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1. Netanyahu gewinnt Parlamentswahlen

Benjamin Netanyahu steht eine vierte Amtszeit als Ministerpräsident bevor. Der Likud-Chef gewann die vorgezogenen Parlamentswahlen überraschend und mit deutlichem Vorsprung vor seinem Herausforderer Isaac Herzog vom Zionistischen Lager. Das Ergebnis hat den Riss im Volk zwischen den Aschkenasim (Israelis mit europäischen und osteuropäischen Wurzeln), die eher linksliberal wählten, und den Sepharden (Israelis, deren Familien von der Iberischen Halbinsel oder aus arabischen Ländern immigrierten), die ihre Stimme mehrheitlich dem konservativen Likud sowie den rechtsnationalen und religiösen Parteien gaben, vertieft und die Spannungen zwischen Juden und Arabern verschärft.

King Bibi and his divided people

(...) King Bibi (...) had cemented his rule. Unloved by the Obama administration, relentlessly criticized by ostensibly friendly European governments, attacked day after day by substantial sections of the Hebrew media (...), and opposed in these elections not only by the Israeli left but also by the centrist Yesh Atid (...), Netanyahu did not just scrape back into office. He swept his critics aside and he trounced his rivals. (...) Netanyahu proved himself a political tactician in a different league from his rivals.

(...) But amid the euphoria of victory, and the majority's reaffirmation of faith in his leadership, will he take heed of the fact that a substantial proportion of the electorate is as shocked and horrified by Tuesday's results as he and his supporters are shocked and delighted? Will Netanyahu seek to reposition himself, in short, from defiantly victorious leader of the Israeli right to prime minister of our riven, multi-challenged Israel?

David Horovitz, TOI, 18.03.15

It's time for courageous leadership

(...) It is striking how very similar the platforms, policies and pronouncements of Likud party head Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Labor Party head Isaac Herzog are. (...) The differences between the Likud and Labor are a matter of nuance, not principle. (...) Herzog may have campaigned on a platform that he can make peace with our neighbors, but he is on record as being skeptical of the motives and capabilities of the current Palestinian leadership – as is Netanyahu. (...) This is a time, therefore, for courageous leadership – and the three men positioned to demonstrate visionary leadership for Israel today are Netanyahu, Herzog and President Ruvlin. (...) Buji Herzog (...) can not only pursue the issues most important to him, but he can position himself as a real leader, decision-maker and

statesman. (...) Carrying out the major reforms needed to stabilize the political system and the economy, and to improve our relations with our neighbors and friends/allies around the world, can only be done with a strong centrist government not held hostage by any of the smaller, sectoral and interest-driven parties. (...)

Aryeh Green, JPO, 19.03.15

One man's victory

(...) The victory belonged to one man, who succeeded within several days to turn the negative momentum into a positive one and give his party an additional 10 Knesset seats, a 50% increase in the party's size. (...) How did the Zionist Union's slogan go? It's either him or us? Well, it turns out that that's not the story. The story is: It's us, not him. We are the ones who didn't see it. We in the media, the pollsters, the Israeli left, whoever believed a change was possible. (...) It's us who didn't see (...) that there are two nations here, two ways. (...) The Likud voters who were not going to vote this time, and the Religious Zionism members who only an hour earlier were planning to vote for the Bayit Yehudi party, grabbed their weapons. They saw it as a war over their home, believing that if they won't go out in droves, a catastrophe would happen: Buji Herzog would become prime minister. War, closed factories, a difficulty to make ends meet, disappointments and insults – at the end of the day, none of this affected Israel's southern residents on Election Day. People who swore that they would never vote for the Likud again, who tore their Likud membership cards in front of the cameras, launched a war against the left, against the media, against the elites, the white tribe, Yair Garbuz and whatnot.

Sima Kadmon, JED, 19.03.15

A message for Obama

(...) the loudest sound heard from Israel this morning is the sound of Israel spitting in Obama's face (...) The message to Obama is stunning and clear; whether Bibi understands the message to him is another issue. Bennett's power is far greater than the eight seats he now commands because he has something more. He has seats within the Likud and those seats, or at least the voters who represent them, will be ready at any moment to pull out if Bibi refuses to now deliver on what he promised to get re-elected. (...) Obama, we will not let you choose who will lead us. We will forever be the best friend America will ever have in the Middle East. We will share a common goal – a commitment to freedom,

democracy. We will share such important values as loving life, fighting to preserve all that we are. We, little Israel, will continue to reach out to help others in times of crisis...but we will not let you do what you tried so desperately to do. (...) Israel has spoken.

