



Schlaglicht Israel Nr. 16/12

Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen

1. – 16. September 2012

1. Neuer Tiefpunkt im israelisch-amerikanischen Verhältnis?

Obwohl die USA und Israel enge Verbündete sind, ist das Verhältnis derzeit sehr angespannt. Anfang des Monats kam es Medienberichten zufolge zu einer scharfen Auseinandersetzung zwischen Premier Netanyahu und dem amerikanischen Botschafter in Israel Dan Shapiro. Darin kritisierte Netanyahu die unklare Iran-Politik der US-Administration, was jedoch von beiden Seiten dementiert wurde wie auch, dass Präsident Barack Obama ein Treffen mit Netanyahu abgelehnt habe. Des Weiteren ist Israel verstärkt zum Thema im amerikanischen Wahlkampf geworden. Der republikanische Präsidentschaftskandidat Mitt Romney warf Obama vor, Israel "unter einen Bus" geworfen zu haben. Zuvor hatten die Demokraten für Aufruhr gesorgt, als sie in ihrem Parteiprogramm auf den Passus verzichteten, in dem Jerusalem als Hauptstadt Israels bezeichnet wird – und dies später in einem Änderungsantrag der Parteiführung wieder korrigierten.

Under the bus

"Netanyahu knows America better than any other Israeli leader. [...] He could have moved mountains to forge a close American-Israeli alliance against Iran.

But [...] his suspicious nature means that instead of building relations of trust with partners, he finds himself [...] at loggerheads with enemies. His parsimony means that [...] Netanyahu wouldn't pay with the settlements to stop Iran's centrifuges. [...] The prime minister didn't find a way to the U.S. president's heart; instead, he made himself hated by him. Because of Netanyahu, it's not Iran that is now perceived as a threat to world peace, but Israel."

Ari Shavit, HAA 06.09.12

Israel and the US: Shared values and interests

"Any Israeli government will have to work together with any American administration, and vice versa. [...] The relationship with the United States is an inseparable part of Israel's deterrence.

[...] In order to maintain this critical US-Israel relationship, let us change the discourse. [...] Let the talk be about how together the two nations can tackle the challenges they share, rather than how America helps Israel. When this is the underlying theme, it is clear that Israel and the United States have shared values and interests that need to be defended, and it is necessary to agree on the required course of action given the region's changes and threats."

Zippi Livni, JPO 05.09.12.

Cold-shouldering Netanyahu, coddling Morsi

"Netanyahu [...] has been saying that a nuclear Iran would constitute a far greater danger to Israelis than an attempt to destroy [it...]. That he has been talking about this often and openly [...] has led some to assume [...] that he is laying the groundwork for getting the Americans on board.

Well, [...] it sure doesn't seem to be working. If anything, the Obama administration is growing increasingly impatient with Netanyahu. [...] The greater the anti-Western forces in the Middle East and the rest of the world, the colder the shoulder [...] Obama extends to Netanyahu. [...]

If Egypt under Morsi is what the Obama administration considers a country transitioning to democracy, and Israel under Netanyahu is what the Obama administration considers a country too easy on the trigger, then heaven help us all. And a special prayer for a Mitt Romney victory."

Ruthie Blum, IHY 04.09.12

Bibi, Obama have lost it

"Obama has contracted Bibi's well-known hysteria and feels the need to respond to every statement

made by the Israeli premier, regardless of whether it is wise or shallow.

He is acting as though the most important war is the one he is waging against Netanyahu, not the war he should be waging against Iran. And the Iranians? They are sitting in the stands, cracking sunflower seeds and mocking the boys who are playing before them.

This war of words through the press must stop."

Eytan Gilboa, JED 05.09.12

The US is more important

"Netanyahu would do well to listen carefully to [Defense Minister Baraks'] statements and the assessments of Israel's intelligence chiefs on the strategic importance of cooperation with the United States, and on the deterrent power of a relationship of trust between the two countries. Undermining relations with the world's strongest superpower is many times more dangerous than Iran's nuclear program."

HAA, 09.09.12 Editorial

Democratic hedging, Republican wedging

"It is now clear that the Romney campaign will try to turn the president's alleged abandonment of Israel into its number one foreign policy issue. As the Iran crisis escalates and the situations in Syria and Egypt continue to deteriorate, quiet partnership is what is needed. Israeli and US leaders need to work out unified strategies and agreed-to red lines regarding the Iranian nuclear program [...]. If the candidates want to demonize each other in order to please major donors and whip constituents into a frenzy, do it in another sandbox. Stay away from the one marked 'Israel.'"

