

Netanyahu: 'Israel Must Choose Life'

Let's put it this way: If Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu decided to jump into the 2016 presidential race, I suspect he would be far and away the front-runner for both the GOP and Democratic nominations.

He has enormous bipartisan support at the grass roots and overwhelming support on Capitol Hill.

I lost count of how many standing ovations Netanyahu received from the 14,000 pro-Israel activists gathered for the 2014 American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) conference.

It was a far warmer reception than he received from President Obama at the White House on Monday.

His themes were large and consequential.

The prime minister:

- Urged the administration to intensify, not relax, pressure on Iran to give up its bid for nuclear weapons.
- Said he was ready to make a "historic peace" with the Palestinians and urged Mahmoud Abbas to recognize Israel as a Jewish state once and for all: "No excuses. No delays. It's time."
- Quoted from the Bible, specifically from Deuteronomy 30, saying, "My friends, on behalf of the people of Israel, I bring you message from Jerusalem, the cradle of our common civilization, the crucible of our shared values. It's a message from the Bible. [In Hebrew.] 'I have put before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Choose life so that you and your offspring may live.' Ladies and gentlemen, my friends, never forget—America and Israel stand for life. We stand together on the

right side of the moral divide. We stand together on the right side of history.”

It is so interesting to hear an Israeli prime minister quote from the Bible. You might think it would be normal, but it’s not. So few Israeli leaders cite Scriptures, at least in English speeches or translations that I hear or read.

How will the speech be received by the president? That remains to be seen. The Palestinian leadership is already denouncing the speech. (See below.)

I urge you to read or watch the full speech, as well as the transcripts of what Netanyahu and the president said at the White House on Monday. Read the full, official text of the prime minister’s speech to AIPAC. Watch the video of the prime minister’s speech to AIPAC. Read the full transcript of Obama and Netanyahu statements at the White House on Monday.

Here’s the latest coverage of the Prime minister’s AIPAC speech:

AP: “Netanyahu to Abbas: ‘Recognize the Jewish State’”

Reuters: “Netanyahu Warns on Iran, Urges No Palestinian ‘Excuses’”

CBS News: “Netanyahu: Nuclear Iran Would Open a ‘Pandora’s box’ of Proliferation”

Ynet News: “Netanyahu at AIPAC: Ready for ‘Historic Peace’, but Palestinians Must Recognize Jewish State,” going on to say, “Day after Obama talks, prime minister says Iran must not be allowed to obtain nukes, he will do what he must to protect Israel.”

Haaretz: “Netanyahu: Israel Prepared to Make Peace, but Abbas Must Recognize Jewish State,” and continuing with, “Millions in the Arab world could benefit from Israeli technology and innovation, prime minister tells AIPAC conference.”

Jerusalem Post: "Netanyahu at AIPAC: Palestinians Must Join Israel, US on the Right Side of the Moral Divide"

Times of Israel: "Without Getting Personal, Netanyahu Hits Back at Obama," going on to say, "PM in AIPAC address argues extensively against White House thinking on Iran and Palestinians, while making just a single reference to the president."

Haaretz: "Palestinians: Netanyahu Speech Effectively Ends Negotiations," continuing with, "Labor leader Herzog 'believes less and less' that Netanyahu wants to lead Israel to a diplomatic solution."

Here are some the tweets I sent out (or retweeted) as the prime minister was speaking:

- "It's wonderful to see so many evangelical Christians attending #aipac2014. Now is the time for us to be standing humbly w/our Jewish friends"
- "@IsraeliPM Netanyahu brings greetings from Jerusalem, 'eternal undivided capital of the Jewish people' 4th standing 0"
- "Netanyahu says – 'Israel is humane. Israel is compassionate. Israel is a force for good.' (Shannon Bream, Fox News)"
- "PM Netanyahu: Israel has treated nearly 1,000 wounded Syrians. #AIPAC14 (Embassy of Israel)"
- "Netanyahu: Nasrallah says Hezbollah loves death & Israel loves life & that's why Hezbollah will win. #aipac2014"
- "Netanyahu: Nasrallah right about 1st part. Hezbollah glorifies death. Israel does sanctify life. But 'dead wrong' on 2nd part"
- "Another Bibi zinger: 'How could anyone fall for the BS in BDS' #AIPAC14 (Chemi Shalev)"
- "Good line. Netanyahu: Israel is boisterous democracy, everyone has opinion and states it. In

Israel, self-criticism is on steroids. (Herb Keinon, Jerusalem Post)”

- “I’ve completely lost track of the number of standing ovations for @IsraeliPM Netanyahu. #aipac2014”
- “@IsraeliPM Netanyahu: closes quoting from the Bible, ‘I have put before you a choice between life and death. Choose life.’ #aipac2014”

Joel C. Rosenberg is the author of numerous New York Times best-selling novels and nonfiction books, with nearly 3 million copies sold. He is also the founder of the Joshua Fund. His books include The Last Jihad (2002), The Last Days (2003), The Ezekiel Option (2005) and The Copper Scroll (2006).

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