



Schlaglicht Israel Nr. 18/20
Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen
16.-31. Oktober

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1. US-Wahl

Die USA sind für Israel diplomatisch wie militärisch der wichtigste Partner weltweit. Entsprechend große Aufmerksamkeit genießt die Wahl des künftigen Chefs im Weißen Haus. Die Stimmung in der israelischen Bevölkerung tendiert mehrheitlich für den amtierenden Präsidenten Donald Trump, der deutlich pro-israelisch eingestellt ist. Trump sei der beste Freund, den Israel jemals im Weißen Haus hatte, erklärte Israels Regierungschef Benjamin Netanyahu. Die Anerkennung Jerusalems als israelische Hauptstadt und der Souveränität Israels über die Golan-Höhen sowie die kürzlich erfolgte Normalisierung der Beziehungen zwischen Israel und den Vereinigten Emiraten und Bahrein sind Eckpfeiler der Nahost-Politik Trumps. Vor allem aber hatte er mit seiner harten Linie gegenüber Teheran und dem iranischen Atomforschungsprojekt die israelische Regierung fest hinter sich. Das gute Verhältnis Israels zu den Republikaner_innen und Netanyahus enge Bindung an Trump ging zu Lasten der Beziehungen zu den US-Demokrat_innen.

Netanyahu mirrors 'Trump style'; Election defeat could mean a change of tack

(...) The world is moving too fast; stop for a moment.
 (...) We have to make an effort to remember the world before Trump. (...) It's hard to capture the breadth of the Trumpist move regarding China, North Korea and Russia. Trump is an anti-globalist, but in a certain sense he has shrunk the map and

turned all the states, peoples and leaders into places and figures in a conspiracy theory. (...) The pace of news Trump has produced in recent years has been felt worldwide and has swept up masses who adopted the Trumpist pace and style as if it were a political fashion trend. In Israel, too, Trump fashion thrives in the Knesset, the cabinet and the media. Many have been tempted to see Trump as a student of the veteran Benjamin Netanyahu. (...) an examination of Netanyahu's conduct reveals a radical change that he himself underwent once Trump entered politics – in Netanyahu's ranting rhetoric, use of social media, vulgarization of the public discourse by proxy (mainly through his son Yair), and appointment of ministers based on their unsuitability or contempt for the field they're in charge of. Netanyahu has changed so much in the last few years that he almost makes us long for the old Netanyahu, even among those who never liked him. Compared to the recent Netanyahu, who has resorted to pedophilia imagery to describe his rivals, it's hard not to feel a rush of nostalgia for the gentleman from Zion Square. But the speed with which Netanyahu has adopted (...) Trump's style, is second only to the speed with which it will be dropped if Trump loses. (...)

Carolina Landsmann, HAA, 25.10.20

Israel put all its eggs in the Republican basket

(...) When Joe Biden won the Democratic nomination and became the party's candidate, many Israel-

lis dismissed him. They saw him as an older, American version of Benny Gantz – not particularly articulate, not particularly impassioned. How could a person like that win against someone who looks like he was born for the stage, Donald Trump? But in the past few weeks, something has changed. Polls indicate that Biden is going to win by a large margin. (...) many Israelis are starting to realize that there is a real risk that Trump won't be president these next four years. That fear grows stronger as many Israelis begin to realize that we haven't taken full advantage of the term of the current president. Even though we have secured historic, exceptional steps, including the relocation of the US Embassy to Jerusalem and the recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital, as well as the recognition of the Golan Heights as Israeli and normalization agreements with Gulf states, it seems as if we could have done more. Whether it's sovereignty in Judea and Samaria or other issues, a number of Israelis are starting to fear that we won't see more opportunities of this kind in the next four years. (...) Israel and Israelis have taken a stance backing Trump entirely, which was the right thing to do when he was the leader of the free world, but in some cases, it was done without thinking. (...) we should have been maintaining ties with the top echelon of the Democratic party. Israel put all its eggs in one basket, and that is a dangerous and irresponsible policy. (...) Total identification with Trump and the Republicans has led to hostility from Democratic politicians, and even US Jews. We need to recalculate our path. (...)
Ofir Dayan, IHY, 25.10.20