Joshua Hammerman, TOI 07.09.12

The myth of a caring Obama White House

"Barack Obama brought with him to 1,600 Pennsylvania Avenue the academic left's values and prejudices. Israel as the epitome of Western subjugation of Third World peoples is but one facet of this cracked worldview. [...]

With such intellectual underpinnings, how can it be argued that Israel has a friend in the White House?"

Gidon Ben-Zvi, TOI 03.09.12

The Obama gut test

"In a desperate attempt to attract Jewish voters to the GOP, the presidential campaign of the Republican Party grossly exaggerated and distorted stories about Obama's background. [...] Mitt Romney's [...] critiques of president Obama's positions on Israel's security have been wholly unwarranted. Under the theme of promising to do

'the opposite' of Obama on Israel, Romney has attacked a president who has done more for Israel than any recent predecessor. He authorized \$3 billion of foreign aid assistance in 2011 and \$3.075b in 2012. [...] He continuously toughened the sanctions on Iran with the oral assurance that the United States will not allow Iran to obtain nuclear weapons. [...] And the list goes on. So it would be interesting to hear exactly what governor Romney would do that is 'the opposite' of President Obama's actions and how that would be to Israel's benefit."

Lester Crown, JPO 06.09.12

Defending Obama on Israel gets tougher by the day

"Obama's personal relationship with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has been chilly on the warmest days. [...] Many fear that in a second term, with no need to raise any more money for his campaign in the Jewish community, and no need to secure Jewish votes, Obama would show his true colors with regard to Israel. [...]

It would be wise to assume that, if Obama wins on November 6, things will 'calm down' for him and he finally can 'be more up-front' about so-called Palestine. Then Israel's troubles will really begin."

Richard Baehr, IHY 05.09.12

Misunderstanding America

"The foundation of the relationship between the United States and Israel are the common ideals and values which the two countries share. [...]

Opinion polls consistently show a large majority in support of Israel, and that this support has not in any way decreased as a result of the differences between the two governments [...].

A large majority in both the House of Representatives and the Senate are strong supporters of Israel. [...]

The idea that Obama, if reelected, will let rancor toward Netanyahu get the upper hand in making decisions concerning Israel is ridiculous."

Moshe Arens, HAA 11.09.12

From Washington to Tehran

"Reports in the media have ranged from the view that, despite reported tension, the relationship is as good as ever, to claims that there are deep strains. [...]

It could be summed up as follows: We all agree the US is important, we just think that the other political parties are not maintaining the relationship in the best possible way. In some way, therefore, it seems like a fight over who can please the Americans the most."

Seth Frantzman, JPO 09.09.12

2. Flüchtlingsdrama an israelischer Südgrenze

Seit 2011 baut Israel an seiner Grenze zu Ägypten an einem Grenzzaun, welcher Flüchtlingen den Weg nach Israel erschweren soll. Derzeit leben etwa 60.000 afrikanische Migranten im Land. Seitens der Regierung werden sie als "Eindringline" und "Arbeitsmigranten" bezeichnet. Die Mehrheit wird nicht zum Asylbewerberverfahren zugelassen. Im September berichteten die israelischen Medien ausführlich über eine Gruppe von 21 Eritreern, die im Niemandsland zwischen Ägypten und Israel festsaßen. Die Männer und Frauen hatten israelischen Boden erreicht, befanden sich jedoch auf der Südseite des Grenzzauns. Die Gruppe, die von Soldaten bewacht wurde, harter eine Woche unter schwierigsten klimatischen Bedingungen aus. Trotz scharfer Kritik der UN-Flüchtlingsorganisation UNHCR weigerte sich die israelische Regierung, die Flüchtlinge ins Land zu lassen. Letztlich wurde zwei Frauen sowie einem Minderjährigen Einlass gewährt, während die restlichen Flüchtlinge den ägyptischen Grenzsoldaten übergeben wurden.

Border woes

"From a public relations perspective, the situation is a nightmare. Rightly or wrongly, Israel will be held responsible for forcing the Eritreans to remain exposed to the brutal desert elements [...]. Little, if any, mention will be made in the international media of the tremendous demographic challenges facing Israel as it struggles to maintain a Jewish majority. [...]"

But the lesser of the two evils appears to be to allow these Eritreans to enter Israel while continuing to do everything possible to dissuade future asylum-seekers from flooding our borders."

