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**1. Massenkundgebung zur Unterstützung der Regierung**

*Israels Regierungschef Benjamin Netanyahu vergebte keine Zeit und rief bereits einen Tag nach den Feierlichkeiten zum 75. Jahrestag der Gründung Israels zu einer Demonstration für die umstrittenen Gesetzreformen im Justizbereich auf. Mit dem Slogan: „Das Volk verlangt die Justizreform“, versammelten sich rund 200.000 Menschen vor der Knesset in Jerusalem. Es war die bislang größte Demonstration zur Unterstützung der Regierung. Sie zeigte, wie tief zerrissen die israelische Bevölkerung ist. Die seit Anfang des Jahres wöchentlich stattfindenden Massenkundgebungen aus Protest gegen die von der Regierung angestrebte Justizreform dauern derweil unvermindert an. Als auch Gewerkschaften zu einem Generalstreik aufgerufen hatten, setzte Netanyahu das Gesetzgebungsverfahren über die Feiertage aus, um erklärtermaßen, „dem Dialog eine Chance zu geben“. Die Massenkundgebung für die Regierung kommentierte er offen gerührt: "Ihr habt mein Herz erwärmt und ich danke jedem Einzelnen von euch", twitterte er. Nicht an der Kundgebung teilgenommen hatten ultraorthodoxe Bürger\_innen, nachdem sich die Anführer der ultraorthodoxen Gemeinden gegen eine Beteiligung an der Demonstration ausgesprochen hatten.*

**Tyranny of the majority is not democratic; certainly it is not Jewish**

Supporters of the judicial overhaul (...) claim that in a democracy, the people are the sovereign, and therefore a majority in the Knesset is authorized to legislate however it sees fit. (...) True, the premise of liberal democracy is individual freedom, which the citizens partly give up when they join in the Social Contract (...). We, however – they argue – have a different premise, national-collectivist, and thus the people's will stands above individual freedom. Hence in a state that is not only democratic but also Jewish, the (Jewish) majority is authorized to legislate as it sees fit. A court that seeks to set limits to this authority by virtue of the rights of individuals or minorities is, on their view, anti-democratic: "a dictatorship of the High Court of Justice", as they call it. This approach is immoral, at least under any humanistic conception of morality, since it subjugates human individuals to the nation, and all too easily leads to fascism like that of Franco, or at least Mussolini. (...) Of course, no right is absolute, and in some cases, individual rights must yield to a vital interest of the community. But this consideration does not provide a green light for each and every item of legislation supported by a majority of voters. It is precisely for this that there is a need for a judicial institution that can steer and strike a balance: serving as a bastion against tyranny of the majority, while sometimes recognizing the supremacy of a communal interest over a particular right of an individual. (...) Tyranny of the majority is an anti-Jewish idea, no less than its being anti-democratic. (...)

### **Israelis need their leaders to prioritize governing**

(...) it's time for all involved to realize that nothing has been resolved and the country is still on the brink of a dangerous tumble into chaos. (...) One hopeful sign emerging from political circles is the apparent seriousness that both the coalition and opposition are attaching to the talks taking place under President Isaac Herzog's auspices at the President's Residence. (...) The deadline for reaching some kind of agreement or compromise is April 30, when the Knesset begins its summer session. (...) Various proposals have been submitted and it appears that this issue is one on which the two sides are actually earnest about reaching an agreement. However, even if there is an impasse, or the talks break down over the next two weeks, the legislation push may still be delayed. That's because the first issue at hand when the Knesset reconvenes is to pass the state budget by May 29. According to Israeli law, if a budget does not pass on time, the Knesset disperses automatically and a new election is held. (...) The coalition should set its priorities straight and focus on formulating a budget that will serve the needs of the Israeli people. At the same time, the coalition and the opposition should be meeting round the clock until they emerge with a compromise that offers a solution to the judicial quagmire – one that is acceptable to both sides and enables the country to get back on track to handle the more urgent issues it faces.

