



## Schlaglicht Israel Nr. 4/08

### Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen

11. - 24. Februar 2008

#### 1. Attentat auf Mughniya

Am 13.02.08 kam Imad Mughniyah, nach Hassan Nasrallah Nr. 2 in der libanesischen Hisbollah, bei einem Attentat in Damaskus ums Leben. Der Top-Terrorist, der für Anschläge gegen Israel, die USA und jüdische Einrichtungen mit vielen hundert Todesopfern verantwortlich sein soll, fungierte als Militärführer der Hisbollah und stand in der westlichen Welt ganz oben auf den Fahndungslisten. Nach seinem Tod kam es sofort zu Spekulationen über den Hintergrund seiner Ermordung. Die israelische Regierung versteckte ihre Zufriedenheit mit dem Anschlag nicht, dementierte jedoch eine Beteiligung. Allerdings vermittelten israelische Medien durchaus den Eindruck, dass israelische Geheimdienste verantwortlich sein könnten. Andererseits wurde auch in Betracht gezogen, dass das Attentat von amerikanischer Hand oder wegen interner Streitigkeiten von der Hisbollah selbst ausgeführt worden sein könnte.

Anlässlich der Beerdigung von Mughniyah machte Nasrallah indes deutlich, dass er Israel die Verantwortung für den Anschlag zuwies. Er drohte, den Kampf gegen Israel von nun an, auch außerhalb von Israel und dem Libanon zu führen. Israelische Sicherheitskräfte verstärkten daraufhin die Schutzmaßnahmen für israelische Einrichtungen im Ausland.

#### Great leap backwards

"From an organization that has a state, a group that manages a war against another country, an organization that is attempting to change the political rules of the game in the country where it operates – Hizbullah shifted to being a hunted, embarrassed, and stunned terror group. [...] This assassination comes on top of the growing headache suffered by Hizbullah Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah. For more than a year and a half this man has been in hiding, determined to go on and firmly manage the

struggle against Israel, despite suffering from great limitations to his freedom of movement. [...]

As testament to the relative isolation faced by Nasrallah's camp, only minor organizations and various pariahs were quick to condemn the assassination immediately after it was reported. [...]

A Lebanese source told Ynet: 'Past experience shows that Hizbullah will certainly respond. The question is not if, but rather, how, when, and in what way. Logic dictates that the response will not necessarily take place abroad, and that all options are open.'

So what's in store? Starting today, Nasrallah will begin to provide the answers."

Roe Nahmias, JED 14.02.08

#### The hit / Not merely revenge

"Mughniyah's assassination - if it was carried out by Israel - strengthens the impression that Olmert is unafraid of making complex defence decisions that involve considerable risks. [...] In view of Mughniyah's status and the future risk he posed, it was absolutely justified to attack him."

Amos Harel, Avi Issacharoff, HAA 14.02.08

#### Far more than the killing of one terrorist

"The killing of Imad Mughniyah - whoever is responsible - represents a significant achievement for Israel and its allies, and a tremendous blow to its most sworn enemies, in particular Hizbullah and Iran's radical Islamist regime. [...]

His sudden loss will undoubtedly set back for some time the operational capabilities not only of Hizbullah and the various terror groups with which he was linked, but the Iranian and Syrian intelligence agencies as well. Still, some degree of perspective is called for here. Mughniyah was not a charismatic political figure, but a shadowy underground leader and organizer, and such figures are always replaceable in the dark world in which he operated. Though his death was obviously a major setback for

Hizbullah, it will continue to carry on as before, as it did in the wake of Israel's targeted killing in 1992 of Hassan Nasrallah's predecessor, Abbas Musawi." Calev Ben-David, JPO 14.02.08.

### **No cause for celebration**

"Is the world a better place without Imad Mughniyah? The instinctive answer is 'Yes.' [...] But a cost-and-benefit analysis could challenge the validity of this response; if a car bomb explodes tomorrow next to a Jewish school in New Jersey [...], we'll be talking differently. On the other hand, if Mughniyah's assassination prevented a few terror attacks that were in the works, then the answer is obvious. It's all a matter of counting heads.

There's at least one thing on which everyone agreed: Mughniyah's elimination will not end terror, nor the war against it. [...]

So why all the joy, if that's the case? It's because terror has been bound up with certain key figures, while the causes behind the terror have been ignored. [...]

But when peace agreements are perceived as concessions or as weakness [...], there is nothing left but to wage war against the symbols of terror, to eliminate the Hamas or Hezbollah leadership, to point to a brilliant operational and intelligence victory, to count the victims of vengeance and to proceed to the next candidate."

Zvi Bar'el, HAA 17.02.08

### **The price they pay**

"Targeted killings have a major factor in their favor. They work. Even if replacement leaders are eventually found there is an inevitable disruption in the operations of the network as well as a blow to morale. It is commonly believed that the select eliminations helped put an end to the suicide bus bombings. Doing nothing does, well, nothing. Worse than that: It shows the sort of weakness which in the Middle Eastern mind-set invites more attacks. [...]

