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1. Patt in der Knesset

In Israel wächst die Sorge vor Neuwahlen, nachdem Regierungschef Naftali Bennett mit dem Rücktritt einer Abgeordneten seiner Yamina-Partei die Mehrheit im Parlament eingebüßt hat. Die Parlamentarierin Idit Silman will erklärtermaßen nicht länger Teil der Regierungskoalition sein, weil diese die "jüdische Identität Israels" bedrohe. Auslöser war ein Brief von Gesundheitsminister Nitzan Horowitz an die öffentlichen Krankenhäuser, in dem er dazu aufforderte, in der Pessach-Woche gesäuertes Brot in Krankenhäusern zu erlauben. Der Oberste Gerichtshof hatte 2021 ein langjähriges Verbot von Mehlwaren in israelischen Gesundheitseinrichtungen gekippt. Horowitz ist Mitglied in der links-liberalen Meretz-Liste. Die von acht Parteien unterschiedlicher politischer Ausrichtungen getragene Koalition verfügt nun nur noch über 60 der insgesamt 120 Sitze in der Knesset. Ex-Regierungschef Benjamin Netanyahu begrüßte die Entscheidung Silmans. Er soll Silman als Anreiz für den Austritt aus der Koalition einen sicheren Platz auf der Likud-Liste bei den nächsten Wahlen sowie den Posten der Gesundheitsministerin im Falle einer Regierungsbildung durch den Likud zugesichert haben.

Israelis have the right to not keep kosher during Passover

(...) Early last year, the High Court of Justice issued a definitive ruling that hospitals have no authority to prevent people from bringing in chametz. But it turns

out that some hospitals weren't impressed by that ruling and decided to try to circumvent it. Jerusalem's Hadassah Hospital, for instance, thought to ask the institution's employees not to bring chametz in or eat it on the premises, and to instruct security guards to "politely ask" patients and visitors not to bring chametz into the hospital. In response, Horowitz sent a letter to all hospital directors last week demanding that they uphold the law and comply with the court's ruling. (...) We must not make do with forbidding hospitals to bar the entry of chametz, because there are people who see this as a green light for continuing to impose religious coercion through other means. Instead, we must now fight to get hospitals to provide non-kosher meals to patients who don't observe kashrut. (...) we must demand that hospitals also provide suitable meals for people who don't observe kashrut on Pesach. Editorial, HAA, 04.04.22

Idit Silman, what are you afraid of?

(...) the dominance of Jewish cultural norms makes Israel's Jewish character unequivocal. The holidays in Israel are Jewish holidays, Sunday is a workday, the day off is Shabbat, kosher food is readily available in any official setting and in most malls and shopping centers. The language is Hebrew, synagogues and mikvaot are ubiquitous, Jewish history is the default perspective in schools, there is a bagrut in Bible and in Jewish thought, etc. (...) Apparently, Silman's concept of a Jewish state features

a light form of religious coercion. tazShe is not advocating making hametz illegal on Pesach, but the government must enforce Pesach rules in its corridors, and religious patients should not be subjected to the trauma of seeing bread on Pesach. (...) For some Israeli dati'im (religious folk), being presented with Jews eating hametz in front of their faces on Pesach calls their own Judaism into question. (...) Religious coercion, however, is morally problematic; why shouldn't a hospitalized person be able to eat a sandwich just because religious Jews object? (...) those who advocate this kind of soft coercion do not understand its negative effects. The best sell for Judaism is seeing the satisfaction observant Jews receive from their practices. Coercion accomplishes the opposite; it makes the coerced resent these practices. (...)

Zev Farber, TOI, 06.04.22

The hypocrisy of Silman's 'values' damage Israel

In the letter coalition whip MK Idit Silman (Yamina) sent to party leader Prime Minister Naftali Bennett informing him that she was leaving the governing coalition, the word "values" came up repeatedly. (...) there is nothing moral in what Silman did (...). A moral person does not drag an entire country back to the political dead-end it had barely managed to escape from less than a year ago. A moral person does not create government paralysis, preventing it from advancing laws and reforms and functioning normally. (...) A moral person does not impose another round of elections, or even more than one, on a country that has not yet recovered from four previous rounds. A moral person does not sell out her party colleagues and coalition in return for a safe spot on another party's Knesset slate and a promise to be appointed a minister. (...) in reality, those who have more often compromised their positions are the parties of the left and the Arab Knesset members, who supposedly are the ones carrying the banner of a two-state solution in an attempt to reach a territorial compromise with the Palestinians. Everything that is truly important to the left, and in strategic terms also for the United Arab List, was stored away in the political attic. (...) The left sat by quietly. (...) There is nothing moral in what Silman did. Political desertion is an irresponsible and egotistical act. (...)