Editorial, JPO, 17.04.23

### **They Hate Israel's Supreme Court, but Didn't Join the Right-wing Protest Against It**

The first major protest against the Israeli Supreme Court was held in Jerusalem on February 14, 1999, when an estimated 350,000 demonstrators called on the justices not to interfere in matters of religion. Nearly all of them were ultra-Orthodox Jews (...). The protest was held on the orders of the senior Haredi rabbis. The prime minister at the time was Benjamin Netanyahu, near the end of his disastrous first term in office. He tried to urge the rabbis to call off the protest, saying it would harm "unity." (...) Fast-forward 24 years and another large demonstration was held against the Supreme Court in Jerusalem (...). This time, the organizers were members of Netanyahu's Likud and Bezalel Smotrich's Religious Zionism parties. The slogan for the demonstration promised a million protesters (...) approximately 150,000 people participated - but nowhere close to

the one million mark. One key group was missing. (...) many senior rabbis and yeshiva heads expressly told their students not to go. (...) the opposition comes from political considerations. The leaders of the ultra-Orthodox parties were originally among the primary movers behind the Netanyahu government's rapid judicial overhaul. However, they were also among the first to realize that the way it was being pursued was causing major damage to Israeli society – especially to their sensitive place in it – once the pro-democracy protests became overwhelmingly a matter of secular Israel objecting to a Haredi takeover. That was when they started to quietly urge Netanyahu to back down and tried to minimize any connection they had with the legislation. The last thing they want now is to be seen as part of the campaign trying to salvage the "legal reform," which even Netanyahu is now distancing himself from. But there are deeper ideological reasons. The Haredi leaders know that their ideal version of a Jewish state is very different to that of their non-Haredi allies on the right. They don't want to reform the Supreme Court – they want it to disappear. (...) Any court that doesn't rule according to their narrow version of the laws of the Torah is a heresy. Especially if such a court is in the Jewish state. (...) Anshel Pfeffer, HAA, 27.04.23

### **The reason for Judicial Reform**

Israel's judicial reform must pass to secure Israel's future as a democratic state. (...) the right-wing coalition needs to enact the policies they were elected to pursue. Compromises will need to be made and the unity of the country must be preserved, but some form of judicial reform must pass (...). Israel's left holds dear its supreme court which overstepped its boundary in 1992 when then Chief Justice Aharon Barak began his Judicial activism revolution. Since then and consistently over the past 30 years, Israel's Supreme Court (...) has disqualified laws forwarding right-wing policies and become an unelected left wing political actor. (...) The left wing and their allies have led boycotts against the State inside and outside of the country, moved hundreds of millions of dollars outside of Israel, encouraged Israelis to refuse to serve in the army and reserves, and have pushed for nationwide strikes. Most Israelis are shocked that a small but vocal left-wing faction is actively trying to destroy the State of Israel. Judicial reform was the clearly stated policy of the right-wing parties during the recent campaign (...). Ultimately, the right-wing coalition should make concessions to broaden public support for reform.

They need to be transparent in these negotiations and fashion a compromise which will be accepted by a large majority of the Israeli public. (...)  
Benjamin Sipzner, TOI, 27.04.23

### **Vain Hope of Israeli Pro-government 'Million March'**

Thursday's "march of the million" (...) reflected an authentic need. The large community represented by its participants has been watching in despair as it sees the way its electoral victory, in its view, has been stolen from it. The way a minority, by holding demonstrations, blocking major roads, soliciting pressure from abroad, causing economic damage to the state and even encouraging soldiers to refuse to serve, has brought its leaders to their knees. If the demonstration achieves its goal – that is, resumption of the government's planned reform – it will generate counter-pressure of the type that erupted after Justice Minister Yariv Levin announced the reform. (...) The majority, and also the formal justice, are with the "march of the million." It is doubtful that wisdom and foresight are as well. (...) Seeking to compromise and to reach a national consensus isn't weakness, and it certainly isn't capitulation, which is how many people attending the "march of the million" see it. Many among the reform's opponents share this view. Much of this national crisis could be solved if a centrist party like the National Unity Party could muster the courage to extricate itself from the dead end into which it is being led by activists whose strategy of chaos holds that the worse things get, the better. Then we could put the ultra-Orthodox in their place and embark on the long, difficult journey of healing the wounds of our divisions and hatreds. (...)