In all the hype surrounding the initial reports of Mughniyah's death, I liked the quote I heard on Israel Radio that 'even his bodyguards didn't know where he slept.' He was too scared of being killed. And there is the added irony that a man who so encouraged others to become martyrs was afraid to die for the cause himself.

The explosion echoed so loudly because it sent a message to Hizbullah and Hamas leaders that they are not immune. Someone will always find out where they sleep."

Liat Collins, JP 18.02.08

### **Rattling the cage: When in doubt, bomb**

"When I heard the news that Hizbullah's number one terrorist had been blown up in Damascus, I thought: This wasn't Israel's doing. We've had a year-and-a-half of cease-fire with Hizbullah, nobody wants to ruin that. We still haven't gotten over the last war in Lebanon, nobody's going to risk starting another one now, not when there's been 18 months of peace and quiet on the northern border.

Well, imagine my surprise. With all the gloating and back-slapping and winking going on in this country, I thought they were going to start passing out candy. [...]

If Israel didn't kill Imad Mughniyah last week, then this country is even more blind than I thought, because we seem to be doing everything we can to wave the assassination in Hizbullah's face, to taunt them, to dare them to try to take revenge.

I don't understand. Everybody knows they're going to hit back, or at least they're going to try as hard as they can, and, based on experience, they probably will succeed sooner or later. [...]

It's too quiet around here. A tense quiet, as the tabloids say. The tension is eating us up. And the surest, simplest way to stop worrying about whether there's going to be a war or not is to start one."

Larry Derfner, JPO 21.02.08

## **2. Homosexuelle in der israelischen Gesellschaft**

*Nach einer Entscheidung von Generalstaatsanwalt Menachem Mazuz Anfang Februar dürfen Homosexuelle die Kinder ihrer Partner adoptieren. Diskussionen zu diesem Thema waren vom Sozialministerium angefacht worden, das den legalen Status homosexueller Partnerschaften mit Kindern klarstellen wollte. Die aktuelle Entscheidung ist Teil eines langjährigen rechtlichen Kampfes für die Gleichstellung von Homosexuellen, der 1994 begann, als der Oberste Gerichtshof die Fluggesellschaft El Al anwies, dem männlichen Partner eines Flugbegleiters Flugtickets zuzugestehen. Mazuz gab in seiner Entscheidung auch an, dass Homosexuelle das Recht hätten, Kinder zu adoptieren, die nicht die Kinder ihrer Partner sind, das Kindeswohl stehe jedoch immer im Vordergrund.*

*Die religiösen Parteien verurteilten die Entscheidung und reagierten – wie in der Vergangenheit – mit Beleidigungen und Verwünschungen. Ein Knessetabgeordneter der religiösen Partei Shas*

*machte zudem auf sich aufmerksam, indem er Homosexuellen die Schuld an einem Erdbeben gab, das in der letzten Woche in Israel zu spüren war.*

### **Gay couples – Civil marriage**

“The attorney general did well in not passing along the hot potato of same-sex couple adoption to the High Court of Justice again. Had he chosen this familiar and safe method, he would have spared himself a great deal of criticism from religious circles. But then the issue would have been on hold for years at the expense of homosexual and lesbian couples as well as children who are candidates for adoption. [...]

Shas is not pleased, predictably, by the attorney general's decision, but it is hard to understand the conditioning that causes them to react with slander and curses every time homosexuals and lesbians are mentioned. [...] They allow themselves to express themselves in this way, inter alia, because of the absence of adequate response. This must not be condoned. Every statement of this sort must be condemned and attacked in order to make it clear that the reputation of homosexuals and lesbians is not to be dragged through the mud.”

HAA 12.02.08

### **The new religious family**

“With a delay customary for the religious world, slowly but surely the religious family is also turning into a new, different, and alternative family. [...] What used to be impossible (can you believe that up until a few years ago, there were no divorces “among us”?) is today still a complex challenge, but tomorrow nobody will remember that once upon a time there used to be a religious problem to create a single parent or same sex family. [...]

Our challenge, as a religious society, as parents, as educators, and as human beings, is to adapt to this reality. Not to be scared of it, not to try and scare our children, not to utilize our automatic negative judgment, and mostly not to lower God to primitive resolutions such as “if God had wanted single parent or same sex families, he would not enable only a man and a woman to create a child together.”

Yael Mishali, JPO 07.02.08

### **Gay-friendliness is not only about values**

“I am tempted to call on the ultra-Orthodox leadership to moderate its extremely offensive tone toward the gay-lesbian community - if only for the sake of civilized coexistence. But unfortunately I am not very optimistic about the effectiveness of such a

call. I can only hope that the moderate members of the Haredi community I know who think differently will try to influence their leaders.

Since liberals have made it clear time and again that we see the issue of gay rights as crucial for an open society, I believe it is necessary to point out how important gay-friendliness is from the standpoint of the economy. [...]

The most consistent predictor for the attractiveness of a city, country or company for creative people is - you may have guessed by now - gay-friendliness. There is some logic to this: Throughout history, tolerance has been the central factor in fostering creativity, and gay-friendliness turns out to be its strongest expression. [...]

