Netanyahu Told the Truth

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The Arabs particularly the Palestinians are mad at Netanyahu's speech of June 14, 2009. It is deemed militant, extremist, hawkish and destructive of what they call the peace process. Even they are unhappy about the White House that described the speech as a step forward. In this speech, the Israeli Prime Minister totally denied the Palestinian national rights. Although he didn't talk about the Palestinian right to self-determination, the denial is built in and implicit in the whole speech.

Netanyahu strongly asserted his conviction that Israel exists on the historical land of the Jews, with emphasis on the West Bank (which he called Yahuda and Shomron) as part of this land, but recognized that there are Palestinians living on this land. He said that Israel should be recognized as a Jewish state by the Palestinians, and if they do so together with strictly observing the needs of Israeli security they will be granted a disarmed entity (which he called a state) that commits itself to Israel's security. He said that the refugee problem should be solved outside Israel, and Jerusalem will ever remain the unified capital of Israel. He committed himself to more settlement activities.

I don't see why the Arabs and the Palestinians are mad. Those who signed the Oslo and Taba Accords knew beforehand that Israel would never reach an agreement with any Arab party without observing Israel's security and conceding the right of return. The Palestinian leadership practically conceded the right of return at the very moment it recognized Israel, and committed itself to Israel's security as it accepted to fight what is called Palestinian terrorism. The Palestinian leadership accepted the Geneva initiative that indirectly denies the Palestinian right of return, and has authorized Dayton, the American general, to recruit and train Palestinians on how to fight terrorism; i. e. to fight other Palestinians.

The Palestinian leadership has always warned (since 1994) that settlement activities jeopardize the negotiations, but building new settlements, enlarging existing ones, confiscating land, uprooting trees, and demolishing houses went on together with the negotiations. This is also true for Jerusalem which has been under a relentless process of social, economic and cultural transformation.

The Palestinian leadership hasn't been honest with the Palestinian people. It has been saying something and ratifying something else.

Netanyahu hasn't announced a policy that is radically different from the policies of other Israeli governments whether led by labor or Kadema parties. Only Netanyahu indirectly pledged to continue what his predecessors started, and to adopt the same policies. What makes Netanyahu a ghost while other prime ministers doves? Netanyahu tells the truth. Apparently, Arab and Palestinian leaders don’t care about the truth, they only hate to be told the truth.

If the Palestinian leadership is truly concerned, it should renounce the accords with Israel, insist on Palestinian national unity, seek new approaches toward the realization of the Palestinian national rights and find ways to meet the expenses of the daily life of the Palestinians. This isn’t a difficult task, and all of what it needs is free will.