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Die Themen dieser Ausgabe

- 1. Netanyahu zieht die Kündigung von Verteidigungsminister Gallant zurück 1
- 2. Gewalt an allen Fronten 3
- 3. Israels internationales Standing und das iranische Atomforschungsprogramm 5
- 4. Medienquerschnitt..... 7

1. Netanyahu zieht die Kündigung von Verteidigungsminister Gallant zurück

Israels Ministerpräsident Benjamin Netanyahu hat die Kündigung des geschassten Verteidigungsministers Yoav Gallant zurückgezogen, nachdem sich die Sicherheitslage des Landes weiter zuspitzte und die Protestwelle gegen die Justizreform und die Amtsenthebung Gallants nicht abreißen wollten. Der Rauswurf Gallants, der aus Sicherheitsgründen dazu aufgerufen hatte, von der Justizreform abzulassen, hatte die Proteste gegen die Justizreformen so massiv, verschärft, dass Netanyahu einlenkte, alle Reformvorhaben der Regierung temporär ruhen ließ und die ausgesprochene Kündigung von Gallant schließlich nicht offiziell werden ließ. Nun sollen die Verhandlungsteams der Regierungskoalition und der Opposition unter der Schirmherrschaft von Staatspräsident Herzog einen Kompromiss verhandeln. Expert_innen schätzen allerdings die Chancen auf einen gelungenen Verhandlungsverlauf als gering ein.

The case for a popular referendum on judicial reform

(...) It's not beyond imagination to foresee independent groups of the Israeli public with special interests calling for referendums at the drop of a hat, and over even the most menial issues. (...) Ironically, the only form of referendum law to be passed to date, was by Prime Minister Netanyahu's cabinet

with a slim majority in 2013, in regard to decisions to withdraw from Israeli-held territory. The same law was effectively ignored by Yair Lapid when he signed the recent territorial waters agreement with Lebanon. This was not a treaty, by any means, but apparently, the High Court saw no reason to intervene and gave him a pass. (...) the reality is that fear of political and social consequences often overrides our real desires. Wishing for an outcome is not the same as having the drive to implement it. You can wish for your country's independence but stop short and shy away from the journey it takes to gain it, opting for a safer status quo. (...) in the context of current Israeli affairs, this lends credibility in turn to the right-wing argument that fear-mongering is handicapping the majority's desire for meaningful judicial reform. (...)
Moshe David Rubinstein, YED, 02.04.23

A Netanyahu Plea Deal That Halts the Judicial Coup? Not Likely

A tempting offer sits on the Passover table – mediation between the attorney general and criminal defendant No. 1. The process would start with an easing of the procedure for presenting evidence – on the number of witnesses and how they would be heard, and how a plea bargain could be reached. Supporters of mediation (...) say the country and the public have already paid too high a price because of the madness caused by Benjamin Netanyahu's corruption trial, and that if the trial continues, the

damage could be truly calamitous. (...) Ostensibly, mediation would be a businesslike approach that cuts losses by averting the total crack-up that will occur when the defendant's sinister legislation, which he has already partly enacted, is completed. This argument relies on the notion that halting the trial will halt the legislation. But this expectation is baseless. (...) Netanyahu has proved that agreements with him (...) aren't worth the paper they're written on. (...) he aspires to use the judicial overhaul as a workshop to build a new Israeli sociology. He believes that this would equalize the power of all the world's oppressed to that of the elites who took over the country and have been running its institutions. But the "second Israel," Netanyahu's preferred implement, is blowing up in his face. (...) Yariv Levin and Simcha Rothman, Bezalel Smotrich and Itamar Ben-Gvir, Yair Netanyahu and his mother Her Royal Highness have already pulled the rug out from under the defendant, who basically only wanted to get home from the trial in peace. (...) Netanyahu needs a plea bargain to remain prime minister after millions of people voted for him. But for that he needs the support of pillars of the coup and thus remains committed to his governing coalition's health and welfare. He realizes that the real plea deal he needs is with his coalition partners, before he can offer a response to the attorney general. And he won't easily be able to bypass or trick them. (...)

