

Netanyahu's rapturous welcome

From Andrew Bolt's website, 4 Mar 2015

To say that Netanyahu's welcome was warm would be an understatement: it was rapturous. President Obama has never gotten such an enthusiastic reception for a State of the Union speech before the same audience. And the enthusiasm was bipartisan: Democrats were on their feet cheering, just like Republicans...

Why is that significant?

American support for Israel has always been bipartisan, a fact that Netanyahu emphasized... It isn't a matter of political clout; as we have noted before, some of the states where Israel is most popular have almost no Jewish population. Americans support Israel out of ideological conviction, as well as religious affinity in the case of many Christians and Jews.

That broad support by the American people was manifested in the reception that Congress gave the Prime Minister this morning. Whatever partisan winds may be blowing at the moment, Senators and Congressmen know what their constituents think. Upon reflection, I suspect that this may be why the Obama administration so strongly objected to Netanyahu's addressing Congress (which, as he pointed out, he had already done on a couple of occasions). Netanyahu has been arguing against allowing Iran to acquire nuclear weapons and ICBMs for quite a while now. Perhaps the administration didn't fear his making the arguments one more time, as much as it feared what we saw before the speech even began: a stark demonstration of where the American people stand in the conflict between Iran's mullahs and, not just Israel, but Western civilization.

Netanyahu's message

Netanyahu's message to Congress and the American people was straightforward, analytic, and difficult to dispute on almost all fronts. First, Iran is the implacable enemy of both Israel and the U.S. Second, Iran is on the march... Third, the nuclear deal that, according to publicly available information, is likely to emerge would "all but guarantee that Iran gets nuclear weapons" for two reasons. First, it would leave Iran with a vast nuclear infrastructure and therefore with the ability to breakout to a nuclear weapon in a year or less. It could break out even more quickly if it cheated on inspections, as it has consistently done in the past.

Second, because the deal reportedly will expire in ten years or so, it would leave Iran with the ability to obtain nukes without violating a single provision of the deal. When the deal expires, Iran could have as many as 190,000 centrifuges (the number the regime says it aspires to), plus the missiles needed to deliver nuclear warheads anywhere in the world. Thus, Iran would be weeks away from being a major nuclear power.

Two rationales to defend the deal

Netanyahu addressed the two rationales put forth to defend the deal: (1) that Iran's behavior will change for the better after a deal and (2) that there is no alternative to the deal other than war. The first rationale is absurd on its face. As Netanyahu said, with the lifting of sanctions, the Iranian regime will be strengthened, and thus have even less incentive to change for the better than it does now.

As for alternatives, Netanyahu argued that the alternative to a bad deal is a much better deal. Noting that Iran needs the deal more than the U.S. does, he predicted that if the U.S. holds out for better terms, with the threat of sanctions in the foreground, Iran will make significant concessions.

This was the only part of the speech that didn't entirely persuade me.

Netanyahu concluded with his message for President Obama. Invoking the holocaust and noting that for the first ten in 100 generations the Jewish people can defend themselves, Netanyahu promised that "even if Israel has to stand alone, it will stand."

Netanyahu's speech

Key quotes from Netanyahu's speech:

- But Iran's regime is not merely a Jewish problem, any more than the Nazi regime was merely a Jewish problem. ... So, too, Iran's regime poses a grave threat, not only to Israel, but also the peace of the entire world...
- Don't be fooled. The battle between Iran and ISIS doesn't turn Iran into a friend of America... When it comes to Iran and ISIS, the enemy of your enemy is your enemy...
- We must always remember the greatest danger facing our world is the marriage of militant Islam with nuclear weapons. ... That deal would not prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons. It would all but guarantee that Iran will get those weapons...
- Why should Iran's radical regime change for the better when it can enjoy the best of both worlds: aggression abroad, prosperity at home?

Obama has outraged even Muslim allies

It says something about how Obama has outraged even Muslim allies by his Iran policies that the official Saudi press runs articles backing Netanyahu. [In the Saudi daily Al-Jazirah, columnist Dr. Ahmad Al-Faraj](#) says Obama, "one of the worst American presidents", is working to sign a deal with Iran at the expense of America's long-time allies in the Gulf, and Netanyahu's campaign against it is justified:

I will conclude by saying the following: Since Obama is the godfather of the prefabricated revolutions in the Arab world, and since he is the ally of political Islam, [which is] the caring mother of [all] the terrorist organizations, and since he is working to sign an agreement with Iran that will come at the expense of the U.S.'s longtime allies in the Gulf, I am very glad of Netanyahu's firm stance and [his decision] to speak against the nuclear agreement at the American Congress despite the Obama administration's anger and fury. I believe that Netanyahu's conduct will serve our interests, the people of the Gulf, much more than the foolish behavior of one of the worst American presidents. Do you agree with me?

Another Saudi paper sides with Israel in warning against Obama's plan to go easy on Iran From the Saudi-owned [Al Arabiya](#):

The Israeli PM managed to hit the nail right on the head when he said that Middle Eastern countries are collapsing and that "terror organizations, mostly backed by Iran, are filling in the vacuum".

The danger to Israel and other U.S. allies

In just a few words, Mr. Netanyahu managed to accurately summarize a clear and present danger, not just to Israel (which obviously is his concern), but to other U.S. allies in the region.

What is absurd, however, is that despite this being perhaps the only thing that brings together Arabs and Israelis (as it threatens them all), the only stakeholder that seems not to realize the danger of the situation is President Obama, who is now infamous for being the latest pen-pal of the Supreme Leader of the World's biggest terrorist regime: Ayottallah Ali Khamenei...

Indeed, it is Mr. Obama's controversial take on managing global conflicts that raises serious questions. ...The real Iranian threat is not JUST the regime's nuclear ambitions, but its expansionist approach and state-sponsored terrorism activities which are still ongoing.