

March 8, 2015

More on Netanyahu's speech. This time from [Mark Steyn](#).

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And [Jennifer Rubin](#).

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... Then there is [Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper](#), a brave and stalwart friend of the United States and of Israel. In a speech in Israel last year, Harper had this to say about the BDS movement (recall that Secretary of State John Kerry said that if Israel didn't make a deal with the Palestinians, there'd be nothing to stop the [BDS movement's growth](#).)

"Some civil-society leaders today call for a boycott of Israel. ... Most disgracefully of all, some openly call Israel an apartheid state. Think about that. Think about the twisted logic and outright malice behind that. A state, based on freedom, democracy and the rule of law, that was founded so Jews can flourish as Jews, and seek shelter from the shadow of the worst racist experiment in

history. That is condemned, and that condemnation is masked in the language of anti-racism. It is nothing short of sickening." ...

Charles Krauthammer has more.

... It was an important moment, especially because of the libel being perpetrated by some that Netanyahu is trying to get America to go to war with Iran. This is as malicious a calumny as Charles Lindbergh's charge on Sept. 11, 1941, that "the three most important groups who have been pressing this country toward war are the British, the Jewish and the Roosevelt administration."

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Compare that to a very partial list of nations for which America has fought and for which so many Americans have fallen: Kuwait, Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia, Vietnam, Korea, and every West European country beginning with France (twice).

Change the deal, strengthen the sanctions, give Israel a free hand. Netanyahu offered a different path in his clear, bold and often moving address, Churchillian in its appeal to resist appeasement. This was not Churchill of the 1940s, but Churchill of the 1930s, the wilderness prophet. Which is why for all its sonorous strength, Netanyahu's speech had a terrible poignancy. After all, Churchill was ignored.

Karl Rove is next.

... It is interesting that Mr. Obama's antipathy has recently been focused not on the planet's most evil regimes, including Iran, but on America's most dependable ally, Israel, a vibrant nation that is a champion of liberty and human rights and a beacon of freedom in a sea of oppression.

The president's behavior has provided ample additional evidence that he lacks the skills and patience to deal with allies with whom he disagrees. He and his team of public-relations geniuses couldn't have bungled this affair worse had they tried.

Jonathan Tobin posts on Tom Friedman's recycled slurs.

... Friedman concludes his piece by saying that it "rubs me the wrong way" to see a foreign leader pointing out the mistakes of an American president in front of Congress. But in that paragraph he lets us on to his real problem with the speech and the entire discussion about Iran: the existence of a solid pro-Israel coalition in Congress that thinks Netanyahu's concerns are worth a hearing. Friedman says, "I have a problem with my own Congress howling in support of a flawed foreign leader."

With this phrase he reminds us of his reaction to Netanyahu's last speech to Congress in 2011. At that time, Friedman couldn't restrain his bile and claimed that the ovations the prime minister received were "bought and paid for by the Israel lobby," a smear that was reminiscent of the Walt-Mearsheimer thesis about a vast Jewish conspiracy controlling U.S. foreign policy to benefit Israel. The point of that thinly disguised piece of anti-Semitic invective was to delegitimize supporters of Israel who had the temerity to back Netanyahu against the Obama administration's assault on the alliance between the two democracies.

Friedman didn't go quite as far as that sort of libel this time though his contempt for a Congress "howling" in support of Netanyahu betrayed his animus. But he did let down his hair a bit in an interview with Israel's Channel 2. Friedman claimed the only reason Netanyahu received tumultuous applause for his brilliant speech was that he was speaking in "Sheldon's world" a reference to casino mogul Sheldon Adelson, a leading Jewish philanthropist and pro-Israel political donor.

Whatever you may think of Adelson's politics, the point of that comment is to reintroduce Friedman's 2011 slur about Congress being purchased by a ruthless Jewish minority. This is a classic anti-Semitic trope in which Jews are accused of using money to insinuate themselves into power and subverting the interests of the nation in favor of their own agenda. It is, of course, pure tripe, since support for Israel is overwhelming throughout the country and undiminished by either the media barrage against Netanyahu or the efforts of the administration to distance itself from the Jewish state.

Friedman then claimed that had Netanyahu spoken to the real America, rather than the Congress that is supposedly owned by the Jews, he would have gotten a different response. His example of a real American venue is the University of Wisconsin. It's true that if Netanyahu or any friend of Israel were to speak at a leftist enclave such as the one in Madison, they would not be cheered. But who, other than Friedman, actually thinks that opinion there is representative of anything but the prejudices of liberal academics.

But the truth is, as a poll suggests, most Americans agree with Netanyahu on Iran, not Obama or Friedman. That's why Friedman's canard about Congress, Adelson and the "Israel lobby" is a lie. But like Obama's Iran policy, Friedman is as undaunted by the prospect of repeating untruths about Israel as his newspaper is unashamed about printing them.