Israel Harel, HAA, 28.04.23

## **2. Gedenktage und Israels 75. Unabhängigkeitstag**

*Der innenpolitische Streit zwischen Gegner\_innen und Befürworter\_innen der Justizreform überschattete auch die diesjährigen Gedenktage. Staatspräsident Izchak Herzog hat die Bevölkerung am nationalen Holocaust-Gedenktag zu Einheit aufgerufen. Gerade die Zeit bis zum Gedenktag für Gefallene und Terroropfer wie auch dem Unabhängigkeitstag müsse "über jeden Streit erhaben" sein, betonte Herzog. Dennoch kam es am Gedenktag für gefallene Soldat\_innen und Terroropfer auf einigen Friedhöfen aufgrund der Teilnahme von Politiker\_innen der Regierung an den Zeremonien zu*

*Rangleien zwischen Hinterbliebenen. Umstritten blieb auch die alternative Gedenkveranstaltung, bei der israelische und palästinensische Hinterbliebene gemeinsam ihren getöteten Angehörigen gedenken. Bei den Holocaust-Gedenkveranstaltungen war erstmals auch der im Exil lebende Ex-Kronprinz des Iran, Reza Pahlavi, zugegen. Er wurde von der israelischen Ministerin für Geheimdienste, Gila Gamliel, begleitet.*

### **Why Is Israel Banning Bereaved Palestinians From a Memorial Day Ceremony?**

(...) For what seditious crimes against the State and bereaved families who do not agree with us are we accused? Is it the very DNA of peacemakers which causes so much fear? Who are these subversive troublemakers who plot against the state? (...) Bereaved Palestinians come to share their stories of loss, of transformation from anger to nonviolence and reconciliation and are looking for a suitable like-minded partner. They have found it in their Israeli partners who have also experienced the worst thing that can happen – who, like them, know the unfathomable pain from the loss of a child or father or mother or brother or sister. We, grieving Israelis and Palestinians, are all members of the Parents Circle-Families Forum. (...) we have no desire to find fault with anyone who is a part of the family of the bereaved. Each person should be allowed to commemorate their loved one in the manner they see fit. No one can understand the desperate need we have to never let our loved ones be forgotten. We are the consequence of a political solution never being found to end the deadlock of violence. (...) we cannot solve the conflict on our own. We must have a partner. (...) We would never dream of criticizing a bereaved family for the way they express their loss. All we ask is for the same respect and to be allowed to give a message of peace and freedom of expression of grief on the holiest of days. (...)

Robi Damelin, HAA, 16.04.23

### **The Shah's Son's Visit to Israel Is Cynical Use of the Holocaust**

Intelligence Minister Gila Gamliel's decision to invite Reza Koresch Ali Pahlavi was puzzling. This wasn't a diplomatic move but political propaganda. (...) Reza Pahlavi has been considered friendly to the Jews and Israel. He always mentions the days when Iran under his father's rule had close ties with Israel, both defense ties (...) and economic ties (...). Even today he fantasizes that he'll someday return to power, but this is a pipe dream. He has supporters

in the Iranian exile community, especially in the United States, where around 500,000 exiles live. But the prevailing view is that he's a red flag even for opponents of the Iranian regime, both inside and outside the country. They don't see him as a suitable person to lead them. So inviting him to Israel won't contribute to Israel's overt and covert efforts to drive a wedge between the Iranian people and their government. (...) All the experts agree that if the Iranian government eventually falls, it will be due to an internal development, not an external one. The only explanation for the decision to invite Pahlavi to Israel is that the Intelligence Ministry considers the visit a psychological operation aimed not at the outside world but at the Israeli public. In other words, the ministry is using him to connect Holocaust Remembrance Day with the Iranian enemy. (...) Pahlavi has the right to visit Israel just like anyone else. But making this an official visit under the government's auspices and inviting him to the main Holocaust Remembrance Day ceremony at Yad Vashem with the prime minister is, again, a cynical exploitation of the memory of the Holocaust. (...)