Zvi Bar'el, HAA, 05.04.23

The National Guard Is Meant for Netanyahu, Not for Ben-Gvir

National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir revealed (...) that he agreed to postpone the promotion of the judicial overhaul legislation until the Knesset reconvenes for the summer session in exchange for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's promise to establish of a National Guard directly subordinate to Ben-Gvir. In the document they signed they agreed that within a week the issue of a National Guard would be brought to the cabinet for preliminary approval, as indeed happened. (...) the National Guard has also become a personal interest of Netanyahu as well. The prime minister learned a lesson from the government's inability to stop the protests or the mass refusal of volunteer army reservists to serve under a dictatorship. The wide public resistance and the spread of the protests put enormous domestic and foreign pressure on the government, and harmed Netanyahu's reputation, which is a serious blow to someone known to be obsessed with his legacy. (...) Now, it seems, Netanyahu and Ben-Gvir

agree that the magic solution to all these problems is the rapid establishment of a National Guard. (...) Deploying it will save them from a public backlash or the legal complications of a politically inspired dismissal or demotion of a top police or army officer (...). The National Guard will not be troubled by legal provisions and police rules regulating the use of force and permissible measures to disperse demonstrations. (...) the establishment of a National Guard will mark a milestone in the transformation of the State of Israel into a dictatorship. Dictators who fear their own people and see them as enemies tend to establish forces independent of the army and the police that are personally loyal to them and ready to quash a protest if the army and the police refuse to do so. Such forces also help ensure that elements in the army and police do not rebel against the dictators. (...) one must not be confused or indifferent: This is not Ben-Gvir's private militia but Netanyahu's. (...)

Eitay Mack, HAA, 11.04.23

Our leaders are simpletons

(...) Many think that our larger-than-life leading politicians must be absolutely brilliant. Turns out that's a gross exaggeration. What really happens is that they found a winning formula and keep using it even when everyone can see it won't work anymore. Trump would never win. He won. So, he keeps doing what he did to win the first time. When people said, it won't work again he said: that's what you said the first time too. And he lost. Not having learned anything, he's continuing, ignoring all the signs he'll lose again. Netanyahu is not like Trump, but he's making the same mistake. He won many times and gave ministers' posts to competing party leaders in the area they criticized him most. Do you think security is bad? You'll be Minister of Defense. Do you think the costs of living are too high? I'll make you in charge of that. You'll fail, and your party will nosedive. But this time it didn't work. He made hardliners deal with security, they failed because they only learned how to polarize (...). These overblown politicians are not the strong protective daddy you always wanted. They're just as fallible and stupid as you and me.

Moshe-Mordechai van Zuiden, TOI, 12.04.23

Keeping Gallant: A forward-thinking compromise

In a welcome and necessary move that stabilizes the government and provides a degree of calm when it is most needed, Prime Minister Benjamin

Netanyahu (...) rescinded his decision to fire Defense Minister Yoav Gallant. Israel recently has faced a series of attacks on various fronts and retaining the Defense-Minister is an important step. It illustrates the kind of forward-thinking compromises that this government should continue working toward. (...) That these two key figures for Israel's security are putting country first should reassure the public and also make Israel's adversaries think twice about challenging the country. (...) At a time like this Israel needs a stable team at the top to guide the Defense Ministry, security forces and other institutions that protect us from external threats. (...) It is important to learn from the crises of recent weeks that we are stronger as a society when we are unified and the country's security should never be politicized. (...) As a democracy, we need to be able to disagree, even vehemently, without having the disagreements reach the crescendo seen in late March. We now know that we can put politics aside when necessary. (...)

Editorial, JPO, 13.04.23

2. Gewalt an allen Fronten

In Reaktion auf die schweren Unruhen in Jerusalems Altstadt kam es nach jahrelanger Waffenruhe erstmals erneut zu massivem Raketenbeschuss aus dem Libanon. Regierungschef Benjamin Netanyahu kündigte harte Gegenmaßnahmen an. Die Vermutung ist, dass diesmal nicht oder zumindest nicht allein die schiitische Terrororganisation Hizbollah hinter den Angriffen stand, sondern palästinensische Milizen. Der Eskalation vorausgegangen waren Zusammenstöße der israelischen Polizei mit Palästinenser_innen auf dem Tempelberg. Dabei kam es zum Einsatz von Schlagstöcken, Tränengas und Gummigeschossen. Palästinensische Jugendliche hatten Feuerwerkskörper und Steine auf die Polizei geworfen und anschließend versucht, sich in der Moschee zu verbarrikadieren. Das scharfe Vorgehen der israelischen Sicherheitskräfte, das filmisch dokumentiert durch die Medien und sozialen Netzwerke ging, stieß auf heftige Kritik vor allem aus Jordanien. Auch aus dem Gazastreifen und von syrischem Gebiet aus auf die Golanhöhen wurden Raketen abgefeuert, auf die Israel umgehend mit Vergeltungsangriffen reagierte. In Tel Aviv und im Westjordanland kamen drei Menschen bei Terrorangriffen zu Tode. Mehrere Menschen wurden verletzt.