Steyn On Line

The Enemy of My Enemy

Our leftie friends at *Mother Jones* put it [this way](#):

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Obama could have done this. He could have said yesterday, "Hey, my good friend Bibi and I don't see eye to eye on everything, but I'd have to be an awfully thin-skinned insecure narcissistic little dweeb to make that a capital offense, wouldn't I? So, since he's in town anyway, I've asked him to swing by the White House for an hour to shoot the breeze - and maybe we can have that dinner we missed out on the last time, right, Prime Minister? Hur-hur-hur."

In loosing off all the phony-baloney bipartisan crapola, Netanyahu reminded us how easy it is to play the game, and how small and petty Obama is by comparison. And then, without ever saying it directly, he went on to lay out (or, if you're as touchy as *Mother Jones*, "mansplain") how pathetic it is to be that small and petty at this tide in the affairs of man.

Mother Jones is right to that extent: it was a man's speech, delivered at times with oblique but intentional Churchillian flourishes - "some change, some moderation," as he said of Rouhani's Iran.

Netanyahu was especially strong on the mullahs' expansionism. He pointed out that Iran now controls four regional capitals - Damascus, Beirut, Baghdad and Sana'a. The P5+1 negotiations talk about Iran "re-joining the community of nations". Au contraire, a not insignificant number of the community of nations have joined Iran. How many more capitals would a nuclear Teheran be exercising control of?

As for the other rising hegemon - the Islamic State, now attracting regional terror partners from West Africa to the Caucasus - Netanyahu cautioned against making the usual assumptions. In this case, he said, the enemy of your enemy is your enemy.

He's right. There is nothing in our recent history to suggest that we're smart enough to play one off against the other, while simultaneously managing Erdogan's neo-Ottoman aspirations and the beleaguered Sunni oldtimers' panicky stampede to join Iran in the nuclear club. A lot of realpolitik types think that an Islamic civil war will let western civilization off the hook. In my book [After America](#), I mention en passant another recent civil war:

The Congo Civil War raged for most of the first decade of this century uncovered by CNN and The New York Times for want of any way to blame it on George W Bush. Among the estimated six million dead, many were eaten. The two parties to the conflict agreed on very little except that pygmies make an excellent entrée. Both sides hunted them down as if they were the drive-thru fast-food of big game. While regarding them as sub-human, they believed that if you roasted their flesh and ate it you would gain magical powers.

So, if the Sunni Isis/Shia Iran split is an Islamic civil war, we're the pygmies - and both sides agree that, if you roast our flesh, you'll gain, if not magical powers, at least a spike in Twitter followers and all the virgins you can handle in the hereafter.

Contentions

Looking for a world leader

by Jennifer Rubin

Looking over the past week, it is hard to miss how unfavorably President Obama compares to other world leaders. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, with excessive graciousness toward his tormentor, gave a powerful, important address. His clarity and presence command our attention. When Obama sneered at a press avail that there was nothing new in Netanyahu's remarks, he looked so very small, so very petty. (By the way, Obama has not bothered over the course of the year to give any major address in which he has included anything more than a few platitudes about Iran; he simply never makes the case for what he is doing — maybe because the rationale for appeasement is nonexistent.)

It is not just Israel's leader who regularly proves to be more clear-headed and inspiring than Obama. Consider [Czech President Milos Zeman](#), who declared at AIPAC this week: "The Czech Republic has been the single island of democracy in central Europe. And [Israel] is the single island of democracy in the Middle East. And there must be the solidarity between those islands against the ocean of dictatorship." And he announced his approach to fighting jihadists: "The first phase ... is expression of solidarity ... now we all must say, 'I am a Jew.' *Ani Yehudi*. But this is not enough. Of course, your discrimination is our discrimination. Your victims are our victims. But, our society is too hedonistic, too consumption oriented. And there is cowardness and appeasement It is not enough. What I propose is [a] systematic and coordinated fight against the bases of Islamic terrorism. ... Superpowers have many conflicts, but one common enemy: Islamic terrorism."

Then there is [Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper](#), a brave and stalwart friend of the United States and of Israel. In a speech in Israel last year, Harper had this to say about the BDS movement (recall that Secretary of State John Kerry said that if Israel didn't make a deal with the Palestinians, there'd be nothing to stop the [BDS movement's growth](#).)

Some civil-society leaders today call for a boycott of Israel. ... Most disgracefully of all, some openly call Israel an apartheid state. Think about that. Think about the twisted logic and outright malice behind that. A state, based on freedom, democracy and the rule of law, that was founded so Jews can flourish as Jews, and seek shelter from the shadow of the worst racist experiment in history. That is condemned, and that condemnation is masked in the language of anti-racism. It is nothing short of sickening.