Israel must kick its Donald Trump addiction

(...) For Israel, a Trump victory would leave things as they pretty much are: Peace treaties with countries with whom we were never at war and a complete diplomatic impasse with our true enemies. Trump is seen by many as Israel's ultimate friend, but just as he has done in the U.S., he has isolated us from the Western community to which we belong. A Biden win, however, could provide a reboot for our international standing. A victory for the former vice president would most likely not lead to a 180-degree reversal on certain issues, such as returning the U.S. embassy to Tel Aviv or conditioning aid on policy shifts regarding the Palestinians and West Bank settlements.

Nonetheless, a Democratic victory could be a serious reality check for Israel. Over the past four years, we have become addicted to a one-of-a-kind powerful psychedelic called "Trumpion" - and the moment

the dealer leaves the White House, Israel will need to enter rehab. Biden and Kamala Harris are friends of Israel, but they will not bow down to every settler's whim, and the party is already full of people who take a cooler stance on Israel. (...) His victory would signal the country's return to the Paris Agreement and perhaps the Iran nuclear deal (...) and the Palestinian issue. (...)
Barukh Binah, YED, 27.10.20

How Israelis get American elections wrong

It has always been the case that the outcomes of US presidential elections have a major impact on Israel. That is the case because US foreign policy is a critical factor in Israel's national security calculus. (...) there is a tendency among Israelis to try and distinguish which outcome is "good for Israel" and which is "bad for Israel." The truth is that whoever should be elected — whether it is incumbent Republican Donald Trump or his Democratic challenger former Vice President Joe Biden — both have proven that they are true friends of Israel. A better question to ask might be: How is Israel preparing to seize opportunities and cope with expected challenges once it has become clear who will occupy the Oval Office over the next term? (...) regardless of who wins the election, there is likely to be a great deal of continuity rather than change when it comes to US policy in the Middle East. What Israel ought to do is to act as quickly as possible to define and identify the appropriate channels in the White House, whether it is another four years of Trump or a new Biden Administration, through which it can outline and act to advance its core interests. (...)
Eldad Shavit, TOI, 27.10.20

Win or lose, Trump has already blown smashed conventions

(...) we should take a moment to think about Donald Trump's legacy and philosophy. (...) Trump is fundamentally anti-establishment. (...) he is an outsider. As such, he is free from other obligations and available to work for the American public. (...) Being anti-establishment, Trump could smash a lot of conventions that other politicians – even Republicans – wouldn't have dared to. He comes from the world of business and he will go back to it when he leaves the White House. So he doesn't care about breaking the dialogue of the politically correct, admiring the military and veterans, saying things about illegal immigration, taking a stance against NAFTA, the Paris Agreement to combat climate change, and the nuclear deal with Iran, which was designed to pre-

vent it from securing nuclear weapons but actually paved the way for them. The agreements and perceptions that Trump has challenged were put together by research institutes and experts from both parties. Trump, free from any constraints, opposed or improved them. Above all else, Trump has broken the silence about China. Today, there is widespread agreement in the entire western bloc that trade with China benefits it and hurts the free world. It's hard to believe, but before Trump stormed American politics, almost no one was talking about that. (...) Trump could give Israel the special treatment it has enjoyed in his term. (...) In any free country, the leader has to serve the people, not the establishment and not the forces of political correctness. If the public gets the sense that the leadership is detached, someone like Trump who breaks with convention will enter the vacuum. That is how democracy works.