Paula R. Stern, TOI, 18.03.15

Netanyahu's sweet victory

(...) Benjamin Netanyahu could not have hoped for a sweeter election victory. It was a decisive victory, achieved against all odds, and after what was seen as a colossal crash. (...) An important component in the Likud's victory, other than the public's natural rightist inclination, was the Left's hubris. Not only by the Zionist Union, Isaac Herzog and Tzipi Livni, but mostly by the Victory 2015 campaign. The multimillion-dollar V15 campaign, the aging, disgruntled generals, trying to hide their radical leftist opinions behind their ranks, as well as the identity of whoever had funneled millions their way, and various leftist cultural figures such as Yair Garbuz and Joshua Sobol, had revealed to all that the high cost of living and security issues were just an excuse for the real reason why they wanted to replace Netanyahu -- profound and burning hatred for anyone who is not of their ilk, and a strong conviction that someone had usurped their country. (...) One can assume that the blatant disregard and disrespect of the public's intelligence brought hundreds of thousands of right-wing voters to the ballots. (...) What woke many of them up, evoking their natural instinct to defend the leader of the national camp, was the Left's flagrant and insolent conduct, with its associations and endless funds. All Netanyahu had to do over the past few days was to push the right buttons, point to the dangers ahead, and let the masses help him claim a great victory. (...)

Mati Tuchfeld, IHY, 18.03.15

Zionist Union's occupation ostrich policy was a major factor in its defeat

(...) Labor has been avoiding the issue of peace with the Palestinians for several years now, and especially the fateful issue of the continued occupation. Shelly Yacimovich practiced this blurring policy in the 2013 elections, which ended in her defeat, and Isaac Herzog continued in the same vein in the present elections. (...) In the past the left won the election when it dared to present a plan. In the 1992 elections Yitzhak Rabin undertook to implement the plan for Palestinian autonomy within six to nine months, and in 1999 Ehud Barak promised to withdraw from Lebanon within a year. They both won.

(...) What did the left wing propose this time? (...) While Netanyahu removed all his masks and presented his right-wing nationalist truth as it is, Herzog was afraid to commit to any move that might have been controversial. (...) It's possible that presenting a far-reaching plan would have driven away a few of the voters at first, but there's no substitute for telling the voters the truth. (...) Herzog and Tzipi Livni chose to obfuscate. Nobody knew where they were heading as far as the occupation is concerned. They did not present a real alternative and the voter gave them what they deserved.

Editorial, HAA, 20.03.15

Israel is a nation divided, and we cannot blame the voters

(...) The Israeli voter has imposed a cruel task on the individual who will head the government. (...) A national unity government is virtually impossible. It's hard to imagine Avigdor Lieberman sitting alongside Tamar Zandberg and Naftali Bennett, who appears to be the election's big loser, together with several Zionist Union members. (...) Netanyahu's "natural partners," as he defines the ultra-Orthodox parties, won't be in his pocket automatically. And Moshe Kahlon, who overnight became the most significant figure in the coalition assembly process, has said on numerous occasions in recent months that he didn't return to politics merely to crown Netanyahu, who has deceived him in the past. (...) Our nation is divided into tribes from which the next government will be established. Compromises, on all issues, will be name of the game. At the end of an exhausting process, and at the very last minute permitted by law, the next government will be presented.

Shimon Shiffer, JED, 19.03.15

On the unavoidable path to Israel's nightmarish future

(...) Israel is determined in its conviction not just to touch, but to dive headfirst into the nationalistic and racist fire. (...) The odds for the Jewish democracy were against it from the start: The dramatic circumstances of its birth sealed its fate. The intensity of the memory of the Holocaust is so strong that in comparison no collective experience seems real. After all, what evil are we capable of doing compared to the absolute evil that our people suffered in the flesh. (...) we let the memory of the Holocaust define our identity and determine our moral standards. Maybe we did not really want to give up on our historic uniqueness and be a nation like all other nations. (...) Where else on earth can the prime min-

ister warn about the civil right and democratic duty to vote when it is exercised by a minority that makes up some 20 percent of the entire citizenry of the country? But in the Jewish state everything is permitted, for the Jews. After all, this is a moral no man's land of the Western world. (...) Sadly, it's becoming clear that the historic period will not come to an end, until we complete our transformation into an absolute monster. Only then will we succeed in breaking the chain of heritage of moral innocence and win the chance of real political emancipation. (...)