Yossi Melman, HAA, 19.04.23

### **This Independence Day, Israel Has No Cause for Celebration**

(...) the celebrations are taking place at the foot of a volcano that is certain to erupt soon, and the celebrants are people affected with blindness like in the last days of Pompeii. The true head of the octopus that is strangling Israel does not reside in Tehran, and the arms are not terrorist satellites in Lebanon and Yemen. The nation itself is the octopus. (...) Even if the government coup is thwarted, Netanyahu will remain, with his corruption trial, and his family, and the devastation he wreaks every day, whether he is in the government or the opposition. (...) There is no mass protest movement in Israel against the persistence of the occupation and the apartheid and in favor of the mass evacuation of settlements and of ending the abominable moral crime that Israel has been committing in the West Bank and East Jerusalem for 56 years. At the beginning of Israel's 76th year, the occupation is etched far deeper into the national DNA than the kova tembel hat, and it enjoys a broad consensus among the country's Jews. Indeed, there is no democracy with occupation, and from this it follows that there is no democracy, period, and there never will be. (...) Due to the occupation, Israel is already a binational state. Not the state of the Jews. From the perspective of the Zionist

enterprise, it is a failure, it is oblivion. Happy Independence Day. (...)

Rogel Alpher, HAA, 24.04.23

### **Stop the protest, if only for 24 hours**

(...) As Israel marks another Memorial Day, like every year, cemeteries nationwide will be filled with bereaved families and IDF soldiers. (...) I believe that both sides should leave cemeteries out of this conflict. The protesters will only reap benefits from a 24-hour calm. I believe that most Israelis, including those who are committed to demonstrating every Saturday, will appreciate this lull. The Independence Day events that will follow will provide the protest with ample opportunities to say what it wants to. In the five and a half months since the elections, Netanyahu and his ministers have fallen into almost every pitfall they encountered. They have an issue with facing reality: they see it differently from most public opinion polls, from economists, from security officials, and from Israel's allies around the world. Netanyahu focuses only on right-wing voters who left his bloc and seeks only to draw them back. (...) If National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir and Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich insist on speaking, let them do so away from the graves of those who fought and died for this country. (...) Memorial Day demands modesty first and foremost. To bow one's head, and speak in few words. It would be better if Netanyahu also followed these guidelines himself.

Nachum Barnea, YED, 24.04.23

### **With Biden's Gifts, We Must Win Our Second War of Independence**

This has never happened to us before. Memorial Day has become a day of division and dispute, and Independence Day has become a day of sorrow and fear. Once upon a time – that is, a year ago – the week that began with Holocaust Remembrance Day and culminated in Memorial Day and Independence Day was the most foundational and unifying week of the year. It encapsulated the shocks that the Jewish people underwent over the last 80 years, from the murder of the six million in the Holocaust through the deaths of 24,213 heroes on the battlefield to the great joy on Independence Day over the very fact that the state exists. But then along came a crazy and extremist government headed by a corrupt prime minister devoid of restraint who not only sowed hatred and division but also tried to turn us into a dictatorship and endanger the state's survival.

Benjamin Netanyahu is the one who turned a unifying, ceremonious week into one of anger and infighting. He is the one who turned the joy of Independence Day into a great fear that our democracy will be destroyed, and with it our Third Temple, the State of Israel. He (...) didn't think U.S. President Joe Biden would personally intervene in Israel's internal affairs and tell him that American support for Israel might well be undermined if he didn't stop the legal overhaul. (...) Indeed, all it would take to turn us into a pariah country with which no one would want to do business is if Biden were to say publicly that he was reevaluating the relationship. From there, the road is short to an economic and security collapse. (...) Netanyahu is an anti-Zionist. He is dismantling society from within, weakening our economy, strengthening the ultra-Orthodox and undermining Zionism's supreme goal of making Israel a safe haven for the Jewish people. Instead of a safe haven, we've gotten exceptional unity among all our enemies, who see how our internal divisions have weakened us. (...) These are the gifts Bibi has given us for our 75th Independence Day. Consequently, we really have no choice. We must win our second War of Independence.  
Nehemia Shtrasler, HAA, 25.04.23

