



# I Will Try Harder

“You never discuss real issues. You have no accountability. Appeasement is all that matters to you. The world has stopped taking you seriously (or has it *ever* taken you seriously?). To sum it up: you are insignificant!” This is essentially what a Westerner who works in Palestine told a friend of mine not too long ago.

Oh dear! The gentleman might as well have gone on to say that our social harmony is abysmal. Our human rights record is nothing to write home about. Our economy is in shambles. Corruption and nepotism are widespread. Our tribal loyalty takes precedence over the rule of law. We also have two competing authorities with two diametrically opposed narratives. Did I miss anything? It sure sounds as though we are the worst people that have ever walked on this earth, doesn't it?

The context of the criticism noted above was a conversation with the author of an article sent to us for publication. We felt that, in keeping with TWiP's professional standards, we needed to tone down the text of the article. The author eventually bit his tongue and accepted our modified version, possibly justifying it by thinking that toned-down criticism is better than no criticism at all. His acceptance, however, created a conflict within the author himself for having agreed to compromise, to appease; it was the very thing he was criticizing. Reality is a bitch, I suppose!

A teacher once asked students of various nationalities to write an essay on the African elephant. A British student wrote about the meticulous life of the African elephant. A French student wrote about the love life of the African elephant. And you guessed it, the Palestinian student's essay was entitled: The African Elephant and the Question of Palestine! This is who we are – we think we are the center of world! As tempting as it is, I will not take a defensive stand towards the Western gentleman's accusation. Maybe he is right. I can only promise that I personally will do my best to make things better. I will try harder.

Long live Palestine!

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Publisher