Carolina Landsmann, HAA, 22.03.15

2. Netanyahu stellt Zweistaatenlösung in Frage und beleidigt arabische Wähler

Im Ringen um die Stimmen aus dem rechts-nationalen Lager erteilte Netanyahu am Vorabend der Wahlen der Zweistaatenlösung eine Absage. Damit führte er jeden weiteren Vorstoß ad absurdum, Frieden zwischen Israel und den Palästinensern durch Verhandlungen zu erreichen. Netanyahu relativierte die Stellungnahme später und erklärte, dass die aktuellen Umstände die Gründung eines palästinensischen Staates nicht erlaubten. Im Weißen Haus reagierte man dennoch empfindlich und kündigte an, die bisherige Politik im Nahostkonflikt zu überdenken. Wenige Stunden vor Schließung der Wahllokale appellierte Netanyahu zudem an rechte jüdische Wähler, ihre Stimmen abzugeben, weil „Horden von Arabern“ zu den Wahlurnen strömten.

Netanyahu's successful campaign may prove destructive for Israel

(...)The Obama administration voiced its strong objections to Netanyahu's remarks against the Arabs of Israel, and to his attempt to throw sand in the world's eyes with regard to his stand on a Palestinian state. (...) Obama is determined to leave his imprint and legacy by tying up loose ends – from Guantanamo prison to the Iranian nuclear program and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He is "reassessing" his policy in the region, with the outcome expected to help Palestinian efforts in the United Nations and make things harder for Israel, if it insists on toeing Netanyahu's line. (...) Israel will be forced to deal with economic sanctions from the European Union, and will cease to enjoy an automatic American veto in the international arena. If Israel does not adopt a two-state solution, one will be forced on it from the outside, and at a much more painful price.

What proved efficient electioneering could turn out to be a destructive policy that puts Israel at risk.
Editorial, HAA, 23.03.15

Know Comment: Resetting the peace process

(...) Benjamin Netanyahu activated a cacophony of global clucking and groaning by his statement late in the election campaign that he no longer viewed establishment of a Palestinian state as a realistic or possible path to peace in the near term. (...) While Netanyahu made these hawkish comments in the context of a last-ditch attempt to draw voters to the Likud from the hard Right, they nevertheless probably faithfully represent Netanyahu's worldview and assessment of the situation. (...) under current circumstances Israeli withdrawals would likely lead to establishment of a second "Hamastan" in the West Bank (or worse, an Islamic State type regime) – not to a stable and peaceful reality. One in every three Israeli voters opted for the Likud (...). And the dominant, mainstream Israeli mindset is both realistic and cautious. (...) Israelis distrust Palestinian intentions. (...) it's time for Israel to re-articulate its thinking about the process of achieving Israeli-Palestinian peace. Netanyahu should capitalize on his sweeping victory to reset the diplomatic table by outlining a pragmatic process that Israel can participate in, and to draw clear Israeli redlines as to acceptable contours of a solution. (...) Unconventional alternatives to the struggling two-state paradigm must be on the table, including: a Palestinian-Jordanian federation; shared sovereignty with Israel in the West Bank; a three- or four-way land swap involving Egypt and Jordan; and, possibly, a combination of all these approaches. (...)

Arab states too must be willing take responsibility for solving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and consider investment of tangible resources in "regional" solutions.(...)

David M. Weinberg, JPO, 19.03.15

Netanyahu's campaign finale dealt a body blow to Israeli democracy

(...) Netanyahu's (...) previous acceptance of a two-state agreement and his participation in U.S.-imposed peace talks fit the classic definition of hypocrisy: the tribute that vice pays to virtue. But hypocrisy has its value; the tribute keeps the idea of virtue alive. No more. Netanyahu's explicit position is now that the permanent status of the West Bank is Israeli rule. Put differently, his policy is that there is part of Israeli territory, known as "Judea and Samaria," in which most of the population happens to

be disenfranchised. Either he does not see this as a significant flaw in Israeli democracy, or he does not see preserving democracy as a significant concern. (...) Netanyahu was desperately afraid that potential Likud voters might stay at home or cast their ballots for other lists, and thus deny Likud the status of the largest party in the Knesset. His response was the infamous status and video that he posted on his Facebook page. (...) Even inside the Green Line, where Arabs are citizens, he considers it unacceptable for them to come out to vote, at least in any numbers that might affect the outcome. When they do so, in his view, they are not participating in a democracy. They are mounting an attack. Jews who encourage them to do so are perfidious. (...) For the left to despair, though, will give Netanyahu a further victory. Explicitly and proudly defying his racist rhetoric, Jews and Arabs must join in a fighting opposition, inside the Knesset and outside. What's at stake is democracy itself.