### **Palestinians Still Pay a Heavy Price for Israel's Independence**

(...) As most Zionists still deny the Nakba, and others - including ministers in the current government - even call for a second one, international recognition represents not just a step for historical justice but a form of protection for the Palestinian people. The fact that this year the United Nations will mark the Nakba for the first time is an important step forward. But we still face a chorus of complicit international voices that do nothing but adding salt to our wounds. (...) In Israel there is no mainstream Zionist party that does not feel proud of what we Palestinians know as the Nakba. (...) At the core of negating the Nakba, or ignoring it, is the denial of any sort of accountability, which remains the core reason why the issue of Palestine and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict remain unresolved. Ignoring the Nakba doesn't just mean whitewashing the ethnic cleansing of at least 500 villages, towns and cities, but also the imposition of a system of Jewish supremacy all over historic Palestine that perpetuates the absence of any just and lasting solution to the conflict. (...) dozens of racist laws approved by the Israeli parliament over the past 75 years include not just tools to steal Palestinian private property and prevent Pales-

tinians' right of return, but even a law banning the commemoration of the Nakba. (...) Recognizing the Nakba remains a basic requirement for justice. Seventy-five years after, we Palestinians have not forgotten. It is high time that Israelis stop their efforts to hide reality. And the international community, belatedly, should face the facts and assume their responsibility too.  
Sami Abu Shehadeh, HAA, 25.04.23

### **'If you will it, is no dream!': What would Herzl think of Israel today?**

(...) Herzl would probably say, "Yes! The con worked - I fooled them." Herzl the lawyer knew that he and his people were playing a weak hand. But Herzl the playwright, the showman, knew how to wow them - convincing czars and sultans, kings and prime ministers, that he was "King of the Jews" - and that Zionism was as central a movement then, as it actually is now, thanks to him and his fellow dreamers. (...) at this critical moment, Herzl and Zionism's other founders remind us what most of us felt this Remembrance Day and Independence Day - there's much more uniting us than dividing us, and it goes way beyond our vicious enemies. (...) Herzl appreciated the past; but, as a dreamer, a social-experimenter, and a liberal-democratic nation-builder, he was future-oriented too. (...) Every day, when 9.7 million Israelis, Jewish and non-Jewish, wake up in their beds, at home in their homeland, most know that every crane that builds, every start-up that starts, and every new investment through the Abraham Accords that appreciates, helps explain why they are safer, freer, and more prosperous than their great-grandparents would have dared imagine. And that's why Herzl would also think, it worked! It's really true - if you will it, is no dream!  
Gil Troy, JPO, 30.04.23

### **3. Moody's stuft Israel herab**

*Der andauernde Konflikt zwischen der Regierung und Kritiker\_innen der Justizreform führte erstmals zu Konsequenzen hinsichtlich einer Bewertung des Landes an den Finanzmärkten. So stufte die Ratingagentur Moody's ihren Ausblick für Israel von „positiv“ auf „stabil“ herab und signalisierte damit, dass „die institutionelle und staatliche Stärke Israels“ als nicht mehr sicher betrachtet werde. Regierungschef Benjamin Netanyahu wies die Kritik zurück. Israels Wirtschaft sei „stabil und solide“, konterte er. Tatsächlich warnen auch israelische Finanzexpert\_innen vor möglichem Schaden für die*

*Wirtschaft. Sollte der Konflikt nicht zeitnah beigelegt werden oder sich gar noch zuspitzen, sei mit Steuereinbußen und einem Rückgang der Konjunktur zu rechnen. Schon jetzt seien ausländische Investitionen erkennbar rückläufig und der Wert des Shekels ist in den vergangenen Wochen drastisch gesunken.*