Ariel Kahana, IHY, 28.10.20

Netanyahu, Trump need to stop corrosive culture of spin

(...) imagine you turned on the news when you woke up tomorrow and learned that Donald Trump never really had the coronavirus. Yes, he said he had it, and yes, he had spent a few days at Water Reed Hospital. But his contracting the disease is now no longer true. My guess is that people would not be overly surprised. They would chuckle, almost half expect it. Why? Because of low expectations. We expect things like this to happen because deep down we suspect that what we are seeing and hearing everywhere is not true. (...) It is true that politicians who lie and deceive have always existed, but this is amplified today like never before owing to the freedom social media affords people, as well as the wave of populism that has been sweeping the globe with as much virality as COVID-19. What this creates is a reality in which people no longer know what is true and no longer know whom they can trust. And who can blame them when politicians flip facts without batting an eye, saying one thing today and the exact opposite tomorrow. (...) People who don't trust the government tend not to adhere to what the government asks them to do (...). The continued decline and acceptance of this fake culture will not end well. We need to stop the spin. We need to admit mistakes, own it, and move on. We need to stop fake news, populism and trickery. We need to put a halt to the passive acceptance of lies and deceit. We need to believe again that truth is what is true, and that there are politicians in whom we can trust. We

just cannot afford to let the corrosive culture erode any further.

Yaacov Katz, JPO, 29.10.20

2. Covid-19-Patient Saeb Erekat zur Behandlung im Hadassah-Krankenhaus

Der an Covid-19 erkrankte Generalsekretär der Palästinensischen Befreiungsorganisation (PLO) Saeb Erekat wird im israelischen Hadassah-Krankenhaus behandelt. Der Gesundheitszustand des Chef-Unterhändlers bei früheren Friedensverhandlungen ist kritisch. Die Behandlung des 65-Jährigen sei nach Auskunft der Klinik eine „immense Herausforderung“, weil sein Immunsystem unterdrückt sei. Erekat hatte sich 2017 einer Lungentransplantation unterzogen. Die ranghöchsten Ärzte von Hadassah seien in Kontakt mit anderen Medizinern weltweit, um die Behandlung abzustimmen. Erekat's Familie und die Palästinenserbehörden würden regelmäßig über seinen Zustand informiert, hieß es weiter. Der PLO-Generalsekretär war am 9. Oktober positiv auf das Coronavirus getestet worden. Die palästinensische Behörde hatte um eine Behandlung Erekat's gebeten, nachdem sich der Gesundheitszustand des in Jericho lebenden Politikers verschlechtert hatte.

Erekat's hospitalization in Israel exposes PA's hypocrisy

The Palestinian Authority is very much aware of the embarrassment and backlash it might face following the hospitalization of senior PLO official Saeb Erekat in Israel, who is in a serious condition after contracting coronavirus. The decision to rush him to an Israeli hospital is especially tenuous given a total lack of diplomatic ties between Ramallah and Jerusalem and the criticism leveled by the PA at UAE and Bahrain over their normalization deals with Israel (...). Erekat's hospitalization has exposed that not everything is as it seems. Despite Ramallah ending almost all military and civilian coordination with Israel, urgent cases appear to be an exception. (...) when it comes to Palestinian officials, especially as senior as Erekat, all ideology goes out the window and receiving help from Israel is fair game.

Elior Levy, YED, 18.10.20

The conflict moves in mysterious ways

(...) Palestinian Authority senior official Saeb Erekat (...) contracted the virus. (...) he (...) urged the "[Israeli] government and the spitters and the disease spreaders" in Jerusalem to take him in at Hadassah

Medical Center, he being a VIP. (...) Israel is exerting itself to save the lives of relatives of terrorist leaders. In any other place in the world, such gestures would create a human bridge for peace, but not here. It's frustration that no matter how much we try to express values such as "tikkun olam," "recognizing the good in others," "anyone who saves a human life saves an entire universe," the Israeli-Palestinian conflict over land – which over the years has expanded to include enmity, hostility, and even hatred – is never forgiven. Even if we saved all the Arab residents of the territories, they would still see us as Satan, and seek our destruction. (...) Saeb Erekat, is the living representation of the Palestinians' tragedy. He is intelligent, well-spoken, accepted internationally, but also a politician who is unable to utter the truth. (...)