Gershon Gorenberg, HAA, 19.03.15

It's time to bury the two-state solution

(...) the overwhelming majority of the Israeli population is sick and tired of the two state solution, that for years, has been forced down our throats. (...) What will it take for us to wake up and see that this golden calf that we have prayed to for four decades is just leading us astray? (...) It's time for us to come to the realization that there are other options out there. (...) This process needs to start by recognizing Israel's rights to Judea, Samaria, the Golan Heights and Eastern Jerusalem within the framework of international law. (...) Israel is not an occupying force. (...) Once we understand our legal rights, we will have taken a huge step towards changing our mindset and reevaluating this conflict. Israel is the only rightful owner of these lands. Any nation claiming otherwise is manipulating and falsifying the facts. From this just position of strength we can begin to discuss solutions for the conflict with the Arab population within our boundaries and a greater regional understanding.(...)

Josh Wander, TOI, 23.03.15

Time to give up on two states, but not on coexistence

(...) Two states? One state? Occupation? Palestinian rights? The subject was of no interest to the Jewish public. (...) Since Ehud Barak's tenure as prime minister, Israel's center-left and right-wing governments alike have implanted in the consciousness of citizens the notion that there is no Palestinian part-

ner for peace. (...) The March 17 election was a watershed. We must now acknowledge the truth: The two-state idea has become the obsession of small, elitist circles in Israel, together with the international community – and both groups together lack the clout to force its acceptance by Israel. In the campaign, Netanyahu declared explicitly what was already apparent: There will not be two states. (...) I was a longtime supporter of the two-state solution, and even now I would be happy if it were implemented. But I also see that more and more Jews are settling in the West Bank (...). It's hard to see how the knots can be undone and the two nations separated. (...) It is our obligation to contemplate new solutions and, above all, to question the feasibility of separation models. (...) the creation of one state or for a new two-state model that isn't based on separation. The most critical struggle is to achieve equal rights for everyone living in this space, Jews and Palestinians (...). It's also essential to find new partners in Jewish society for the equal-rights struggle, because Israel's old, entrenched left is too feeble to broaden the circles on its own. (...) there is no choice but to prepare for the fight ahead. (...)

Nir Baram, HAA, 26.03.15

Israelis haven't lost hope in peace, but are more prudent about process

(...) Netanyahu has always argued for a demilitarized Palestinian state. His recent statement was not a policy departure from the about kind of neighbor Israel's seeks. (...) Diplomatically, the two-state solution is still the basis for Israeli-Palestinian negotiations which has been advocated by most of the international community, spearheaded by Washington. (...) Israelis have not lost hope in peace but they are more prudent about the process. Netanyahu still underscore that "just as Israel is prepared to recognize a Palestinian state, the Palestinians must be prepared to recognize a Jewish state." Both sides need to make concessions, but Israel's security and Jewish identity concerns deserve as much attention as Palestinian territorial claims.

Asaf Romirowsky, JED, 27.03.15

Netanyahu's moment of truth has arrived

(..) The prime minister promised that a Palestinian state would not be established alongside the State of Israel during his term. (...) And when he thought he might be about to lose the battle to secure his place in the prime minister's official residence on Jerusalem's Balfour Street, he issued a declaration that the Arabs were moving in droves to the polling

station and that left-wing NGOs were bringing them there on buses in a bid to topple him. The Arabs are on the fences – that's the way wanted the voters to understand his warning. There is no other way to define this alarming statement against Israeli citizens, who were practicing their full right to fulfill their civil duty. (...) Netanyahu still has no intention of initiating any compromise with the Palestinians. The only thing that has changed, as far as he is concerned, is the explanation of the refusal to reach an agreement. Now he is arguing that reality has changed. Unfortunately, reality hasn't changed. About four million Palestinians in the territories which have been controlled by Israel since 1967 will not agree to live forever under an Israeli regime without full rights. (...)