### **For Now, the Moody's Downgrade Is Netanyahu's Problem, Not Ours**

If these were normal times in Israel, Moody's decision (...) to lower Israel's credit rating outlook to "stable" from "positive" would have been little noticed. (...) But these aren't normal times: The government is in the process of administering a self-inflicted wound with judicial reform and reacts angrily and irrationally every time a new doctor urges it to stop. Over the past two decades, (...) the shekel never weakened against the dollar as it did over the last several days (...). Having failed (...) to convince Moody's to change its latest verdict, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich disparaged Moody's appreciation of Israeli society's underlying strength and lack of constitutional expertise. (...) But interestingly, they made no attempt to defend judicial overhaul as beneficial for the economy, and it is just as well they didn't. (...) The bottom line is that the economy remains in good shape, and (...) Tel Aviv Stock Exchange barely moved (...) while the dollar continued its gains against the shekel, they were insignificant. (...) The government is in negotiations with the opposition about a compromise plan, and the Moody's action will no doubt strengthen the opposition's hand. Indeed, if Netanyahu regards Israel's economy and its thriving high-tech industry as an important part of his legacy he does not want to risk, the Moody's downgrade might even be something akin to a royal flush for the overhaul's opponents. The other reason is that if the judicial overhaul is enacted, it means that Netanyahu & Company are putting Israel on a path it will struggle to ever leave (...). If the economy isn't growing as it used to (...), it will no longer be politically easy for future governments to limit deficits and lower taxes. The magic of deregulation and free markets that Netanyahu and Smotrich seem to think will compensate for anxiety about the future of the courts can only work in an environment where government isn't corrupt and ensures a level playing field, and where businesses can count on free, fair and independent courts. Without these, "free markets" are nothing but a recipe for crony capitalism and slow economic growth. The judicial overhaul

pulls the rug out from under the system that has ensured Israel a good credit rating. Fortunately for us, Moody's has given Netanyahu an opportunity to elegantly abandon the judicial overhaul on economic grounds. (...)

David Rosenberg, HAA, 16.04.23

### **Why boycotts of Israel are never kosher**

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu may have thought that he was initiating a truce in the battle over judicial reform when he paused efforts to pass his legislative initiative. But the demonstrations against the effort to introduce some democratic checks and balances into the system have continued (...). The debate about it also continues elsewhere (...) serious is the blowback from the open letter to Netanyahu issued last month by 255 US Jewish business leaders in which they threatened to halt investments in the Jewish state unless his efforts to reform the judiciary were shelved. (...) There is nothing new about liberal American Jews taking sides in Israeli politics. Everyone is entitled to their point of view about how Israel should be governed. (...) What isn't legitimate is their desire to use their financial clout in this manner. Calls to re-evaluate investment are a body blow to the country's efforts to thrive and maintain its economy. To do so in order to aid one side in political battles is disgraceful. (...) ever since the anti-Bibi resistance started taking to the streets shortly after Netanyahu's government was sworn in, the unintended consequence of their claims that the prime minister wishes to destroy democracy is to validate the propaganda of the BDS movement. And though the threat to re-evaluate investment is not the same as a boycott, to those Americans not familiar with the issues, it sounds very similar to calls for BDS resolutions. (...) threats to disinvest from Israel over judicial reform are not just wrongheaded. They also make it much more difficult, if not impossible, for the pro-Israel community to oppose BDS campaigns and to push for anti-BDS legislation. (...) Boycotts or disinvestment campaigns of Israel are wrong, no matter what the motivations of those calling for them may be. (...)

Jonathan S. Tobin, IHY, 16.04.23

### **Lapid shouldn't be campaigning against Israel in the US**

(...) Yair Lapid did enormous harm to Israel, American Jewry and US-Israel relations during his Passover trip to the United States, by demonizing Israel's democratically-elected government as "extremist" and by telling American Jews, Jewish leaders and

Democratic politicians to oppose the Israeli government and the proposed, much-needed Israeli democratic judicial reforms. (...) Lapid's traitorous trip is a disgrace that has cemented his status as head of the "disloyal Opposition." Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu paused the needed judicial reforms as the Opposition relentlessly demanded as it was the only way they agreed to negotiate. Yet Lapid is continuing to use the issue to sow anarchy, and to foment outside foreign pressures that trample upon the will of the Israeli public, sovereignty and democracy. (...) telling American politicians, Jews and Jewish leaders to pressure and oppose Israel on a domestic internal issue is a line that Lapid should surely not have crossed. Lapid needs to stop harming and endangering Israel.

