



The Last Word

# The Israeli Elections

I believe that the return of Netanyahu and the rise of the extreme, racist right are two signs that indicate the terminal stage of the already moribund occupation. There is a clear bankruptcy regarding the ability to produce leadership elites, which is illustrated by bringing back a failed former leader, who happens to be on trial on corruption charges, and who effectively has no options to present to the public about how to get out of the country's predicaments. The only possible value in Netanyahu's return is a desert fantasy that people can now sleep at night without worrying about the monsters "out there" trying to get them. On the other hand, as all political and social experts concur, the rise of the extreme right is a recipe for explosion and the worst-case scenario for the state.

Many Palestinians are quite concerned about the rise to power of people such as Ben Gvir and Smotrich. Based on what Palestinians have seen from these newly elected leaders, whose ticket was based solely on hatred of Arabs, their concern is certainly legitimate. However, we need to remind ourselves that most wars in the area have been waged by labor governments, and incidentally, most American wars have been initiated by Democrats. So the perception that the left, or center-left, gives more hope for a solution is only a myth. Also, it's as if people believe that former Israeli governments did not include extremist ministers, parliament members, or even prime ministers! My column is too short to list them. If we ask ourselves what is the difference, for us Palestinians, between Netanyahu's twelve-year rule and the rule of other governments, including Yair Lapid's, the answer would be: almost nothing – whether in terms of brutality and aggression, or in terms of limited options and margins of maneuver.

The returning Netanyahu is incapable of waging war and has nothing new that would even threaten war. It is sufficient to consider pulling back on his threat to withdraw from the maritime demarcation agreement with Lebanon. He was effectively forced to change his position and accept the agreement. In my opinion, Netanyahu's immediate, huge problem is how to form a government with extremist partners who demand key ministries that he cannot give because of the expected vehement opposition from the Israeli military establishment, the Americans, and the Europeans who are obsessed with the desire to avoid any escalation. Buckle up, Palestine, we're in for a new ride that I hope will hasten our independence.

Long live Palestine!

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Publisher