Shimon Shiffer, JED, 22.03.15

We, the Arab hordes

(...) let's (..) do what's expected of every true democrat: demand the immediate resignation of a prime minister who expressed such blatant racism. This is no more than would be demanded by any Jewish democrat in the United States, when confronted with racists statements against Jews. (...) That's democracy. (...) you cannot delegitimize an entire public by demonizing it and then turn innocently to the president, asking him to invite you to form the next government. (...) I believe the president will accede to our demands. I believe that this nation, whose history is paved with pogroms, incitement and hatred will never allow a racist and instigator of divisiveness, who incites against Arabs and his own people (one mustn't forget his infamous whisper to a rabbi, claiming that the left has forgotten what it is to be Jewish) to be placed at its head. Other potential partners in the government also view us as unwanted "hordes." One states that we are like shrapnel stuck in his rear end, another compares Palestinian children to snakes and a third, perhaps in the role of the head of the Israeli branch of ISIS, suggests no less than wielding an ax to chop off the heads of his Arab opponents (who object to being transferred). I'm sure that with such a government even the moderate right will sign the petition. (...)

Oudeh Basharat, HAA, 23.03.15

3. Krieg im Jemen und die Sorge vor einem Erstarken Irans

Die Krise im Jemen droht zu einem Stellvertreterkrieg zu eskalieren. Das Weiße Haus signalisierte Unterstützung für die Militärallianz unter saudi-arabischer Federführung gegen die schiitischen Huthis im Jemen, die wiederum Waffenlieferungen aus dem Iran erhalten. Die neue Krise wirft einen Schatten auf die Annäherung zwischen Washington und Teheran sowie die Verhandlungen um einen Kompromiss für das iranische Atomprogramm. Denkbar sind zudem Konsequenzen für den Kampf gegen den islamischen Extremismus. Die Al-Kaida auf der arabischen Halbinsel gilt als derzeit gefährlichster Ableger des Terrornetzwerks, und auch der IS versucht, im Jemen Fuß zu fassen.

Yemen is just part of Iran's Mideast master plan

(...) The UN secretary-general is "checking" and "considering," and is definitely "concerned" – but he has yet to call a special session to discuss the grave ramifications of the situation in Yemen. And the United States, too, hasn't helped much at all. After Washington "forgot" to add Iran's name to the annual list of countries that sponsor terrorism, it is in no hurry to send force to Yemen. (...) The Gulf States know by now not to rely on the Obama administration: Washington is engrossed up to its neck in fine tuning the nuclear deal with Iran (...). Last week, after the attacks at the mosques in Sana'a that killed 137 people, the United States withdrew its 125 advisers who had been living in Yemen for years as "training instructors," but were actually involved in gathering intelligence on irregular movements in the Gulf. (...) From the perspective of the West, Yemen has always been a remote and uninteresting country. (...) Saudi Arabia is issuing statements that could have been written in Jerusalem. "Iran is an aggressive state that is intervening and operating forces in the Arab world," Saudi Foreign Minister Saud al-Faisal said this week at a joint press conference with his British counterpart, Philip Hammond. "Its nuclear weapons are a threat to the Gulf and the entire world. (...) Think, too, about the dangerous ramifications of the Iranians' 'second plan.'" This "second plan", about which Israeli intelligence officials have been warning for the past five years, involves Iran's desire for Shiite control over the Arab world, with the ultimate objective being control over the Muslim holy sites in Saudi Arabia. (...)

Smadar Perry, JED, 28.03.15

Reverse course

(...) Since the end of 2011, when the IAEA published findings that pointed to the military dimensions of Iran's nuclear programs, the Islamic Republic has refused to fully answer all but one of a dozen IAEA queries (...). Yet, the US and the other P5+1 nations have allowed the Iranians to continue to lie about their nuclear program in every possible public forum and claim that it has always been solely for peaceful purposes and will continue to be in the future. (...) the P5+1 has chosen to live in a fantasy world of its own making not just with regard to Iran's "peaceful" nuclear program. It has also chosen to ignore Iran's involvement in the destabilization of the region, from Damascus and Beirut to Sanaa and Baghdad, and in terrorism and drug trafficking in Central and South America. (...) We are witnessing the beginning of a war in Yemen between Sunni states and Iran, and we may also be on the verge of a Sunni-Shi'ite nuclear arms race as well. In Riyadh, Cairo and Istanbul, Sunni political leaders – already threatened by nuclear-free Iran's expansionism – will not stand by idly as Iran's influence is augmented by a nuclear weapons umbrella. The P5+1 must awaken from their self-induced delusion. The French are already showing signs of life. The Yemen fiasco provides a perfect opportunity for a reassessment. (...) The March 31 deadline has not yet arrived. There is still time to reverse course.