Editorial, HAA, 07.04.22

Is Idit Silman 'the good girl' who fell for Netanyahu's trickery?

(...) Benjamin Netanyahu and his closest associates, praised Silman for her "brave decision," expressing their willingness to "welcome her with open arms". Before her sudden resignation, however, Silman was one of the most hated Knesset members in the coalition. This resulted in her being on the receiving end of a relentless barrage of insults and abuse from the same Opposition that she is now set to join, having struck a political deal with Netanyahu's Likud. (...) Silman, for her part, claimed that during her tenure she had been subjected to constant threats and harassment. (...)

Itamar Eichner, YED, 06.04.22

Who will win big from the government's disintegration?

(...) With Silman's departure, Prime Minister Naftali Bennett's tiny Yamina party (...) shrank to just five representatives in Israel's 120-seat legislature after she joined MK Amichai Chikli's mutiny. (...) Now the opposition is lying in wait for another defector that would allow it to initiate a vote of no confidence and topple the sitting government. Most members of the incumbent government are not interested in an early election (...). At the same time, each actor holds their own set of conflicting interests. (...) One of the most spoken about figures right now is undoubtedly Yesh Atid Chairman, Alternate Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Yair Lapid — the true tragic hero of the current government. (...) The fact that the current Knesset could dissolve before realizing his grand political masterplan (...) is very bad news for him. (...) Defense Minister and Blue & White Chairman Benny Gantz (...) stands to gain big from a new round of elections, provided he is not perceived by the public as the one responsible for the collapse of the sitting government. If Yamina does the work for him and dissolves the government before Lapid assumes Israeli politics' top position, Gantz will be able to supplant him as the leader of the center-left bloc and carry off some of his voters on his path back to the political forefront. (...) Another significant actor in the political game is Opposition Leader Benjamin Netanyahu. (...) Netanyahu is now trying to snatch more "defectors" from the government's right flank, especially from Bennett's Yamina (...). Prime Minister Naftali Bennett is considered the big loser of this political earthquake. His tenure could be cut short before he managed to complete any significant political and diplomatic moves. (...) Therefore,

any changes in the composition of the coalition at this time do not auger well for Bennett. (...) Moran Azulay, YED, 07.04.22

Key to Bennett coalition's survival

(...) Naftali Bennett and Justice Minister Gideon Sa'ar know that elections now would mean suicide. Making a mockery of the Knesset for a year is not a recipe for success at the ballot box. (...) Joint List leader MK Ayman Odeh has already announced that he will topple the government. (...) Joint List MK Ahmad Tibi has a great chance to hop on the wagon. (...) Meanwhile, Labor and Meretz have to swallow their own bitter pills. The yeshiva at Evyatar, the shelving of the law that prevents an indicted individual from forming a government, connecting the illegal outposts to electricity and water, and construction in the settlements. (...) Bennett restored a great deal of dignity to the role of prime minister. His conduct has usually been focused and practical, the imperial customs have vanished. His tragedy is like that of many other rebound leaders before him: It's very difficult to thrive when you take over after someone as dominant as Netanyahu. Now he faces an almost impossible political maneuver, and the only way for him to succeed at it is to persuade those who up to a year ago he wouldn't utter a word to: Transportation Minister Merav Michaeli, Health Minister Nitzan Horowitz, and Tibi – for whom it is worth paying a political price to save the government. Perhaps mediation between Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Russian President Vladimir Putin will suddenly seem like an easy task. Raviv Drucker, HAA, 11.04.22