Rockets from Lebanon are a green light to encourage escalation on all fronts

In the northern region, any activity typically requires the approval of the Lebanese-based Hezbollah. While it appears that the Shi'ite terrorist group did not directly launch the rockets, it likely authorized Palestinian organizations based in southern Lebanon to do so. This was predictable, especially given Hezbollah's recent statement expressing solidarity with the Palestinian cause around Al-Aqsa. (...). Recent events, such as the Temple Mount clashes and rocket attacks from Gaza and southern Lebanon, were instigated by Hamas in order to maintain its position as the primary Palestinian-Islamist resistance movement and to bolster its prestige and leadership status. At the same time, Hamas aims to hold onto its control over Gaza and ease the economic struggles of its residents. (...) The course of escalation will depend on Israel's response to the ongoing events around the Temple Mount. (...) Israel is no longer willing to let its deterrence erode, but two factors will likely shape the decision: avoiding a major confrontation with Hezbollah and preventing a conflict with Palestinian organizations during the holiday season when many Israelis are vacationing in the north.

Ron Ben-Yishai, YED, 06.04.23

Iran, Hezbollah, Hamas: Israel Now Faces the Perfect Storm of a Multi-front War

(...) The current round of violence is a further iteration of Hamas and Hezbollah's long term, Iranian-inspired strategy of wearing Israel down through a process of attrition until destruction. (...) Israel faces enemies whose objectives are nothing short of genocidal. They seek to drag Israel into a multi-front war along its borders, in the West Bank and Jerusalem, and with Israel's Arab population. (...) Israel has no alternative but to defend itself. There are, however, some unpleasant strategic and political realities. Israel's strategic circumstances have probably never been less conducive to waging a conflict. In just three months, the current government of national lunacy has succeeded in causing severe disruption and in bringing Israel to the brink in almost all areas. (...) Israel's regional and international standing could not be much worse. (...) Israel's crucially important strategic objective, of creating a U.S.-led Sunni-Israeli alignment against Iran, has been dealt a severe blow. (...) we face a possible perfect storm, one which Israel's intelligence agencies have been warning about for months, of a multi-front war. One need not be unusually creative to imagine the glee

with which Iran, Hezbollah and Hamas must be viewing the disarray and self-inflicted processes of destruction underway in Israel. (...) Israel's domestic security cannot be placed in the hands of a convicted terrorist and that he cannot be given a private militia. Parts of the Ministry of Defense cannot be carved off for a delusional minister who was almost also indicted on charges of terrorism. An Israeli cabinet cannot be composed of anti-Zionists, draft dodgers, political opportunists and ministers under indictment, or soon-to-be. (...)
Chuck Freilich, HAA, 09.04.23

The country is burning and Ben-Gvir is tweeting

(...) A central aim of Hezbollah, Hamas, and Islamic Jihad is to plan and carry out the killing and murder of Israelis. The big question is not what they want, but how strong our society is and how wise the government is in dealing with this organized hatred. Simply put: what is the government doing to prevent or reduce these threats to Israel? What are the measures of wisdom, determination, and initiative it applies? (...) For example, what did the "Minister of National Security" do? Shortly after Shabbat was out (...) Ben-Gvir felt a compelling urgency to explain how immediately necessary his "National Guard" was, and of course to accuse his political opponents of being responsible for the situation. (...) A real Minister of Police would (...) investigate the incident thoroughly. (...) Israel does not have a Police-Minister, but a tweeter; Its Defense-Minister was fired and awaits amnesty; its Military General Staff was scolded by Netanyahu - for the fact that the IDF "went on strike." (...)
Nadav Eyal, YED, 10.04.23