Bnei Brak and Jerusalem are two of the poorest cities in Israel, and both are, to put it mildly, not gay-friendly. Since cultural openness cannot be dictated by the state, I am not too optimistic about the possibility of influencing the economic future of these and other culturally conservative cities except through education and cultural change. Tolerance cannot be enforced, it must be embraced. [...] Israel would pay a heavy price for reversing the trend toward gay-friendliness: The brain drain that draws Israel's talent abroad will turn into a tsunami, and without the creative class, Israel's economy and culture will lose its vibrancy.”

Carlo Strenger, HAA 20.02.08

### **Give gays kosher stamp**

“The issue of religious homosexuals is a serious test case for leaders of the so-called God-fearing public. With the exception of very few people, the leaders of this community fail time and again in handling this question. The miserable anti-gay expressions uttered by Orthodox Knesset members are especially concerning, and in fact horrifying. [...]

I believe that somewhere there is a Jewish law solution. [...] Here I expect the rabbis to resolve this issue once and for all, and preferably not in the Iranian way. I'm not talking about lifting prohibitions, but rather, about social acceptance. The Jews are a creative people, so I am certain that rabbis will be able to find a patent that would make homosexuals kosher too.”

Asaf Wohl, JED 21.02.08

### 3. Sderot

*Auch in den letzten beiden Wochen setzte sich der Beschuss durch Kassam-Raketen aus dem Gazastreifen auf die israelische Stadt Sderot und die umliegenden Gebiete fort. Während die Armee begrenzte Operationen im Gazastreifen durchführte und die Regierung versprach, 3600 Häuser in der betroffenen Gegend mit Schutzwänden auszustatten, protestierten Einwohner von Sderot in Tel Aviv und Jerusalem. Der Bürgermeister der Stadt gab schließlich an, auch zu Gesprächen mit der Hamas bereit zu sein, um den Beschuss einzustellen.*

#### A farewell to indignation

"Something is wrong - terribly, terribly wrong - with how accustomed we have become to the violence being inflicted upon the southern part of the country by the Palestinians. It is almost as if we have said farewell to our sense of indignation, replacing it instead with static indifference. [...] Some might view this as a healthy approach, but I beg to differ. The fact is that we as a society have become numb to the cry of Sderot and the south. The outrage we should all be feeling over the relentless rocket attacks has failed to materialize, and the government exploits this to avoid taking action. [...] Comfortably ensconced in our homes, we all think it couldn't possibly happen to us. The headlines from the south seem taken from some far away place, off in the distance. After all, the government would never abandon us, would it? But if we accept our leaders' decision to snub Sderot, abandon Ashkelon and neglect Netiv Ha'asara, then we are essentially lining ourselves up to become potential prey too." Michael Freud, JPO 12.02.08

#### The Israel they don't belong to

"The people of Sderot and the South feel that had this happened somewhere else, in the central region, for example, the country's energies would have burst forth just to solve the problem. Nothing can persuade the residents of the South that this is an unsolvable military or political problem. Those demonstrators in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, whose parents were sent in the middle of the night to settle the desert in the '50s, are convinced that they are doomed to this incessant hell just because they are seen as second- and third-grade citizens. [...] The failure to stop the Qassam rockets is to a large extent a metaphor for Israel's incompetence regarding the southern communities. Had their

residents a sense of mission, they may have found the fortitude to cope with the military threat. But in a reality of soup kitchens, closing factories, fleeing residents, growing unemployment, economic distress and a bleak future, it is doubtful whether stopping the fire would bring joy to their lives."

Daniel Ben-Simon, HAA 12.02.08

#### Lügnerische Behauptungen der Linken

"Ein schwieriges Problem bei diesen Diskussionen stellen die lügnerischen Behauptungen der Linken dar. [...] Hier einige Beispiele:

'Und als wir in Gaza saßen, hat man da etwa nicht Kassam-Raketen geschossen?' – Nein, hat man nicht! [...] Aus Gaza sind wir nämlich im Jahr 1994 abgezogen, sollte jemand das vergessen haben. Vor 1994 wurden aber keine Kassam-Raketen abgeschossen. [...]

Vor der Loslösung hatte Israel nur etwa 10% des Gaza-Streifens unter Kontrolle. Von den Stellen aus, an denen wir uns befanden, in Gush Katif und im Norden, wurden keine Raketen und keine Mörsergranaten abgeschossen. 'Was werden wir tun, wenn sie nach einer Rückeroberung weiter Raketen schießen?' Es gibt keinen Grund, warum so etwas geschehen sollte. Von den Stellen, an denen die Armee stationiert ist, wird bewiesenermaßen nicht geschossen."

HZO 13.02.08

HAA = Haaretz

HZO = Ha Tzofe

JED = Jedioth Ahronoth

JPO = Jerusalem Post

MAA = Maariv

Die Artikel aus HZO und MAA wurden dem Medienspiegel der Deutschen Botschaft Israel entnommen.

Veröffentlicht am: 26. Februar 2008

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