



Written by [Jack Kenny](#) on February 8, 2015

Baneful Boehner and Bibi Show Coming Soon to Capitol Hill

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin “Bibi” Netanyahu’s planned speech on Iran before a joint session of the U.S. Congress next month is creating controversy in Jerusalem well as in Washington, the [World Post](#), a partnership of the *Huffington Post* and the Berggruen Institute, reported. Labor Party leader Isaac Herzog, Netanyahu’s opponent in Israel’s March 17 election, called Saturday for the prime minister to cancel the trip.



Zehava Galon of the leftist Meretz party did the same, warning that the scheduled March 3 address on Capitol Hill is already causing, in Galon’s words, “serious damage to Israel’s strategic relations with the United States.”

Vice President Biden and an unknown number of congressional Democrats will miss the speech. Biden’s schedule calls for him to be overseas at the time, according to information released from his office Friday, though there was no mention of just where the vice president would be. Speaker of the House John Boehner’s decision to invite the prime minister without consulting the either the White House or his Democratic colleagues has enraged Democrats, who see the Ohio Republican’s maneuver as an attempt to embarrass President Obama and build support for new and harsher sanctions against Iran.

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Obama has promised to veto new sanctions while he pursues negotiations with Tehran over its nuclear program. Netanyahu, who calls Iran’s potential for developing a nuclear weapon an “existential threat” to Israel, has repeatedly called for a more confrontational policy toward Iran and is expected to do so again in his March 3 address.

Neither President Obama nor Secretary of State John Kerry plans to meet with the prime minister during his Washington visit, thereby avoiding the appearance of favoring or endorsing Netanyahu a mere two weeks before the Israeli election. But it is also clear the president, whose relations with the prime minister have often been strained, has taken no small offense at Boehner for extending, and Netanyahu for accepting, an invitation to a foreign head of state without consulting the president. Barring a change of plans, *Newsweek* noted, the event will mark “the first time in the 66-year history of the U.S.-Israel relationship that the White House has closed its doors to a visiting Israeli prime minister.”

Both Boehner and Netanyahu have been drawing criticism from across the political spectrum over what appears to be an effort to torpedo negotiations with Iran in favor of the hardline approach favored by Netanyahu and many congressional Republicans. Noting the heavy support for Obama among Jewish voters in America, David Corn, [writing in the left-wing publication Mother Jones](#), addressed both the diplomatic and political fallout from the prime minister’s next visit to Washington.

And now Netanyahu is partnering up with Boehner to kick Obama in the teeth and sabotage one of



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the president's top diplomatic priorities. He is essentially telling American Jews to get lost: *I have no regard for the president you support and no regard for your own political needs and desires.* [Emphasis in the original.]

Even at the neoconservative Fox News Channel, where commentators generally support Republican policies, Netanyahu's visit has already drawn [negative reviews](#) from hosts Chris Wallace and Shepherd Smith. To Wallace, it is downright "wicked."

And to make you get a sense of really how, forgive me, wicked, this whole thing is, the Secretary of State John Kerry met with the Israeli Ambassador to the United States for two hours on Tuesday, Ron Dermer. The ambassador never mentioned the fact that Netanyahu was in negotiations and finally agreed to come to Washington, not to see the president, but to go to Capitol Hill, speak to a joint session of Congress and criticize the president's policy. I have to say I'm shocked.

Netanyahu's government, Smith said, seems to think "we don't pay attention and that we're just a bunch of complete morons, the United States citizens, as if we wouldn't pick up on what's happening here."

Perhaps the best commentary on the matter was written 219 years ago. In the famous Farewell Address he penned in 1796, George Washington warned his countrymen against the "insidious wiles of foreign influence," which finds opportunities to "tamper with domestic factions, to practice the arts of seduction, to mislead public opinion, to influence or awe the public councils." Foreign influence, said Washington, "is one of the most baneful foes of republican government."

Surely, our Republic has suffered enough "insidious wiles" without adding the baneful influence of the Boehner and Bibi Show, coming soon to our nation's capital.

Photo of Speaker Boehner with Prime Minister Netanyahu in 2011: AP Images



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