The tragic and bloody Passover and Ramadan that Hamas planned all along

(...) Welcome to the Passover and Ramadan that Hamas planned all along. Every year, without fail, the Gaza-based terror group finds a way to incite violence among impressionable Palestinians and turn Ramadan into a violent blood bath. And every year, without fail, the media and international community find a way to misrepresent the situation. (...) Every Ramadan, Hamas repeats the same story. In the weeks leading up to the holiday, the terror group had issued statements with the false claim that al-Aqsa was in danger and called on Palestinians to confront Jews and defend al-Aqsa. (...) The night before Passover, a large group of Palestinian rioters incited by Hamas stormed the Temple Mount and began chanting violent sentiments, including calls

for the destruction of Israel and the death of Jews. A group of extremists smuggled fireworks, stones and other explosive devices into al-Aqsa mosque. The (...) brawl of Israeli Police beating Palestinians was captured on video and circulated all over social media. The footage is terrible and difficult to watch but it only depicts one side of the story. As Israeli forces entered the mosque, a violent fight broke out, with the rioters setting off fireworks. (...) Every Ramadan, we see an escalation at the Temple Mount and it continues to be misrepresented every year.

Zina Rakhamilova, JPO, 11.04.23

In Shambles: Israel's 'Mowing the Grass' Doctrine

The lesson Israel's enemies have probably learned from the recent round of fighting is that the greater their provocation and the more fronts it originates from the stronger is Israel's interest in ending the hostilities quickly and thus the weaker will be its military response. Such a conclusion will indicate to Iran that its strategy of financing, arming and training proxy forces to encircle Israel with a "ring of fire" is paying off. It limits Israel's options. Israel will now think twice before undertaking a major military action for fear other fronts will erupt. (...) Moreover, the ability to coordinate fire from multiple fronts has a psychological impact beyond its real effectiveness. Given the current political and societal crises in Israel, this aspect is of special value to its enemies. (...) Maintaining quiet on its borders was Israel's preferred policy for years. (...) The Israeli solution was to adhere to the arching goal of striving for quiet on the borders but support it with a military policy of "mowing the grass." Under this doctrine Israel would sporadically use military means (...) to retaliate for attacks on its citizens. (...) The current "war between the wars" campaign underway in Syria and aimed at expelling Iran and its proxies from the country and torpedoing its efforts to establish a new front against Israel there, is in effect a variation of the same "mowing the grass" approach. In short, the Israeli policy was and still is tactically offensive but strategically defensive. (...) It seems there will be no choice but for Israel to shift to a tactically and strategically offensive doctrine. In pursuance of this approach, the IDF would need to revamp its order of battle and operational plans so it can fight on multiple fronts simultaneously while conducting a major ground offensive in one theater. Israel must switch from the "mowing the grass" doctrine to one of up-

rooting the “lawn” altogether and the sooner the better.

Avigdor Haselkorn, YED, 14.04.23

3. Israels internationales Standing und das iranische Atomforschungsprogramm

Während gegnerische Kräfte Israels, wie jüngst die libanesische Hizbollah und die palästinensische Hamas, verstärkt zusammenarbeiten, gehen alte und neue Verbündete infolge der Politik der in Teilen rechtsextremistischen Koalition auf kritische Distanz zu Jerusalem. So wartet Israels Regierungschef Benjamin Netanyahu weiterhin auf eine Einladung ins Weiße Haus. US-Präsident Joe Biden steht den Justizreform der Regierung kritisch gegenüber. Auch in europäischen Hauptstädten wurde große Sorge um Israels Demokratie laut. Israelische Sicherheitsexpert_innen sorgen sich nun vor allem um die gemeinsame Front gegenüber Teheran. Dabei geht es um die USA wie auch um die noch jungen diplomatischen Beziehungen zu mehreren Golfstaaten. Israelische Expert_innen fühlen sich mit Blick auf die globale Bedrohung durch einen Atomstaat Iran von der Welt alleingelassen.