Moshe Elad, IHY, 20.10.20

Treating Saeb Erekat

An early Palestinian advocate of talks with Israel on a two-state solution, Saeb Erekat over the years has also proved himself a formidable and sometimes malevolent adversary. At the height of the Second Intifada in April 2002, when the IDF entered the Jenin refugee camp from which waves of Palestinian suicide bombers were being dispatched to target Israelis, Erekat was at the forefront of an extraordinarily potent misinformation campaign that claimed Israel's soldiers had killed hundreds of Palestinian civilians there, massacring them in cold blood and burying them in mass graves. In fact, 50-55 Palestinians, most of them armed gunmen, and 23 Israeli soldiers lost their lives in bitter fighting. (...) Weeks later, I remember watching the articulate, passionate Erekat describing live on CNN how Israeli troops were in the process of storming and burning the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. (...) The incendiary claim, again, was both false and immensely damaging to Israel. (...) Erekat has not only shown himself to be a malicious anti-Israel propagandist; he has also served as Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas's righthand man in pursuing a strategy profoundly damaging to his own people's cause. (...) Most relevantly in Erekat's case, the PA also canceled the arrangements by which Palestinians needing medical treatment not available in PA areas can be transferred to Israeli hospitals. (...) There's a whole world of tragedies, ironies, hypocrisies so foul and blatant they really don't need spelling out, and, potentially, lessons in this story — about what genuine coexistence between Israel and the Palestinians could achieve, about failed leader-

ship, about what ultimately matters most to us all. I truly hope Saeb Erekat will live to internalize and benefit from some of those lessons. What is certain is that a leading hospital in the State of Israel is doing everything in its power to give him that opportunity. (...)

David Horovitz, TOI, 21.10.20

Saeb Erekat should and will receive best healthcare at Hadassah hospital

PLO Secretary-General Saeb Erekat should and will receive the best possible healthcare at Hadassah-University Medical Center (...). But why are there no hospitals under Palestinian Authority rule to which the gravely suffering Erekat and his family can turn? (...) The simple and stark fact is that the Arabs never succeeded in developing a civil infrastructure; while the Jews did. (...) It is clear that the Arab entity in Judea and Samaria today does not lack the financial resources to set all this up. It has a government and it has received huge amounts of support – certainly in the 26 years since the Palestinian Authority was established. Ever since Jordan was chased out in 1967, their economy has been flourishing – to a vastly far greater extent than any neighboring Arab state. (...) Indeed, the amount of unrestricted resources poured into PA coffers has been astounding and unprecedented. (...) Where is all this money? Certainly, it has not gone to develop good hospitals. For, as Erekat voted with his admission choice, there is none. And yet, the Arab population is no less capable than Jews of producing excellent doctors and nurses. Erekat is probably being cared for by more than one Arab doctor and by more than one Arab nurse at this "Jewish" hospital, as Arabs and Jews work together as part of Hadassah's superb medical staff. (...) I wonder if Erekat asked himself this question as he was taking what for him must have been the humiliating step of turning to a Jewish-sponsored hospital for emergency care. I hope he recovers soon and that he will be willing to address this question.

Joel H. Golovensky, JPO, 22.10.20

Is there honor in saving Saeb Erekat?

(...) Erekat doesn't deserve it. (...) Many Israelis and Jews worldwide are extraordinarily proud of the fact that Israeli hospitals treat hundreds of Palestinian Arabs and Arabs from countries that do not recognize Israel's right to exist, especially innocent children. It is a fine humanitarian thing to do; and maybe, just maybe, the Arab kids who are saved by Israeli doctors might one day be a bridge towards

peace. (...) Few have tempered their political hostility towards this country in recognition of its medical kindheartedness. (...) For the past 30 years, Erekat has been an ultimate obstruction to peace between Israel and the Palestinians; the dirtiest defamer of Israel, without shame; and, ironically, master planner of the Palestinian Authority's campaign to isolate and boycott Israel. (...) Since Oslo, he has played the dual role of negotiator-in-chief for the Palestinian Authority (PA) and propagandist par excellence for the regimes of Yasser Arafat and Mahmoud Abbas. His record of lies and dissimulations is legion, and his dishonesty has deepened with time. History will yet record his abysmal role in the many mistakes of the Palestinian national movement. (...) he purposefully obstructed every single round of negotiations. (...) Some naïve Israelis have expressed the hope that if Erekat recovers, he might repent; meaning, that having enjoyed the blessings of first-rate and color-blind Israeli medical treatment, Erekat would come to see the error of his ways and cease demonizing Israel. (...) Do not hold your breath for any such congeniality or reconciliation from Erekat! Even if his lungs are healed by Israeli doctors and he once again merits to breathe on his own, you can be sure that Saeb will continue to slander Israel until his very, very last breath.