Editorial, JPO, 29.03.15

Yemen as a symptom

(...) The loss of Yemen as a US partner gives the al-Qaida offshoot more room to plot and train. (...) Obama administration has no intention of getting involved beyond empty condemnations. The result will be a free-for-all involving the Saudis, backed by a few other countries united under the Gulf Cooperation Council; the Houthis, who are receiving abundant logistic and arms support from Iran; and AQAP. Fighting alone, the Saudis, who have already carried out air strikes against the Houthis, have little chance of restoring order with a ground offensive. (...) What is clear is that the developments in Yemen are yet another setback for the Obama administration's strategy in the Middle East. (...) There are no easy answers in places such as Yemen, Syria and Iraq. But the message being conveyed by the Obama administration is one of retreat packaged in euphemisms such as "light footprints" and "engagement." (...) a US-backed regime has been deposed in Yemen; and a pro-American, Israel-friendly regime in Egypt is being kept at arm's length by Wash-

ington. A foreign policy vacuum has been created and longtime American allies are being forced to look out for themselves, sometimes with less than satisfactory results. Yemen is a symptom of a fundamental ailment in US Middle East policy.

Editorial, JPO, 26.03.15

Obama forsakes his allies

(...) The conflict in Yemen is essentially a proxy war between Saudi Arabia and Iran. It is yet another chapter in the ongoing feud between the Sunnis and the Shiites. The conflict may result in a much wider conflagration if things get out of hand. And things could get worse because America has displayed utter incompetence. (...) The administration's passive response has not been lost on Saudi Arabia, which had expected its trans-Atlantic friend to lend a hand. Having lost trust in Obama, it turned to other nations. One of them is its strategic ally Pakistan, which received Saudi funding for its nuclear program. Washington (...) has been willing to provide logistical and intelligence support, hoping this would contain the violence. In light of this lackluster response, Saudi Arabia had no choice but to act. Saudi Arabia has a long-standing rivalry with Iran. This rivalry extends to terminology as well. One country's Persian Gulf is the other country's Arabian Gulf. Yemen was Saudi Arabia's red line. (...) Riyadh knows full well that inaction in Yemen could prompt Saudi Shiites to stage another rebellion. It would also like to prevent Iran from establishing Hezbollah-like militias that could challenge the House of Saud's authority at home. As far as Riyadh is concerned, a scenario in which Iran wields ever-growing influence is a nightmare scenario. The nightmare scenario. The problem is even more complicated than it seems because Iran is in the midst of nuclear talks with the world powers. (...) Those who were convinced that a nuclear deal -- even a bad one -- would prevent a nuclear arms race in the region must have second thoughts in light of this week's events (...).

Boaz Bismuth, IHO, 27.03.15

Playing into Iran's hands

(...) The battle between the Shiites and Sunnis in Yemen and the Arab world's pitching in to kick Iran off Saudi Arabia's doorstep could be motivating Iran as well as the U.S. on the other to put the pedal to the metal and reach an agreement as soon as possible. (...) it's hard to say whether the timing of the fighting in Yemen is benefitting or hurting Iran. What can be said is that it is spurring the U.S. to reach a

forced deal. (...) The Arab nations believe that Iran is doing whatever it wants in the Middle East, promoting its interests among the Shiites while recognizing de facto an agreement with the leading superpower about its "peaceful" nuclear program. (...) At a time when the U.S. is dropping its strategic partnership in the Middle East and leading a policy of recognizing Iran's nuclear program, it's actually saying crudely that it has no more interests in the Middle East and the entire area is now left to its own devices. It looks like a fight will soon begin to see who will serve as the responsible adult du jour.

Dr. Ronen A. Cohen, IHY, 30.03.15

4. Medienquerschnitt

Moshe Kahlons Kampf gegen die Armut und die Banken

Can Kahlon halt the rise in real estate prices?