2. Israels Militär setzt Razzien im Westjordanland fort

Nach vier Terroranschlägen in Israel mit insgesamt 14 Todesopfern in den vergangenen Wochen kündigte Regierungschef Naftali Bennett ein striktes Vorgehen gegen die Gewalt an. Die Armee, der Inlandsgeheimdienst Shin Bet und alle weiteren Sicherheitskräfte hätten volle Handlungsfreiheit, "um den Terror zu besiegen". Bei israelischen Militäreinsätzen im besetzten Westjordanland, bei denen nach weiteren Terroristen gefahndet wurde, sind palästinensischen Informationen zufolge 20 Menschen zu Tode gekommen, und zahlreiche Palästinenser_innen wurden verletzt. Palästinenserpräsident Mahmud Abbas versuchte zu beschwichtigen und verurteilte die Tötung von palästinensischen und israelischen Zivilisten. Im Gazastreifen feierten

hingegen die Hamas und der Islamische Jihad die jüngsten Anschläge.

Israel's integration to 'new Mideast' comes with a price

(...) the summit was (...) definitely a major step in Israel's struggle for the Americans to stop easing sanctions on Iran, including the rumored removal of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps from its notorious terror list. (...) The concern of Iran becoming a nuclear threshold, as while free of international sanctions and encouraging regional terrorism, is what has brought the Sunni states closer to Israel. While Israel can't provide these countries the same protections as the U.S., it is still the most powerful country in the region, it has links to the U.S. Congress, and most importantly, Israel has the military ability to strike Iran at any point. (...) Someone who is unlikely to join the summit next year are the Palestinians. As far as Bennett and Lapid are concerned, that's good news. But, as we sadly learned over the past week, the Palestinians have their own way, usually a violent one, of forcing themselves into every discourse. And while they were not around the political table at the summit, they were in Hadera, Be'er Sheva, and Bnei Brak. So, not only the beautiful landscape of Sde Boker is part of the new Middle East, but terrorism as well. Nahum Barnea, YED, 01.04.22

Moderate leaders on both sides need to unite against radicals

(...) For the record and according to the UN, in 2022 alone, 15 Palestinians, including children, were killed; Israeli forces injured 1,733 Palestinians (...) and Israeli settlers committed 93 attacks against Palestinians. (...) Palestinian life has continued to be dominated by the Israeli occupation. But this cycle of violence should not be allowed to continue spinning out of control. (...) There are those who genuinely want peace, understand that peace means deep political compromise, and are not deterred by radicals and their abhorrent actions. On the other hand, there are those who believe in the zero-sum game and have no interest in any compromise. If they are genuine in their beliefs, those of the first group must insist on refusing to allow radicals to change their path. (...) we have in Ramallah today a Palestinian leader of the first group while in Israel there is sadly a leadership of the second group. (...) There has been an increase in settler violence and continued provocations in Sheikh Jarrah and Al-Aqsa Mosque (...) In every meeting that the Palestinian leadership

has had with Israeli ministers (...), Palestinians have stressed the importance of giving the public reasons for optimism. (...) In Arabic, there is a saying: fil harakeh barakah (in movement there is a blessing). Political and diplomatic movement of the peace process would certainly be a blessing. (...) The absence of hope is the most powerful motivation for radicalization. (...)

Daoud Kuttab, YED, 02.04.22

Opposition's conduct during terror wave has been shameful

The four terrorist attacks (...) were a sad reminder that as long as the endless conflict between ourselves and the Palestinians is not resolved, we are destined to suffer from bouts of terrorism, with brief periods of quiet in between, and every once in a while a military operation, usually followed by another brief period of quiet. (...) Five persons were killed in Bnei Brak – two of them Jews, and three non-Jews: a Christian-Arab policeman, and two illegal Christian Ukrainian workers. (...) Amir Khouri, was one of two policemen who sought contact with the terrorist, and was killed in the crossfire. While his body still lay by his motorcycle on the street, the mob was yelling “Death to the Arabs.” The police were furious. There are around 1,200 Christian and Muslim Arabs serving in the police force (...) it is customary that when terrorist attacks by Palestinians take place, the opposition avoids criticizing the government – at least for a while. But that is not what happened this time. (...) Today, as leader of the opposition, Netanyahu continues to do everything in his power to delegitimize the (...) current government and doesn't miss an opportunity to attack it – this time about the tragic results of the current round of Palestinian terrorism. Shame on him.