Morton A. Klein, IHY, 17.04.23

#### **Israel fails to understand that perception creates reality**

(...) What had been practiced for years in the worlds of marketing, communications and politics was now more clearly and openly proclaimed: reality matters less than people's perceptions of it, especially when it comes to selling products and political activities. Sadly, this lesson has not been learned by our current Israeli political leadership during these last 15 weeks of protests against the judicial reform package that the government was trying to push through in record time. (...) there is nothing inherently wrong with Israel's economy. Prior to the start of the current unrest, inflation was under control, unemployment was low, the shekel was the strongest it has ever been (...), people were living generally good lives, the investment community had faith in Israel's future and Israel was rated as the fourth happiest place on earth. (...) Moody's dropped Israel's financial rating from "positive" to "stable" reflecting their concern over the potential effect of the proposed judicial reform. (...) nothing has really occurred in the economy to cause this reaction other than Moody's perception that something terrible is going to happen if the reform goes through. (...) the fact is that the strength of the Israeli economy is very much dependent on the way economists look at us and their perception of where things will go if an uncompromised judicial reform moves ahead. They don't need to be experts in constitutional law, nor do they need a doctorate in governmental structure. All they need is to harbor a fear that this will move in the wrong direction for them to voice their concerns and cause an economic downturn here. (...) The sooner our government understands that the sooner they

will address the public relations issues attendant to the planned judicial reform and then seek a compromise that will re-establish stability in the economy. And the sooner the better before we reach the point of no return.

Sherwin Pomerantz, JPO, 18.04.23

## **4. Medienquerschnitt**

### **Der Preis für einen regionalen Frieden**

#### **Israel Strengthens Iran's Growing Status in the Region**

(...) Netanyahu acknowledged that "In many ways [peace with Saudi Arabia] "would end the Arab-Israeli conflict," potentially paving the path for talks with the Palestinians. It's been a long time since we've heard such precise truths from Netanyahu. Diplomatic relations with the richest oil superpower could truly be a game changer in the Arab-Palestinian arena, as well as on the Iranian front. But as opposed to cigars and Champagne, for regional peace you have to pay. The price is noted in the Arab Peace Initiative of March 2002, which celebrated its 21st birthday last month in the House of Saud. In return for peace and normalization with all Muslim states, Israel must permit the establishment of a Palestinian state in a majority of the territory it captured in 1967 (...) and a negotiated resolution of the refugee problem. The initiative is expected to win the complete approval of the Arab League summit in Riyadh in May. There is no chance that the Saudi host will abandon its protegee for an embassy in Israel, whose cabinet includes settlers on steroids who don't recognize the existence of the Palestinian people and who threaten to harm al-Aqsa Mosque. Netanyahu can't even sell a ticket to the White House's rear entrance anymore. (...) After Israel's 75th Memorial Day, let every Hebrew mother know that a regional war is not inevitable. Let every Hebrew father know that regional peace is not a crazy fantasy.

Akiva Eldar, HAA, 26.04.23

#### **Ausnahmeregelung beim Wehrdienst für Jeschiwa-Studenten**

#### **Haredi draft bill, a new low for egalitarian service**

Israeli lawmakers have been dealing with the question of military service for ultra-Orthodox men, for decades but may now be reaching new lows in their

response to the need for an egalitarian and united Israeli society. (...) In the establishment of the government, the Haredi factions demanded legislation that would override the court's ability to cancel laws passed in the Knesset, with an eye specifically on a draft bill. They seek a bill that would allow Haredi men who are studying in religious institutions, to avoid military service. Currently, 33% of Israeli men do not enlist and half of them are from the ultra-Orthodox sector (...). Those are irrefutable facts that must be recognized before any discussion on the participation of the Haredi community in the IDF, begins. (...) The expected solution acceptable to the coalition would ensure legislation that would excuse ultra-Orthodox men from service now, while the military would have to make do with promises for compensation for those who do serve, down the road. Either way, Israeli society must face up to the truth: Israel will not have egalitarian service for all and that will not change. (...) Men and women (...) should be compensated according to their service, enjoy considerable tax exemptions, and have access to housing and employment after they complete their compulsory service – ensured by law.

Yossi Yehoshua, JPO, 17.04.23

HAA = Haaretz

YED = Yedioth Ahronoth / Ynetnews

JPO = Jerusalem Post

IHY = Israel HaYom

TOI = Times of Israel

GLO = Globes

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