(...) Kahlon will be Israel's first Sephardic minister of finance. His chief promise in the election campaign was that he would take action to lower housing prices. (...) The construction industry is not like the cellular industry in which Kahlon made a name for himself as Minister of Communications. The situation cannot be reversed by having a few programmers change the price of a call, following which everything follows automatically and digitally. (...) Kahlon can (...) demand that a member of his Kulanu party be appointed minister of construction and housing, and operate through this minister. When Kahlon repeatedly says "I will break up the Israel Land Administration (ILA) (...) he knows that this is a practical impossibility (...) In that case, what are the particulars of Kahlon's great plan for saving the housing market? (...) In general, the idea is to create competition in the planning, development, and marketing of land. (...) the idea is to deprive the developers of the ability to pester the planning committees with demands to add housing units, while being strict about infrastructure and public amenities. With respect to the standard ILA land marketing tenders, Kahlon is expected to advocate the elimination of minimum prices from land tenders. Another element in the plan is the prevention of land marketing by ILA in "marketing parcels" in lots for new housing in order to avoid the price increases attributed by the team to this method. (...) Kahlon will have a particularly difficult time with the banks. They can be criticized for being a cartel and for their high charges, to public applause and as a follow-up to his success with

the mobile telephony market, but the banks have an essential role to fulfill in housing - they provide the financing for the contractors and for the mortgages. (...) One thing is clear: in contrast to the situation in the target price plan, Kahlon will insist on the introduction of socioeconomic criteria into housing aid plans. (...)

Moshe Lichtman, GLO, 19.03.15

Mehr Gewalt gegen Juden in Europa

The rising tide of anti-Semitism

(...) Anti-Semitism has returned to streets of Paris and Toulouse, to the streets of Brussels and Copenhagen. It has even returned to Berlin. Jews make up less than 1 percent of the population of France, but they were victims of more than half of all the racist attacks in that country last year. The number of anti-Jewish attacks in France in 2014 doubled from the year before. (...) There is a hatred growing throughout Europe that is causing Jews to wonder if they should leave...they are asking if there is a future for Jews on that continent. (...) How could this happen in 2015? The answer is that a strange confluence of hatred has taken hold across Europe today that comes from very different corners. There are huge populations of Muslim immigrants throughout Europe. Most are peaceful, but far too many of them have adopted radical Islam. (...) At the same time, we have seen the rise of smaller right-wing neo-Nazi groups that have become political forces in Hungary and Greece and have been seen on the streets in Germany and France. And there is a third force that may appear more benign, but it adds fuel to this fire. I'm talking about an educated, elitist class – from universities to the media – that has a pathological hatred of Israel. (...) And then there is technology. (...) Today, the power of the Internet sends out a constant stream of anti-Jewish ideas at hyper speed and there are not enough people speaking up to counter these lies. (...) European leaders have stepped up and strongly condemned these attacks on Jews, and the rise of anti-Semitism. The United States must do the same. (...)

Ronald S. Lauder, JPO, 26.03.15

Beduinen fordern Anerkennung ihrer Dörfer

The Bedouin are not Israel's enemy

(...) Since its establishment, Israel has forged an alliance with the Bedouin community, whose young men serve in the Israel Defense Forces and die in the defense of their state. But even were it not for

their military service, the Bedouin deserve to enjoy the rights conferred by citizenship, including the right to water, education, health care and housing. Most of these rights are withheld from the inhabitants of the scattered Bedouin habitation clusters, on the grounds that they are illegally squatting on state land and cannot have basic services until their habitation status is sorted out. On the face of it, the state is right in demanding the regularization of the Bedouin settlement, so that they can benefit from regular community services. The state claims it is difficult to reach agreements with the scattered Bedouin, due to disputes within the community over property ownership, their rejection of proposals for compensation and their desire to maintain their traditional way of life, which is very different from an urban lifestyle. But all this cannot excuse the neglect of the citizens living in unrecognized communities and the racist paternalism toward them. (...) The government must reexamine the Bill on the Arrangement of Bedouin Settlement in the Negev, taking into consideration the historical rights of this population. (...) Editorial, HAA, 31.03.15

HAA = Haaretz

JED = JediothAhronoth / Ynetnews

JPO = Jerusalem Post

IHY = Israel HaYom

TOI = Times of Israel

GLO = Globes

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