Susan Hattis Rolef, JPO, 03.04.22

In every terror attack in Israel, every Arab is guilty

(...) As soon as the perpetrators' identities were known, a familiar, grisly ritual began: Arab leaders denounce the attacks, and Israeli right-wingers accuse all Arabs in Israel of collective responsibility for the deaths, inciting racism and calling for revenge. Is there any way to break out of this dismal cycle? (...) Immediately after the attacks, key political leaders and activists from the Arab community (...) condemned them. Despite these wall-to-wall condemnations, racist chants against Arabs and verbal as well as physical attacks against the com-

munity, especially the Muslim Arab community, have intensified. (...) there is always a collective blame of Arabs in general, and Muslims in particular, an imagined hierarchy to justify racist and Islamophobic comments. (...) Far right provocateurs, like Knesset member Itamar Ben-Gvir, know exactly how to exploit the moment, to rile up their base and grab a platform for their hate. (...) Generations of Arabs in Israel have grown up under the shadow of fear, surveillance and discrimination, constantly reminded of the fragility and conditionality of their (second-class) Israeli citizenship, and the illegitimacy of any expression of Palestinian identity. The backlash after these recent attacks, together with the intercommunal riots of last summer signal to Arabs that regardless of how much progress they make, how much education and social capital they acquire, they will always be vulnerable to categorization as a “fifth columnist” or terrorist. (...) It is too often the actions of the very rare extremist few, representing only themselves and their place on the margins of society, who end up defining the present and future of a community of millions. (...)

Dr. Anwar Mhajne, HAA, 04.04.22

Terror wave is no time for political games

Alongside the rise in horrific attacks against Israelis, we've witnessed (...) politicians trying to take advantage of the situation to score points with their voter base. This is – as the Hebrew term goes – “dancing on the blood” of the victims. (...) The opposition is right in its claim about the lack of security in the streets and that Israelis cannot know where and when it will hit you. What the opposition MKs purposely ignore is that Israel felt the same way 11 months ago, when rockets from Gaza reached almost every part of the country. Then, the opposition did not run a fierce campaign against Netanyahu who was PM at the time. Most politicians united behind the cause and against the enemy. So why can't the Likud and the Religious Zionist Party do the same? (...) We see the IDF, the Shin Bet (...), and the police responding when needed (...). The use of the victims for political purposes is unacceptable. It is time to put aside politics and contribute to the effort to bring security to the country. Even the opposition should support that.

Editorial, JPO, 04.04.22

Only an Israeli-Palestinian agreement can defeat terror

(...) In Israel, we now have a government that has decided to refrain from the only step that can defeat

terror over the long term: a diplomatic agreement with the Palestinians. (...) A government that refuses to recognize the existence of a Palestinian people and does not stake out a diplomatic blueprint that would constitute an alternative to the path of violence, is relinquishing the most effective weapon against terror. The absence of a policy that strives to reach an agreement also attests to insensitivity to the pain of Israeli-Palestinian citizens, who see their fellow university students, or members of the team with whom they save lives in Israeli hospitals, doing reserve duty in order to guarantee the continued occupation of their people. (...) Concern for Israel's future requires looking at the existing reality and proposing genuine solutions. (...) without an agreement with the Palestinians, the hostility toward Israel among the Arab public in Amman, Cairo and Riyadh will continue. (...) Israel is in need of a government that understands guaranteeing the country's security and its Jewish and democratic character require full civil equality for its Arab citizens, as well as an attempt to reach a diplomatic agreement with the Palestinian people. Israel needs a government that understands that perpetuating the conflict means perpetuating terror.