Tick, Tick... Boom!: Netanyahu Kills Any Chance of Stopping a Nuclear Iran

(...) the governing coalition’s legislative blitz and the Iranian/Israeli nuclear issue (...) are closely entwined (...). Tehran is closer than ever to obtaining nuclear weapons (...). And Netanyahu is now likely to undermine what little remains of any chance to stop Iran before it obtains nuclear weapons, in three different ways. He is chipping away at the alliance with the United States and the cooperation with the Biden administration (...). He has eroded relations with the Gulf-state partners to the Abraham Accords, whose partnership in a coalition is essential for any serious action against Iran. And he has created a domestic rift in Israel that is drastically diminishing the motivation to serve and thus degrading the military’s operational fitness. (...) The nuclear option has (...) encouraged the United States and other countries to cooperate with Israel in the conventional military sphere, to keep Israel away from opting for a nuclear-weapons-based strategy. Finally, it has made it possible for Israel to reassure Jews abroad that we have what it takes to prevent another Holocaust – this time of our country as well. (...) the nuclear program (ours and theirs) is very close to Netanyahu’s heart (...) we must put our faith in Netanyahu (...) finally (...) understanding how vital it

is that the constitutional reform enjoy a true consensus (...) while keeping a trusted hand at the Defense Ministry. This would heal the internal rift, revive our image as a responsible democracy, rebuild our credibility with the Biden administration (...) and make further progress with the Gulf states. Without all these, we cannot effectively address the Iranian nuclear threat; we will also play into the hands of those who constantly seek to strip us of the capabilities they attribute to us. And this time, we may well be deprived of understanding abroad for the justness of our struggle, as well as of America’s diplomatic umbrella. (...)

Ariel Levite, HAA, 04.04.23

The world’s hypocrisy and silence towards Iran: Israel is doing the dirty work for you

(...) There are two takeaways the world should understand from the recent escalation. First, the fact that multiple casualties were Iranian regime “advisors” and IRGC officials, shows that the regime in Iran is more determined than ever to wage war through proxy terror groups. The second takeaway is that Israel will not, under any circumstances, allow the Islamic Republic to build up a military front on its borders that threatens the security of the state of Israel. (...) it’s incumbent upon the West (...), to take a stronger stance in support of Israeli action against Iran in Syria. The idea that the Islamic Republic of Iran isn’t planning to carry out the same type of military destabilization tactics in Europe and throughout the Western world is delusional at best. (...) The Islamic Republic of Iran behaves like a mafia regime, terrorizing and oppressing its people for 44 years and counting. They have no actual justice system, they routinely beat, sexually assault, imprison, torture, and execute civilians for protesting, including children. (...) If Europe can’t even hold the regime accountable for its crimes against humanity, how on earth are they going to defend themselves against a nuclear military threat from the terror-supporting Iranian regime? (...) Already, the regime has proven itself to engage in brazen acts of terrorism on European and American soil, including kidnapping and attempted kidnapping of foreign nationals (...). This is not an anomaly for the regime – it’s only the beginning. (...) the international community should support Israel’s actions against Iranian proxies in Syria (...) because it is in the long-term self-interest of the West. (...) Sadly, the escalation in Syria isn’t the end of the conflict between Israel and the Islamic Republic of Iran, but global support for

Israel on this front can help bring about the end of this conflict sooner rather than later.

Emily Schrader, YED, 04.04.23

US-Israel tensions: Netanyahu knows Biden won't win in 2024

(...) Israel and the US have always had a big brother/younger brother relationship. And like all siblings, they fight. They quibble. They say awful things to each other. But they will always be there for each other. (...) These tensions, as high and dramatic as they are, will pass. But not just yet. (...) the most public way for Biden to "dis" Bibi is by holding back on that traditional invite to the White House. (...) It was essential for the security of Israel, for the security of the region, and in the best interest of the US, for the world to see that the relationship between Israel and the US – the warm relationship, the cordial relationship, the "we-are-on-the-same-page" relationship between these two nations – continues even though the leadership has changed. By breaking with tradition, the White House is trying to teach Jerusalem a lesson. (...) Netanyahu has almost certainly determined that he can weather the storm. He has calculated that Biden cannot and will not be re-elected. (...) That realization gives Netanyahu peace of mind. (...) Israel understands the United States. The Prime Minister's Office is feeling secure. They see these divisions in the US. Most importantly, they know that their real friendships rest in Congress and not the White House. And they know that regardless of what happens regarding judicial reform, the friendship, the family ties between the US and Israel will remain intact. (...)