David M. Weinberg, IHY, 26.10.20

3. 25 Jahre ohne Rabin

Israel gedenkt in diesen Tagen der Ermordung von Jitzchak Rabin am 4. November 1995. Der Friedensnobelpreisträger war im Verlauf einer Kundgebung in Tel Aviv von dem national-religiösen Fanatiker Yigal Amir erschossen worden. Über Wochen vor dem Anschlag hatte das rechte Lager im Beisein des damaligen Oppositionsführers Benjamin Netanyahu gegen Rabin und seine Politik gehetzt. Unter Premierminister Rabin verpflichtete sich Israel zur Osloer Prinzipienklärung und dem schrittweisen Abzug aus den besetzten Palästinensergebieten. Mit Rabins Tod kam der israelisch-palästinensische Friedensprozess nach und nach zum Erliegen. Das Attentat wirft auch heute noch Schatten auf die israelische Politik. Die Gesellschaft ist ähnlich wie damals wieder stark polarisiert. Die Angst, es könne erneut zu einem politischen Attentat kommen, wächst. Rabin unterzeichnete zudem Israels Friedensabkommen mit Jordanien.

Political violence: We won't see it coming

(...) once a woman who wears a headscarf spat on by youngsters, and other times it's pepper spray on demonstrators, some of them kids, whose only crime was to think differently. Fights and physical blows have also happened, journalists have been attacked, or others who have been rescued by police are no longer a rarity. They are all signs on a road leading to a great catastrophe, the repercussions and damages of which are hard to evaluate or define. The stage might be ready and the gun in the current act of our lives is already loaded ahead of the horrible act that will follow the shot, but there's one way to try and stop it. A strong response, ostracization from the camp and being put on trial in response to any show of violence, verbal or physical. (...) freedom of expression is sacred, but just as sacred is the duty to investigate and judge those who harm or threaten to harm others (...). This is not a call for unity or reconciliation. The current discourse in Israel is turbulent, and it is the essence of democracy to shift the potential for violence to a level of passionate debate and discussion. No one is being asked to love thy brother, even if that would be nice, and there's no requirement to feel empathy or affection for your political rival. But there must be a concrete border that cannot be crossed. (...)

Itamar Fleishman, IHY, 22.10.20

25 years since Rabin's death: Marking the day is the message

(...) Twenty-five years, a quarter of a century, is a long time. (...) World War II (...) ended in 1945. In 1970, 25 five years later, that war seemed a very long way off, at least for those who did not experience it firsthand. By contrast, Rabin's assassination does not seem to have taken place so very long ago. The reason: Israel solemnly commemorates the day year after year after year. (...) But let us not delude ourselves. The day has not become our kumbaya moment. Along with the rallies and poems and songs, it has also turned into a day of recriminations of one camp blaming the other, of charges of incitement and counter-incitement. It has turned into a day when political points are made and certain sectors feel delegitimized. (...) And each year the same platitudes predictably rain down: We have not learned. We are still divided. It could happen again. (...) the anniversary of Rabin's assassination has never turned into Israel's day of national unity. (...) Jews do memory well. It's part of our DNA, part of our strength as a people. With Rabin's murder, Israel lost not only a leader, an architect of the victory in

the Six Day War, a Palmah hero and a symbol of the idealized Israeli – the tough, direct and determined Sabra, with faults but without pretension – the country also lost what remained of its innocence. (...)
Herb Keiron, JPO, 28.10.20