Ami Ayalon, HAA, 05.04.22

Israeli security officials only raise tensions instead of calming them

(...) Every day we have warnings about potential attacks, for the simple reason that we live in a "bad neighborhood" of the world. What may come out of this constant need to report foiled attacks is an even greater animosity towards the security forces. So, the right thing to do is to calm the Israeli public, instead of making the fire of panic burn brighter it, which by the way is also true for the media. (...) Between the "mini" terror wave in 2015 and the bloody week of March 2022, a combination of achievements of the Shin Bet, the IDF, and the Israel Police, along with the policies of the various Netanyahu governments, materialized the belief that economic wellbeing could trump terrorism. And it is important to talk about the price of this policy, which saw security forces turn a blind eye on tens of thousands of Palestinians passing illegally through the perimeter fence in the West Bank to work in Israel - in the hope it would keep them away from the cycle of terror. In addition, you can't ignore the evolution of technology and social media. (...) The level of documentation, the speed at which it is distributed, and the lack of filter on social media is a leading cause of anxiety. (...) some of Israelis are experi-

encing the trauma of terror attacks for the first time, in a world that has changed, especially in the way it consumes media. (...)

Yossi Yehoshua, YED, 05.04.22

Israel must use new anti-terror tactics against lone-wolf attackers

(...) the military is back, in perhaps a late response to the changing face of terror. The enemy is not the one Israel had known in the past, and the security agencies are re-grouping in order to face the new challenge. Arab Israelis who support the Islamic State will be found and dealt with. (...) the new kind of terrorist poses a different challenge. The perpetrator of the deadly attack in Tel Aviv (...) was identified within two hours, even before his immediate circle in the Jenin refugee camp, was aware that he had left it. He did not share his plans with others, did not leave a will, and was not on the radar of the Israeli security agencies as a potential threat. He had not worked in Tel Aviv before, nor had he spoken Hebrew. He had a job in high-tech and carried a gun because of a dispute over his work in cryptocurrency. He was not very young, nor was he affiliated with any militant organization. His family, like many others in the camp, had strong ties with the Palestinian Authority establishment. His gun was used eventually to shoot innocent civilians at a busy Tel Aviv bar. These "new terrorists" hold deep contempt for the Palestinian Authority, and unlike perpetrators of attacks in previous waves of terror, cross into Israel carrying arms in order to inflict death and injury. No organized Palestinian faction sends them on their mission, and they answer to no one. To them, all factions have given up the fight against the "occupation". (...)

Alex Fishman, YED, 13.04.22

Israel has become numb to this cycle of violence

The deaths of young soldiers in the territories are as terrible and unnecessary as the deaths of three young men on Tel Aviv's Dizengoff Street, or as the death of a mother of six in Bethlehem. We greet every such death with surprised faces. But we aren't zombies, we're from here. And we know that we too are responsible for their deaths. (...) We're always surprised, we never understand. Why do they do this to us? What have we ever done to them? What have we done? We've killed and destroyed and uprooted and imprisoned. Demolishing homes doesn't prevent attacks, but it does create generations of highly motivated terrorists whose homes were destroyed when they were children. (...) With

eyes wide open, the majority is marching toward the abyss, and en route, it will sweep all of us along with it. Our idiotic routine won't be halted somewhere on the way to its bitter end. They'll murder us, and we'll murder them. In her rendition of the traditional Pesach song "Chad Gadya," Chava Alberstein asked, "How long will this terrible cycle continue / persecutor and persecuted, beater and beaten / When will this madness end?" Apparently, the answer is never. Yossi Klein, HAA, 14.04.22

3. Bestürzung über die russischen Massaker

Israels Außenminister Yair Lapid zeigte sich angesichts des von russischen Soldaten verübten Massakers in der ukrainischen Stadt Butscha entsetzt. Zivilisten vorsätzlich Schaden zuzufügen, sei ein Kriegsverbrechen, twitterte Lapid. Der Anblick der Bilder aus Butscha könne niemanden gleichgültig lassen. Nach und nach werden immer mehr Berichte über Vergewaltigungen auch von Kindern sowie Massenmorde publik. Auf offizieller Ebene hat Israel bislang weitgehend eine allzu deutliche Positionierung vermieden. Die Regierung in Jerusalem unterhält gute Beziehungen zu beiden Kriegsparteien. Moskau gegenüber ist man vorsichtig, um die Sicherheitskooperation in Syrien nicht zu gefährden. Russland drückt beide Augen zu, wenn israelische Kampfflieger Stützpunkte der iranischen Revolutionsgarden angreifen. Auf die Unterstützung der Ukrainer ist man wiederum angewiesen, wenn es darum geht, ukrainische Juden und Jüdinnen aus den Gefahrenzonen zu holen und nach Israel zu bringen.