Micah Halpern, JPO, 04.04.23

FYI, Biden: What to Remember When Dealing With Netanyahu

(...) the fascist-messianic regime in Jerusalem is farther from a U.S. green light to strike Iran than the Ayatollah regime is from a nuclear bomb. If Trump returns to the White House, he too will be in no hurry to invite the Netanyahus. More than 30 years ago, Deputy Foreign Minister Netanyahu, already considered an expert on the United States, was the spearhead of a group of Likud lawmakers who asked Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir to reject President George H.W. Bush's demand to freeze construction in the settlements. (...) In response to Netanyahu's slurs against the administration, Secretary of State James Baker (...) declared him persona non grata in his office. Bush made it clear that the settlement

enterprise is not an internal Israeli matter (...) because continued construction in the West Bank sabotages the peace process, which is a major U.S. interest. The United States (...) rejected the request for guarantees and Israel was forced to take out expensive loans in order to fund the wave of immigrants from the former Soviet Union. Shamir failed to convince Israelis that a snub of the prime minister accompanied by an economic sanction is nothing more than a "momentary dispute within the family." A short time later, the settler right lost power.

Akiva Eldar, HAA, 05.04.23

Israel isn't the only one threatened by Iran; Western countries are, too

(...) Over the past decade, Iran has increased the range, precision and capabilities of its drones. (...) The proliferation of drones in the Middle East, and now as far as NATO's doorstep, poses both a unique challenge and an important opportunity for Israel to work with its Western partners to curb these threats. Drones are a weapon of choice for Iran and its proxy groups like Hezbollah, because they can be based far from Israel's borders and pose a complex threat to strategic infrastructure. (...) As Iranian drones deployed by Russia wreak havoc and devastation in Ukraine, European countries are taking a closer look at the threat they pose to their own interests and national defense. (...) the events of recent months illustrate that the Iranian drone threat is by no means contained to the Middle East. Western countries are finally taking note – and action. (...) Today the Middle East is reaching a new crossroads, as Iran reconciles with Saudi Arabia and Syria's regime is making diplomatic inroads that may enable it to emerge from its status as an international pariah. NATO is also undergoing changes as it expands to include Finland and considers how best to address the threat posed by Russia. (...) Now is the time for Israel and our partners to take a close look at the threat posed by Iran and its proxies in both the Middle East and Europe. Combating Iran's drone threat should be at the top of the agenda. (...)

Editorial, JPO, 06.04.23

Iran is pushing Israel toward a multi-theater conflagration

After a long pause in the nuclear talks, during which Iran came closer to a nuclear capability (...), "leaks" emerged about an alleged American desire to offer once again a partial deal (...). The idea of "less for less", which is in practice "much less for much more", is based on some restrictions and freezes on

Iran's nuclear program, mainly by halting any further progress, in exchange for partial sanction release. The absurdity of this proposal is even more pronounced today than in the past. (...) An agreement, even a broad one, will buy the world only a few weeks or maybe a few months, alongside a substantial easing of sanctions, allowing the regime to recover economically and to continue financing and backing terrorism all over the world. (...) Tehran will ostensibly agree to a few concessions and will receive many benefits in return. (...) Once the Iranians will get significant concessions, a bigger, broader follow-up deal is only an illusion. Iran's leaders understand how to leverage far better than President Joe Biden and his people. (...) there is a justifiable fear in the Gulf that an Israeli attack on Iran will demand an immediate price from them, given their geographic proximity and the Abraham Accords, which position them as collaborators with Israel. (...) This analysis, along with Israel's declarations, on the military option, will create a challenge to the stability of the agreements and their ability to expand to other countries. (...) Israel is bound to pay a heavy price in an ill-advised deal, so it must act against it with a united voice. (...)