Rabin's murder has taught us to fight for our future

The shock and trauma born of that staggering murder that served to exemplify the power and influence of one's hate, caused a national need for a common, comforting idea that would bring the people together. These attempts failed, the walls between each sector and population only grew taller, as did the divide. Marking someone a "traitor" became the norm, an obsession, and a tool. (...) At that rally, the public showed its love for its leader. And Rabin, who was never good at hiding his emotions, was as happy and moved as he could be. But all the support, all the love came too late. First came the so-called halakhic quibbles about whether or not it was permissible to assassinate a prime minister, then came the assault on Rabin's vehicle during a wild and violent demonstration, followed closely by ritualistic Jewish ceremonies meant to guarantee someone's death and more. Those who weren't there cannot possibly remember how we watched as a true hero of Israel became a sitting duck for extremists. Back then we had no idea where hate and zealotry could lead us. (...) During these events calling for Rabin's blood, the normative public failed to speak up, to protect democracy from these violent people who seized control of the streets and public discourse with blood-curdling utterances. Since then we have become wiser. (...) The current protests against the continued rule of a criminal defendant who does everything in his power to crush the institutions of the rule of law is further proof we have learnt our lesson. Demonstrations have never lost their power and potential. (...) True demonstrations are driven by the voice within us, the one that is inexplicably stronger than we think and calls on us to realize the bitter lessons we have learned, to continue to fight even if the odds are against us. The days where we could simply cast our votes and then sleep soundly are over. Consider the lesson learned.

Shelly Yachimovich, YED, 30.10.20

The true Rabin legacy can be the basis of national consensus

It's possible that the Oslo experiment had to be tried, and fail, to bring Israeli society to the majority

opinion that exists today – that there is no Palestinian partner for peace.

Twenty-five years after Yitzhak Rabin's murder, and still the debate about his legacy heats up every year as the date of his memorial ceremony approaches. A few object to the statement that the Oslo process failed because the Palestinian national movement was not ready for a historic compromise with the Zionist movement. Prior to Rabin's death, that realization appeared to be sinking in, and there is some evidence that he wanted to put an end to the process, about which he had mixed feelings. Nevertheless, the stain of Oslo stuck to Rabin, mostly because of the need to use his image to secure legitimacy to continue the process. (...) Rabin was ready for a territorial compromise with the Palestinians, but certainly was not willing to pull back to the 1967 borders, and definitely never considered ceding any territory within the Green Line. (...) Rabin was very aware of the violent rules of the game in the region in which Israel exists. The skepticism and caution that characterized his path eventually overcame the excitement of some of the writers of his speeches about peace. Rabin understood that Israel would need to live by the sword for many more years, and often stressed that despite the peace agreements with its neighbors, Israel would need to continue to make careful use of military force to strike or deter its enemies. (...) The true Rabin legacy, not the ones certain circles are trying to create, could be the building blocks for broad national consensus and strengthen Israel to meet of future defense and security challenges.

Efraim Inbar, IHY, 30.10.20

4. Medienquerschnitt

Protest gegen Netanyahu

Israel needs elections right now

No one can understand the cause of this strange phenomenon and so in response the government orders a complete halt to all driving. The economic and social damage is immeasurable. The public is scared to death while car crashes drop to zero. The prime minister of this fictional nation goes on TV and proudly declares: "We have defeated the car crash plague. Drive safely, your keys are in the ignition." Within a short while, the accidents resume. Later on, it is learned that all the fatalities were people over the age of 24, who all suffered from severe vision problems. Everybody realizes that if the government

had only stopped those who were prone to these accidents from driving, the problem would have been solved. But the prime minister again orders every single driver off the road, regardless of age. This is the decision-making process under Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's governance. Illogical, haphazard and politically motivated decisions (...) have brought us to the precipice of disaster for our health, economy, society and education system. (...) The coronavirus has hurt the population less than Netanyahu's steps to fight it. Netanyahu must go home (...) Israel must have an election now, for our national catastrophe only grows greater with every day that passes.

