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Netanyahu's father discusses Bibi's character, childhood: Excerpts from the exclusive Maariv interview (part III).

Posted: April 5th, 2009 | **Author:** [noam](#) | **Filed under:** [In the News](#), [The Right](#) | **Tags:** [ben zion netanyahu](#), [Benjamin Netanyahu](#), [bibi](#), [maariv](#) | [2 Comments](#) »

This is the third and final post with excerpts from Sari Makover-Belikov's 8 page interview with Benjamin Netanyahu's father, Prof. Ben Zion Netanyahu, published by Maariv. The PM's office tried to prevent this interview from being published, and for a good reason.

In this last section, Prof. Netanyahu discusses his son's character and the reasons for his failure on his previous term (some of these excerpts are available online [in Hebrew](#)). He also mentions two episodes from Netanyahu's childhood; the second one, which probably happened when Bibi was 13 or 14, is very interesting.

You can read the previous parts of the interview [here](#) and [here](#).

Prof. Ben Zion: "Bibi didn't succeed in his first term. He wasn't a very good Prime Minister. At the time, I was shocked to see how he defeated [Prime Minister] Shimon Peres who was a well-known personality, while Bibi was just a young man. I was sure he would be defeated. But I think he learned from his mistakes."

(...)

Q: What do you think of him?

A: "Benjamin, or Bibi, is, from several aspects, a great man. He can influence and motivate people to do what's necessary... he is loyal to his people, and has a sense of responsibility... he is not one who prefers the comfort of compromise just to rid himself of pressure."

Q: So much for his strengths. What are his weaknesses?

A: "... his main fault is that sometimes he doesn't choose people who are suitable for their positions. He doesn't always see clearly their advantages and disadvantages, but rather falls for their deceiving ways. Sometimes he learns of their disadvantages only after the bond [with these people] is already made and cannot be broken..."

(...)

Q: To what extent is he influenced by your opinions?

A: “Sometimes I feel Bibi is influenced from a very small age, and sometimes I don’t. We don’t have the same opinions always...”

Q: And still, how much do you think you’ve influenced his opinions today?

A: “I have a general idea. Bibi might aim for the same goals as mine, but he keeps to himself the ways to achieve them, because if he expressed them, he would expose his goals.”


Q: is that what you wish?

A: “No, I just believe that it could be so. Because he is smart. Because he is very careful. Because he has his ways to handle himself. I am talking about tactics regarding the revealing of theories that people with different ideology might not accept. That’s why he doesn’t expose them: because of the reaction from his enemies as well as from the people whose support he seeks. It’s an assumption, but it might be so.”

On Netanyahu as a kid:

Prof. Ben Zion recalls his son wasn’t interested in politics very much. “He only cared about being a good student, he only cared for history and math. He was a firm kid... I remember once he and his brother Yoni made a big noise next to where I was working. I came out to them and acted as if I was trying to catch them, though I never laid my hand on a kid. Bibi ran away, but when he saw I was getting close, he turned towards me and stood up like a tank, saying ‘You wouldn’t dare.’ I was shocked. I looked at him with amazement and admiration.

“Bibi stood up for what he thought he deserved. He had a friend, the son of Dr. Halperin. They both went to an excellent school, from which some students got picked to the Hebrew University High School [the most prestigious high school in Jerusalem]. A week before the year’s end, they announced who got picked, and Bibi’s name wasn’t mentioned. One day, it was announced that Halperin got picked as well. Bibi was so upset, and Halperin said to him: “what do you think, not anyone gets picked, only those who deserve it.” And that upset Bibi even more. He came home and ran to his bed crying. He hit the pillow with his hands and shouted ‘it’s not fair, it’s not fair’. And while he was at it, it was found out that he was chosen too. Then he said ‘I knew that my name would be there too.’”

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1. 1 [canoerib](#) said at 4:48 pm on April 9th, 2009:

Interesting but rather abbreviated. Surely there was more ...

2. 2 [noam](#) said at 9:12 am on April 10th, 2009:

did you check out my other two posts regarding this interview?

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