Jacob Nagel, IHY, 07.04.23

Surmountable Challenges

(...) How many times has the Biden administration practically begged the Iranians to go back to the Iran Deal (...). It's just too pathetic. With the deal very close to its sunset – which allows Iran to do just about whatever it wants with nuclear and other weapons – the administration still can't get over its obsession: to co-opt Iran to the American side, displacing Israel and Saudi Arabia as the Americans most stalwart Middle East allies. (...) After the Biden administration's incredibly inept diplomacy in the Middle East, the latest sign of American loss of prestige is China's recently brokered alliance of sorts between Saudi Arabia and Iran. These two countries have been implacable enemies for decades. But because of a lack of confidence in American power and steadfastness, Saudi's acting ruler Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (...) has switched its allegiance. China has gained yet another foothold in the region, making the US look unreliable as an ally. (...) The current US administration cannot remain this myopic for much longer. Reality intrudes.... The realization that a China-Russia-Iran axis portends a Western defeat is too huge to ignore. (...)

Steve Kramer, TOI, 10.04.23

Will Iran manage to kick out US forces?

Pushing American military forces out of the Gulf region has been a persistent goal of Iranian leadership. It has influenced numerous Iranian operations and plans throughout the years. (...) Multiple American sources confirmed that the US will not withdraw its forces from northern Syria. (...) President Joe Biden told Iran to "be prepared for us to act forcefully to protect our people". (...) it is challenging for the Biden administration to determine whether to withdraw US forces from Syria. (...) The Iranian missile strikes on American bases in Syria reveal the magnitude of the challenge confronting the US, as it has failed to dissuade Iran. (...) Washington is concerned that Iran may expand the scale of its attacks, leading to more significant losses in American military bases. This puts the White House in a challenging position to deter Iran by taking action, either by launching a large retaliatory military operation with all the potential risks involved or by accepting humiliation and staying silent. The latter is the most difficult and unacceptable option, given the complex challenges that the US faces in many areas of influence and operations. (...) repeated success of Iran's strikes against US military bases may embolden more attacks to either extract concessions from the US in the overall relationship between Tehran and Washington or to demonstrate the effectiveness of Iran's long-arm policy and proxy war. This (...) will inevitably lead to further weakening of the security relationships between the US and its Middle Eastern allies due to Washington's shortcomings, decreasing deterrent capability, and failure to maintain its traditional influence in the region.

Salem AlKetbi, IHY, 13.04.23

4. Medienquerschnitt

Pessach im Schatten von Terror, Unruhen und Raketen

Why this Passover is like no other

(...) On this first day of Passover, cities in northern Israel were attacked by a barrage of 34 rockets from Lebanon that resulted in three reported injuries and other property damage. Passover is the holiday when Jewish people around the world celebrate the redemption of the ancient Israelites from slavery in Egypt and liberation from the tyranny of Pharaoh. (...) Too often, when Jews are attacked in Israel, it is

chalked up to being part of the realities of a far-away geo-political conflict. (...) And the same is true when a car is rammed at a group of people at a promenade or bus stop, and when there is a targeted shooting of a passing car or near a synagogue. These acts of terror must never be legitimized because of politics or geography. These incidents are no different from attacks and mass shootings in American synagogues or markets. Jewish people everywhere – including in Israel – should be able to live free of fear. (...) these repeated attempts to murder Jews in Israel, go well beyond being critical of Israel and its policies. (...)

Daphne Lazar, TOI, 09.04.23

Our Passover wish: Israelis disagreeing agreeably

With the confluence this week of Passover, Easter and Ramadan, it is worthwhile pondering what our wish should be in this year of worldwide chaos and increased violence in Israel this past week, as well. With political polarization rampant in so many Western democracies, seemingly out-of-control climate change and a crazed madman in Russia trying to bring the world to a third world war, the challenge to write something meaningful is daunting. (...) Jewish families gathered for the traditional Seder, Christians sat down to a family dinner on Easter Sunday and Muslims gather each night of Ramadan for their fast-breaking evening meal, Iftar. No doubt, there were and will be family members representing different political and religious views at all of these events and the holiday table could very well be a setting that pits siblings, parents and children, against each other – a microcosm of the conflict playing out all over the world. (...) May this holiday season, which has sadly begun here in Israel with rocket fire from both Lebanon and Gaza along with disturbances at the al-Aqsa mosque, be a blessing for all of us that we may merit the enjoyment of long lives of health and happiness in peace and security.

Sherwin Pomerantz, JPO, 10.04.23

HAA = Haaretz
YED = Yedioth Ahronoth / Ynetnews
JPO = Jerusalem Post
IHY = Israel HaYom
TOI = Times of Israel
GLO = Globes

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