Message to Congress on Israel's 'Neutrality'

(...) Israel's main foreign affairs issue is the threat coming from Iran which has sworn to destroy the country and that threat must be taken seriously. This includes not only a nuclear threat but also terrorist and cyber threats. (...) The US administration under President Biden, sadly, has made reestablishing the deal with Iran a priority. (...) he is throwing Israel "under the bus". He continues to favor his enemies over his allies such as by removing the Houthi's from the terrorist list. The billions that will be released to Iran as a result of the deal will not go to the poor suffering people of Iran, but rather to support Iran's terrorist activities throughout the world. (...) Israel needs to eliminate Iranian incursions into Syria, it must maintain the security cooperation with Russia in the skies over Syria. Loss of that cooperation could lead to disastrous complications of a

Russian-Israeli military conflict which Israel could not handle, especially with the anti-Israel (...) attitude of the current administration. Israel is the only Jewish state in the world and from that perspective needs to make the survival of Jews in the world its number one priority. There were tens of thousands of Jews in the Ukraine and hundreds of thousands in Russia. Antisemitism in both countries has a very real and long history! (...) Jews in both countries are a vulnerable population. Israel has opened its doors to Jewish refugees from the Ukraine, even while maintaining "neutrality". They can't risk jeopardizing the Russian Jewish population by following Western sanctions as any other simple democracy can as the Russian Jewish population would pay the price. (...) Richard A. Lopchinsky, TOI, 04.04.22

Israel needs to get off the fence regarding the Russian-Ukrainian war - editorial

(...) Following the horrific discovery of a mass grave and tied bodies of civilians shot at close range in Bucha, outside Kyiv, Liberman refused to condemn Russia and its leader, President Vladimir Putin. (...) Liberman is viewing the situation in realpolitik terms – the pragmatic approach that looks at the day after the war and the fact that Israel will still need a working relationship with Putin in order to act freely against Iranian interests in Lebanon. That may all be true, but when stated against the backdrop of the gruesome images emerging from Bucha, it sounds callous and calculated. (...) If it wasn't clear before Bucha, it certainly should be now. Israel can no longer sit on the fence and try to appear neutral as Russia continues its murderous assault on Ukraine. History is a harsh critic, and when all of this is over, Israel will be scrutinized carefully to see whether it was on the right or wrong side during the Russia-Ukraine war. (...) the words of our leaders will be what is remembered. (...) Editorial, JPO, 05.04.22

What will be the price of ignoring atrocities in Ukraine?

The images and testimonies that have been coming out of war-torn Ukraine in recent days, specifically those from the region northeast of Kyiv, are horror incarnate. (...) documented and caught on tape. (...) it is exceedingly clear that Moscow's plan for Ukraine includes the practical extermination of any and all opposing the Kremlin's influence. The shock felt in Ukraine and the West in the face of these atrocities is understandable and justified, the widespread demand to investigate Russia over potential

war crimes, and perhaps even crimes against humanity, even more so. But this is exactly the moment to stop and see the historical evil taking place before our very eyes. (...) The war in Ukraine is no Holocaust, and yet we should neither diminish the impact of the horrors perpetrated there nor the need to act in the face of these atrocities. (...) History's lesson is clear: not only do thugs like Putin need to be stopped when they are not very powerful, but that such atrocities are not conducted in a vacuum and the rest of the world has responsibility to stop it. Those who do not stop and punish the Russians for their crimes in Ukraine, will find such atrocities occurring close to their homes.

