what was the message? I could come up with the following. Shabbat we celebrate to express our belief that G<sup>d</sup> created the world. Therefore we enjoy the world as it is, the food that we already cooked, the company that we got, etc., and don't worry about what could have or should have. It's being in the present. Improving the world is later. And Creation starts with the word Rosh — beginning. Not only on the Shabbat we live in the present. Also all the Festivals impress upon us that now it is Spring, Redemption comes closer (Passover), now is the beginning of a new year (Rosh Hashanah), now we use our trust in G<sup>d</sup> (Emanah — Sukkot), etc. Rosh Chodesh also has the word Rosh — it's the start of the month. Mi-keitz, keitz means end. And Chanukah is one of the Redemptions we need to go through. Which also indicates ending. In other words, this day was about beginnings and endings. Then maybe the message is: we live in the present all the time but sometimes, pay a little attention to that our time is often finite. It has a beginning and an end. So let's spend our time well. (...)

Moshe-Mordechai van Zuiden, TOI, 29.12.19

### **Looking at Hanukkah through blurry eyes**

Hanukkah (...) has underscored the distance between the two groups of US Jewry. They both celebrate Hanukkah, but it seems like only one of them delves into the holiday's meaning. Hanukkah is the most Zionist holiday on the Hebrew calendar. It commemorates the Jews' revolt against foreign occupiers who desecrated the Temple and their war to expel the occupiers and reestablish Jewish sovereignty in the region. But for some reason, in the past few years certain groups have elected not to see the holiday clearly. Instead of Jews vs. the Greek invaders, they see it as the enlightened vs. the primitive. Instead of Jewish sovereignty, they see environmentalism. A particularly extremist

group, mostly young, celebrated Hanukkah by frying latkes that formed the letters BDS. (...) But there are also people who take a different approach, as if they understood the holiday. (...) One group will continue to move away from the American Jewish population. The second group (...) will be the future of the Jewish people, and they are also what will remain of it. They are the ones who will marry other Jews, have families, and raise their children with Jewish values. They are the ones who will protect the existence and the light of Israel — whether on campuses in the Diaspora, or in jeeps in the Negev, or both (...).

Ofir Dayan, IHY, 30.12.19

## **4. Medienquerschnitt**

### **Annäherung zwischen Israel und der Hamas**

#### **Gaza deal is an Israeli interest**

(...) It's true that in the current political climate, in which warmongering is considered advantageous and negotiating with enemies is perceived as weakness, criticism of a deal in Gaza has been heard even from the largest opposition party, Kahol Lavan. Nevertheless, the three former chiefs of staff who head the party should be reminded that during their years in that job, they too failed to bring about complete quiet. (...) In a situation where thinking about security is monolithic, it's important to speak out clearly in favor of a long-term deal with Hamas, regardless of whether it's called an agreement or an arrangement. Israel's government, like its army, knows very well that there is no military solution in Gaza. The repeated rounds of violence have hurt residents of the south, cost the lives of civilians in Gaza and destroyed civilian infrastructure there. Moreover, the blockade of Gaza has given birth to nothing but despair, which is fueling the next round of violence. It's just too bad that a necessary step like a long-term arrangement with Hamas has to be backed up by collective punishment in the West Bank. The government's decision to deduct 149 million shekels (\$43 million) from the tax revenues it transfers to the Palestinian Authority has been framed as a punishment for the PA's support of terrorists' families. But it is actually evidence of a distorted worldview, in which the Israeli public can't swallow positive diplomatic steps toward the Palestinians in Gaza without other Palestinians in the West Bank being subjected to sanctions of some kind or another. This is an embarrassing and unnecessary ritual that is meant to hurt the Palestinian



Authority, the very organization that's supposed to be our partner in a future diplomatic agreement. Editorial, HAA, 30.12.19

### **Terror gegen Juden in New York**

#### **No, N.Y. Attacks Don't Show That Black People Have an anti-Semitism Problem**

We don't know enough about the origins of the hatred behind the wave of violence, and jumping to conclusions by painting an entire race as anti-Semitic will only make things worse. (...) Crown Heights, in Brooklyn, has been, in many ways, the epicenter of the growing anti-Semitic violence against Orthodox Jews, and especially Hasidic Jews, that has only recently started to truly gain the attention of America due to the unimaginable tragedies we are currently faced with. (...) As in so many other communities suffering from attacks against Orthodox Jews, the information was sparse: each attack seemed disconnected, without a motivating ideology or movement as with white nationalism, and with hardly any actual hard numbers besides the attacks themselves. (...) A day before I wrote this, a man walked into a home in the town of Monsey, well known for its large Haredi community, and proceeded to attack the people celebrating Hanukkah with a machete. Only two weeks earlier, a man and a woman walked into a kosher grocery store in Jersey City, N.J., and murdered three people, shortly after killing a police officer. In between, there were multiple assaults in the New York area. (...) It has been getting worse for a while, but these last two weeks shook us all, of every denomination: the low-grade assaults have now escalated to murder. And there is little sign it will get better. (...) But by far the most prevalent talking point that has simmered under the surface of mainstream discourse seems to finally have burst forth: the vast majority of the perpetrators over the last two weeks have been black. (...) It is, in fact, true, that America, and especially the left, have obsessed over white nationalism while largely not feeling the same urgency about anti-Semitism that doesn't fit their right-left constructs. It is also true that when communities like the Hasidim are targeted, anti-Semitism isn't taken as seriously. But as I see more and more people demanding we deal with "black anti-Semitism," I can't help but feel there is something missing, something that many people seem both desperate for and yet not willing to truly examine. (...) Because of the intense focus on white nationalism and the alt-right, we have an incredible amount of data available. (...) The exact

opposite is the case with the horrifying acts in Brooklyn, Jersey City, and Monsey. These attackers seem to pop out of nowhere. These acts don't appear coordinated, even in the vaguely disconnected version of "lone wolf" attacks we see among white nationalists. (...) The question is not whether black people have an anti-Semitism problem, because an entire group cannot be painted in such generalizing terms. These attacks are not occurring with any similar frequency in other areas of the United States: they are largely confined to the New York area. Even where other Jewish communities mix with black communities, such as in Chicago, these horrors have not occurred nearly as often. This point alone means that discussing anti-Semitism purely in terms of race is not just wrong and dangerous: it does not help us properly address the heart of the problem. (...) It's time we admitted something that is clearer every day: we simply don't know enough. And while we must take measures to secure our safety in the meantime, we can't properly address the growth of anti-Semitism without an understanding of how that hatred is originating, spreading, and being acted upon. Really, we just need more data.

Elad Nehorai, HAA, 30.12.19

HAA = Haaretz

YED = Yedioth Ahronoth / Ynetnews

JPO = Jerusalem Post

IHY = Israel HaYom

TOI = Times of Israel

GLO = Globes

Veröffentlicht im: Januar 2020

Verantwortlich:

Dr. Paul Pasch,

Leiter der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Israel

Redaktion:

Susanne Knaul

Judith Stelmach

Homepage: [www.fes.org.il](http://www.fes.org.il)

Email: [fes@fes.org.il](mailto:fes@fes.org.il)