JPO, 06.09.12 Editorial

Reality dictates rigidity

"Should the State allow the poor migrants in at the expense of the residents of south Tel Aviv and other cities, who want personal security in their own neighborhoods? [...] A democratic state is entitled to protect its national interests, even at the price of unpleasant images. The African migrants will continue looking for a hole in the fence or a legal loophole. We can be humane and provide food and water to those who are stuck at the border, and we can allow two or three to enter in case of an emergency, but we must maintain the policy of keeping our borders permanently sealed."

Yoaz Hendel, JED 07.09.12

The fence wasn't built to be left open

"It wouldn't really be a problem for Israel to absorb another 21 Eritrean refugees. It would, however, be a big problem for Israel to open up its border fence. The various charity organizations — which never ask themselves about the implications of flooding Israeli society with hundreds of thousands of foreigners — can't get enough. They will always call for tearing down the barbed wire for every new wave of invaders. Their plan does not include protecting Israel's identity as a Jewish state. [...] The overwhelming majority of Israelis want to live in a Jewish, democratic state, and are willing to make heavy concessions in order to make that happen. Now what are they being asked to do? To weaken the state's Jewish democratic identity in exchange for almost nothing? [...]"

Israel's Jewish majority has no reason to increase the numbers of an ever-growing, hostile minority."

Dan Margalit, IHY 07.09.12

Let the refugees in

"The international rules and agreements that Israel has signed obligate it to implement the principle of non-refoulement. This principle states that a person cannot be returned to a place where his life would be in danger. At the very least, this principle obligates states to examine asylum-seekers' claims before deporting them. [...] But while this discussion is taking place in a cool, scholarly manner, these refugees are facing another day of terrible suffering in the burning heat of Sinai. The discussion can still be held even if the refugees are lodged in a refugee camp or [...] prisons, where they would get medical treatment and decent food. If the final decision is that there's no reason to let them stay in Israel, they can join the other migrants whom Israel is forcibly deporting."

HAA 06.09.12 Editorial

Migrants at the border

"Irresponsible media reports abound criticizing Israel for not allowing the migrants to enter Israel, while completely ignoring Egypt's culpable role in this debacle. [...]"

Especially since it has increased its military presence in Sinai by agreement with Israel, Egypt has no excuse for continuing to avoid its duty to protect the refugees currently stranded on its side of the Egypt-Israel border. [...] Egypt is duty-bound to protect all refugees entering legally or illegally directly from neighboring Sudan and from Eritrea via Sudan, since in both countries their lives or freedom are threatened."

Maurice Ostroff, JPO 09.09.12

Cast to their fate

„In essence Israel deported 18 migrants from a country whose asylum-seekers Israel is not allowed to deport, and the action was taken without ensuring their safety. The High Court justices washed their hands of it by avoiding a decision on this issue of principle and human rights.

No one knows what happened to the Eritreans. [...] This week the Egyptian security forces killed another Ethiopian migrant who was trying to approach the border with Israel.

Israel can and must - perhaps together with other countries - take up the position that these refugees deserve protection. And that is how Israel should have treated them.”

HAA 11.09.12 Editorial

3. Unruhen in der muslimischen Welt nach Mohammed-Video

Nachdem ein Ausschnitt des Anfang Juli auf YouTube veröffentlichten amerikanischen Amateurfilms „Innocence of Muslims“, in dem Mohammed und der Islam karikiert sowie diffamiert werden, am 11. September im ägyptischen Fernsehen gezeigt wurde, ist es in der muslimischen Welt zu heftigen Ausschreitungen gekommen.

In Ägypten, Jemen, Iran, Tunesien oder Libyen kam es zu gewalttätigen und teils blutigen Demonstrationen. In Bengasi wurden der amerikanische Botschafter und drei seiner Mitarbeiter bei einem Anschlag getötet. Obwohl die amerikanische Regierung erklärte, es habe sich dabei um ein geplantes Attentat gehandelt, scheinen die Proteste als Deckmantel für den Anschlag gedient zu haben.

Der Filmmacher hatte sich in Medieninterviews fälschlich als "jüdischer Israeli" ausgegeben. US-amerikanische Zeitungen legten jedoch schnell offen, das ein ägyptisch-amerikanischer koptischer Christ für das amateurhafte Werk verantwortlich ist.

Muslims' sensitive issue

"The depiction of the prophet Muhammed has always been a sensitive issue for Muslims around the world. [...] Any attempt to mock or demean the prophet sparks a wave of rioting worldwide. [...]