Nadav Eyal, YED, 09.04.22

The shocking inspiration for Putin's atrocities in Ukraine

(...) The day after the photographic revelations of the Bucha Massacre, the Russian state-owned domestic news agency RIA Novosti published an article that effectively admitted and justified the fact that the Russian war crimes in Bucha and elsewhere in Ukraine were not military excesses or collateral damage at all, but part of the Russian strategy aimed at eradicating the Ukrainian nation. The article, entitled "What Russia Should Do with Ukraine," and written by Russian political consultant Timofey Sergeytsev, openly admits that "de-Nazification," which Putin named as one of the aims of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, has nothing to do with eradicating any far-right ideology, but is simply a euphemism for "de-Ukrainization" – the destruction of Ukraine as a nation-state by way of atrocities perpetrated on its citizens. (...) According to this plan, Ukrainian national elites need to be eliminated; Ukraine must cease to exist and be broken up into several areas occupied by Russia that would erase Ukrainian national self-awareness through imprisonment, re-education and censorship; and after the eradication of the Ukrainian national identity, the masses would be assimilated into the "Russian civilization." (...) The normalization of these genocidal fantasies about Ukrainians by the Russian state media, especially against the background of the bloodcurdling news about Russian war crimes in Bucha and elsewhere, and its platforming the possible utility of using chemical weapons, is a conscious tactic aimed at maintaining and consolidating popular support for Putin's regime. (...) For the victims of Russian war crimes, it matters little whether those who killed, raped, tortured and mutilated them genuinely supported Putin or simply

followed illegal orders out of peer pressure or fear of prosecution. A genocide requires something more than the visceral hatred of "the enemy" – it also needs the willing executioners and the mass compliance of cowards.

Anton Shekhovtsov, HAA, 13.04.22

Europe finally understands the need for military power

(...) Europe has come to realize that might is the only thing that will protect liberty from Kremlin-style threats, attacks, and tyranny. For now, it is an initial, limited and belated recognition, but it is nonetheless preferable to the continued blindness the West has clung to over the past few decades, leading to its helplessness in the face of almost any threat. Sweden and Finland's willingness to join the NATO military alliance speaks for itself. Both have until now thought the Kremlin could be appeased through concessions. But after Putin demonstrated that he has no intention of backing down, Stockholm and Helsinki made an about face. A country that wishes to protect its independence and security must have a large military power and the willingness to use it. Israeli weapons could be helpful as well, which is why Sweden and Finland have procured blue-and-white military systems. Signs of a similar change could also be observed with High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell, who said a few days ago that the war between Russia and Ukraine would be "won on the battlefield." (...)

Ariel Bulshtein, IHY, 13.04.22

4. Medienquerschnitt

Verhandlungen über ein Nuklearabkommen mit Iran

Biden is kicking the nuclear ball into Iran's court

The weeping and wailing by Israel's government and defense establishment over the death of Israel's deterrence against Iran at the hands of Washington death squads is premature. (...) U.S. President Joe Biden evidently doesn't intend to lift the sanctions applied to Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps, even if this means no nuclear deal is reached with Tehran. (...) The official position endorsed by the Iranian government – President Ebrahim Raisi, parliament and the Revolutionary Guards – is that removing sanctions on the Revolutionary Guards is a necessary condition for Iran's return to the nuclear deal.

Consequently, the Biden administration's emerging position poses a serious dilemma for Tehran at a pivotal moment. (...) Washington has imposed onerous sanctions on Iran since withdrawing from the deal three years ago. (...) the Iranian economy is faltering, and a majority of the people is hurting. (...) Removing sanctions, even if the Revolutionary Guards are excluded, will enable Iran to rehabilitate its economy and help its people. (...) But leaving sanctions on the Revolutionary Guards would undermine the regime's image and be viewed as a capitulation to Washington. (...) Biden has been in office for 15 months. Despite all the dire predictions, mainly on the Israeli right, that he would sell out Israel, there is still no nuclear deal. (...) in the absence of a deal, Iran will try even harder to become a nuclear threshold state, albeit probably without assembling a nuclear weapon. The Mossad will also have to work even harder to delay, disrupt and frustrate Iran's nuclear program. One important and regrettable conclusion from this latest development in the Iranian theater is that despite their close strategic ties with Washington, Israeli leaders have trouble understanding the United States and repeatedly fail to read the map correctly. This is mainly because both Israeli leaders and the heads of the defense establishment think Israel is the center of the universe. They are like the tail that tries to wag the dog.

Yossi Melman, HAA, 12.04.22

HAA = Haaretz

YED = Yedioth Ahronoth / Ynetnews

JPO = Jerusalem Post

IHY = Israel HaYom

TOI = Times of Israel

GLO = Globes

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