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Much Pressure on Israel

Will Netanyahu be able to preserve his country's security?

Unrelenting pressure is being applied on Prime Minister Netanyahu to make ever-more-dangerous concessions to the Palestinians. The recent Wye Plantation Conference was only a foretaste of what is going to be demanded from Israel in the so-called "final status negotiations." What follows are some areas in which demands will be made and pressure will be applied.

What are the facts?

Land for Peace. The whole concept is absurd. Never in the history of the world has any nation returned lands to those who have attacked it. Even so, in line with the Camp David accord, Israel has yielded the vast Sinai to Egypt. It has yielded Gaza and about 40% of the "West Bank" to the Palestinians. Over 90% of the Arab population of the territories is under the control of the Palestinian Authority. What else is expected of a country that occupies only a fraction of 1% of the lands occupied by the Arabs?

And shouldn't land for peace work both ways? Shouldn't the Arabs give up some land to get peace? Or why not just simply "peace for peace"?

A Palestinian State.

Israel could not survive if Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") were in unfriendly hands. And, especially in light of the experience since the "handshake," during which time more Israelis were killed by Palestinian terrorists than in any comparable previous period, there can be little question of the enduring hostility of the Arabs. The "West Bank" mountain ridges dominate the narrow waist of Israel, in which over 70% of the Jewish population, 80% of its industrial base, and the most important military installations are located. The Palestinians would not need an army to make life in Israel impossible. Moveable Katyusha rockets would dominate the area. Israel needs to keep strategic control of the "West Bank," without which it would not be defensible.

Return of the "Refugees". Population transfers have occurred throughout history. In 1923, Greece and Turkey agreed to a resettlement of 2 million Greeks and 800,000 Turks; in 1945, the resettlement of 3 million Germans from Poland and Czechoslovakia

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was arranged. Following the collapse of its North African empire, France accepted close to 1.5 million people. More than 12 million(!) Muslims and Hindus were exchanged between India and Pakistan. Israel has recognized this historical necessity. But the "Arab Nation", with its enormous wealth and vast under-populated lands, has stubbornly refused to face facts. Instead of allowing the Palestinians who left Israel in 1948 (and their descendants) to be integrated into their societies, they have, for the past fifty years,

kept them in miserable "refugee camps" and have encouraged them to plot vengeance and terrorism. Return of these people to Israel, including Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") is impossible.

Neither Israel nor any Palestinian entity could absorb them. There is not enough land and not enough water. It would be as unthinkable as for those 3 million Germans to return to Poland and the Czech republic or, for that matter, for the 800,000 Jews who fled or were expelled from the Arab countries to return to their original homes.

Jerusalem. Before the end of the 1967 Six-Day War, no claims to Jerusalem being a Moslem holy city or the capital of any Arab country were asserted. But for over two thousand years, Jews have been living in Jerusalem and they have been the majority population since the 19th century. Why should they give up their capital, their holy city as far back as memory goes—or even any part of it? The Moslems have their holy cities, Mecca and Medina, and they have 22 Arab capitals. There are important Arab cities in the "West Bank", under full control of the Palestinian Authority. But Jerusalem is the eternal and indivisible capital of the Jewish State.

These are the most important issues that Netanyahu and his government will have to confront in the final status talks. As to Jewish "settlements" in the "West Bank": Netanyahu has made clear that Jews have the right to live in any part of the land of Israel, all of the land west of the Jordan River. And why not? How is it possible that 160,000 Jews living among 1 million Arabs in the "West Bank" should be an obstacle to peace if over 1 million Arabs live within the "green line" of Israel? They don't have to fear for their lives and nobody considers them an obstacle to peace. By standing firm on his campaign promises, not yielding to pressure from any source, and by not allowing Israel to be strategically weakened, Mr. Netanyahu will be true to his campaign promise and will bring peace with security, *shalom batuach*, to Israel and to the entire Middle East.

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