To understand how a silly, low-budget movie can offend so many Muslims around the world, one must understand Muhammad's status within Islam. [...]

Any insult to the prophet reminds Muslims that the Islamic world has been inferior to the West since the 19th century and of their dream that Islam will reclaim its cultural, political and military superiority. [...]

The West will have to be very cautious regarding anything that is related to the prophet Muhammad, particularly because he symbolizes the honor of 1.4 billion people."

Yaron Friedman, JED 14.09.12

Another link in the violent chain reaction

"A low-budget, marginal film that is certainly provocative and outrageous (and the people behind it should face criminal investigation) is just an excuse to launch a frenzied attack against America. The fact that there were initial reports that the anonymous director is an Israeli Jew raises suspicions that this was all premeditated.

What can be done in addition to bolstering defenses against merciless religious terrorists is to try to convince the filmmakers to leave other religions, their founders and their leaders, alone. It is always a sensitive issue that prompts some sort of violent response."

Dan Margalit, IHY 13.09.12

Disgrace, tragedy at US embassy in Cairo

"US Embassy grounds were invaded by an Egyptian mob of soccer hooligans and Islamist fanatics [...]. The US Cairo Embassy's response? 'We firmly reject the actions by those who abuse the universal right of free speech to hurt the religious beliefs of others.' [...] Yes, the US Embassy condemned America by blaming freedom of speech that "hurt religious feelings."

When we condemn every form of speech that 'hurts feelings,' we will find that 'hurt feelings' are used as an excuse for all sorts of thuggish behavior. [...] When we throw away our values because others claim to be 'offended,' we surrender to mobs of intimidation, censorship and intolerance."

Seth Frantzman, JPO 12.09.12

Biting the feeding hand

"Obama's failures in the Middle East continue. During the latest one, thousands of Salafis surrounded American diplomatic missions in Libya and Egypt and would have destroyed them completely had they been given the opportunity to do so. The message was clear: Leave and don't come back. [...]

But this is Libya, where Obama and NATO directly assisted the rebels with weapons and bombardments on Gaddafi and his regime. So how is it that these same 'rebels' are now attacking their 'liberator'?

These rebels are members of dozens of militant Islamist groups, some with links to al-Qaeda. Gaddafi curbed them, but now they can operate freely. [...] These Salafis are not hiding their intent to

drive western forces – headed by the Americans – out of the Middle East. [...]

Over the past two years, the Obama Administration's Mideast policy ousted the old regimes and turned the Arab countries into Afghanistan: Flooded with militias, extremist armed groups and severe violence - all under the auspices of the sacred democracy."

Guy Bechor, JED 15.09.12

An existential threat to the West

"Let's stop pretending that these are just 'radical Islamists' or 'extremist Salafists' or any other restrictive, politically correct definition [...]. The Western world shouldn't really care that some idiot made a movie that desecrates Islam. [...] Freedom of expression and freedom of thought are the foundations of Western life. The madness of the Arab masses is their problem, but an attack on an American Embassy as a result of an individual's exercising of his freedom of expression — that is an attack on Western values. [...]

The West needs to adopt a zero tolerance policy for these types of violent acts. [...] The West, too, has its pride, and if someone humiliates us, we must respond with force, not issue lukewarm reactions."

Dror Eydar, IHY 14.09.12

Islamic terror and the American story

"They consider U.S. values to be the most lethal, clear and present danger. They dread U.S. civil liberties, such as freedom of religion, association, expression, movement, economy, equality for women, and the Internet.

The root cause of Islamic terrorism has been the nature of Islam. In contrast to Western democracy, Islam is supremacist, aiming to bring 'believers' and 'infidels' to total spiritual and physical submission. Henceforth, the centrality of hate-education (toward 'the other') is forging the national state of mind; hence, the intolerant, violent, anti-doubt, anti-choice, anti-criticism and anti-individualistic nature of Islam. [...]

The delusion of the Arab Spring has been brutally exposed by the tectonic and stormy Arab Winter that is gaining momentum. Ideological and operational ambiguity [...] must yield to [...] clarity, identifying the clear and present danger to peace and to the survival of Western democracies — global Islamic terrorism."

Yoram Ettinger, IHY 14.09.12

Despairing of democracy

"A decade of attempts by a series of American administrations and a handful of Western countries to combat Islamic extremism and to promote

democracy in the region appears to have achieved nothing. [...]

The attack in Benghazi seems to send out the message that even when the US does the right thing – joining a coalition of Western countries in helping the Libyan people free themselves from their hated dictator – hatred for America and all it stands for remains unchanged. [...]