Haim Ramon, YED, 16.10.20

Broader, more representative: This is how the protests can oust Netanyahu

(...) The regular protests seeking to oust Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu are effective because more and more people are joining in (...). The protests (...) are an amalgam of demonstrations on a modest scale that when combined created a nationwide protest movement. (...) The nation is in deep crisis. As it emerges from the coronavirus lockdown and people begin to move around more freely, the intensity of the economic crisis will wallop the country from every direction. (...) Without a 2021 state budget, there is no economic plan and there are no economic targets. That means there is no real possibility of planning for the future. (...) Protesting solely over the collapse of the country's democracy and the conduct of the police and against the Prime Minister's Residence (...) won't tip the balance either. If the protest is to really surge forward, the coronavirus and the economic crisis have to be the central issues. (...) The protest has to voice the concerns of the public at large, a portion of which is awash with daily propaganda about the justice system and democracy and has therefore perceived the protests as part of a political dispute, and has not shocked them into participating. (...) The current protest is a real achievement, but it has to become broader and more representative. That's how you win a public battle.

Uzi Baram, HAA, 21.10.20

Ultraorthodoxe in der Kritik

Historic correction needed

The sight of masses of young ultra-Orthodox students returning to class (...), in defiant violation of

lockdown provisions, while Israel's other pupils remain at home, where they have been for a month, symbolizes more than anything the disconnected existence of an autonomous Haredi population that lives according to its own laws, ignoring the state's decisions. This sight also exemplifies the helplessness of the government and most of the Israeli public in the face of extremist rabbis whose authority is accepted by a minority (...). The Haredi revolt takes it for granted that the funding for Haredi educational institutions that have opened in violation of the law will continue to flow from government coffers and that the public health system will continue to treat members of that community who are infected as a result with the coronavirus. It would be appropriate for the instigators of this to be punished, fined and indicted, but it is very doubtful that that will happen. (...) Netanyahu's political alliance with the Haredi parties is preventing him from concerted action against this irresponsible conduct (...). Public funding should be cut off from separate educational settings that do not teach the core subjects required to integrate into the work world. The budget should be transferred to settings that enable refugees from the Haredi education system who choose to do so to complete their educations there. The disconnect of the ultra-Orthodox public from Israeli society is one of the main reasons for the national failure to deal with the pandemic. (...) In order to advance this important historic correction, another government, when it is formed, must repeal the status quo, which is past its time, and begin with the separation of the clergy from the leadership of the country.

Editorial, HAA, 20.10.20

Kanievsky's actions close to organized civil disobedience campaign

Something big and very disturbing in the history of Israeli democracy took place this week. The directive issued by Rabbi Chaim Kanievsky, the leader of the non-hassidic (...) ultra-Orthodox community, to flout the law and open up elementary schools for boys (...) is the first time in Israeli history that we are seeing something that approaches a call for mass civil disobedience. That is, an outright call for non-violent action in defiance of the law, motivated by values and a moral conscience issued by a key public figure, and aimed at generating change in the law or in government policy through the use of undemocratic means. (...) We've seen rowdy and unruly demonstrations, protests and strikes, but these were not led by a major public figure instructing his followers to break the law, with the aim of

bending the Knesset to his will. (...) Kanievsky's current stand is extremely dangerous. It provides every sector of our fragmented society with an example of a civil disobedience campaign aimed at bending the rule of law. It does away with what until now has been a mental block denying the possibility of a frightening escalation of the Israeli Kulturkampf. It undermines our very ability to continue to disagree while accepting the rules of the game, at the core of which is the rule of law. The rabbi may emerge victorious in this battle; but he and his followers, as well as Israeli society as a whole, are liable to lose the war. (...) we should (...) take unfaltering and significant action against this organized civil disobedience. (...)

Yedidia Z. Stern, JPO, 22.10.20

HAA = Haaretz

YED = Yedioth Ahronoth / Ynetnews

JPO = Jerusalem Post

IHY = Israel HaYom

TOI = Times of Israel

GLO = Globes

Veröffentlicht im: November 2020

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