Bush tried to win Arab publics by promoting democracy. Obama has opted for a policy of deference, respect and engagement. But [...] neither Bush nor Obama has succeeded in overcoming Arab resentment and hatred of the West."

JPO 13.09.12 Editorial

It wasn't the Jews this time

"So there you have it, another blood libel against the Jews exposed in less than 24 hours, thanks to the power of the Internet. [...] There is another question which should be asked of those media organizations, [...] that swallowed [the filmmakers'] story of Israeli citizenship and Jewish backing: Why were you so quick to run his version when reporting such a highly sensitive story, without first performing some elementary corroboration? The moment it was out there, the Jewish and Israeli angles were reproduced on 10,000 websites and established as facts."

Anshel Pfeffer, HAA 14.09.12

4. Medienquerschnitt

Die Vielfalt der in Israel relevanten Themen kann in einem Medienspiegel nicht umfassend wiedergegeben werden. Um den deutschen LeserInnen dennoch einen Einblick in das breite Themenspektrum, das in den Medien behandelt wird, zu gewähren, veröffentlichen wir in dieser Schlaglichtausgabe wieder eine kleine Auswahl an weiteren Themen, die in den vergangenen zwei Wochen die israelische Gesellschaft bewegten.

*Über eine Regierungskampagne, die Aufmerksamkeit auf **jüdische Flüchtlinge aus arabischen Ländern** lenken soll:*

A dubious campaign

"Israel's Foreign Ministry [...] launched the [...] campaign [...]. By inviting Jews from Arab countries to share testimonials about their experiences in the years following Israel's independence, [Deputy Foreign Minister] Ayalon hopes to further push the issue of Arab Jewish refugee recognition onto the international agenda. But why [...] now?

Some suggest that the campaign's purpose is to undermine Palestinian claims in any future round of peace talks. If roughly equal numbers of Palestinians and Arab Jews were displaced [...], and the lost assets [...] were of similar value, then Palestinian and Arab Jewish claims would appear to cancel each other out. [...]

The most politically salient question is not whether Arab Jews should be legally recognized as refugees [...]. Rather, one has to wonder why Ayalon and the Foreign Ministry have hijacked Arab Jewish recognition efforts when their predecessors stifled them?"

Shayna Zamkane, HAA 07.09.12

Refugees and peace

"Since the 1948 War of Independence [...] about 850,000 Jews were displaced from Arab countries – more than about 700,000 Palestinians estimated to have left Palestine in the wake of the war. Frustrated by their defeat on the battlefield and incensed at the supremechutzpah of the Jews daring to establish a state of their own, Arabs across the region lashed out at easier prey. [...] In short, the nightmare of dispossession is not unique to the Palestinians. [...] But the time has come to raise consciousness [...]. Only when the Palestinian people acknowledge their own and the Arab nations' complicity in their own displacement, as well as the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Jewish refugees, will true, lasting peace be attainable."

JPO 10.09.12 Editorial

Über das Jüdische Neujahr (Rosh Hashana) und Israels Zukunftsaussichten:

Rosh Hashana – a time to rejoice

"In recent years, our masochistic tendencies have encouraged many of us to overlook the big picture and fail to appreciate the fundamentally positive reality of our current status. [...]

We should surely be exuberant for being privileged to live in our own homeland at the height of the Jewish renaissance. In the wake of the [...] Holocaust, we rose like a phoenix from the ashes. [...]

Despite being surrounded by neighbors seeking our destruction, we forged a Jewish state which retained its democratic ethos. [...] Israel's economy is an extraordinary success story. [...]

As we move towards [the Jewish year] 5773, [...] we surely have every reason to celebrate that our nation has emerged as the most extraordinary and miraculous success story of the past century."

Isi Leibler, IHY 12.09.12

Zero expectations

"The graph of Israelis' hopes is constantly falling. Talk of a two-state solution has long since evaporated, the settlement drive continues, the world economic crisis has begun to nibble, the Arab Spring has evolved into an Islamic Winter, and the Iranian threat has only increased.

Warmongering has replaced the voices of last year's social protest. [...] The New Year hopes, which once included the prayer for peace and security, have been whittled down to one prayer: please, no catastrophe."

HAA 16.09.12 Editorial

HAA = Haaretz; JED = Jedioth Ahronoth; JPO = Jerusalem Post; IHY = Israel HaYom; TOI = Times of Israel

Veröffentlicht am: 20. September 2012

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