In short, the world has grave problems, but the biggest may be that there is a complete void where the leader of the free world usually stands. Instead of a U.S. president, confident and resolute, we see a petulant figure who bad-mouths our allies, complains that options are limited, and does not bring the powers of office (militarily, rhetorically, politically) to bear to defeat aggression by evil actors and nation states. No qualms about allowing 200,000 Syrians to die? Rest easy as Iran slides into nuclear breakout capacity? He certainly does whistle in the graveyard of Western civilization.

It is not that the public is "war weary" — Obama's excuse. To the contrary, the latest [Quinnipiac poll shows](#) how supportive the public is of strong action:

American voters support 62-30 percent sending U.S. ground troops to fight ISIS in Iraq and Syria, with strong support across all party, gender and age groups, according to a Quinnipiac University National poll released [Wednesday].

Men back U.S. troop deployment 68-28 percent, while women support it 57 – 33 percent. ... A total of 69 percent of American voters are “very confident” or “somewhat confident” that the U.S. and its allies will defeat ISIS. Only 39 percent of voters are concerned that U.S. military action will go “too far” in getting involved in the situation, while 53 percent are more concerned the U.S. military “will not go far enough in stopping ISIS.”

Voters say 64-23 percent Congress should grant the authorization requested by President Barack Obama to use military force against ISIS. And voters say 72-19 percent that the U.S. should never pay ransom to terrorists who are holding American hostages. This opinion is shared by every listed group. “Send in the troops and eliminate ISIS: The resounding hardline message from Americans who say, ‘Don’t negotiate with terrorists; destroy them,’ ” said Tim Malloy, assistant director of the Quinnipiac University Poll.

When it comes to Iran the public is even more hawkish. [A new Fox News poll finds](#), “Overall, two-thirds of voters (65 percent) favor the U.S. using military action, if necessary, to stop Iran from getting nuclear weapons. Just 28 percent are opposed. To varying degrees, majorities of Republicans (81 percent), Democrats (54 percent) and independents (53 percent) agree on using force to keep Iran from becoming a nuclear power.” In direct opposition to the reported deal in the works that Netanyahu criticized, “84 percent — including 80 percent of Democrats — think it’s a bad idea to allow Iran to get nuclear weapons 10 years from now in return for agreeing it won’t obtain nukes before then.”

Why then is the Islamic State still on the march? Why can’t we force a third world country hobbled by economic restrictions to give up its nuclear weapons program? Increasingly the answer is because we have a non-leader in the White House. Presidential candidates for 2016 should pay attention to their demeanor, their policies and their language. We are looking for someone of presidential stature, who can fill that void in world leadership. This is a very, very big role, and we tend to forget under this president how real leaders act and sound. We need someone as morally astute as Zemen, as stalwart and articulate as Netanyahu, and as courageous as Harper. It’s not enough to be better than Obama or better than the other GOP competitors; we need greatness, if only the promise of it.

Washington Post **[Netanyahu’s Churchillian warning](#)** by Charles Krauthammer

Benjamin Netanyahu’s address to Congress was notable in two respects. Queen Esther got her first standing O in 2,500 years. And President Obama came up empty in [his campaign to preemptively undermine](#) Netanyahu before the Israeli prime minister could [present his case](#) on the Iran negotiations.

On the contrary. The steady stream of slights and insults turned an irritant into an international event and vastly increased the speech’s audience and reach. Instead of dramatically unveiling an Iranian nuclear deal as a *fait accompli*, Obama must now first defend his Iranian diplomacy.

In particular, [argues The Post](#), he must defend its fundamental premise. It had been the policy of every president since 1979 that Islamist Iran must be sanctioned and contained. Obama, however, is betting instead on detente to tame Iran’s aggressive behavior and nuclear ambitions.

For six years, Obama [has offered the mullahs](#) an extended hand. He has imagined that with Kissingerian brilliance he would turn the Khamenei regime into a de facto U.S. ally in pacifying the Middle East. For his pains, Obama has been rewarded with an Iran that has ramped up its aggressiveness in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Gaza and Yemen, and brazenly defied the world on uranium enrichment.

He did the same with Russia. He [offered Vladimir Putin a new detente](#). “Reset,” he called it. Putin responded by [decimating his domestic opposition](#), unleashing a vicious anti-American propaganda campaign, ravaging Ukraine and shaking the post-Cold War European order to its foundations.

Like the Bourbons, however, Obama learns nothing. He persists in believing that Iran’s radical Islamist regime can be turned by sweet reason and fine parchment into a force for stability. It’s akin to his refusal to face the true nature of the Islamic State, Iran’s Sunni counterpart. He simply can’t believe that such people actually believe what they say.

That’s what made Netanyahu’s critique of the U.S.-Iran deal so powerful. Especially his dissection of the sunset clause. In about 10 years, [the deal expires](#). Sanctions are lifted and Iran is permitted unlimited uranium enrichment with an unlimited number of centrifuges of unlimited sophistication. As the Wall Street Journal’s [Bret Stephens points out](#), we don’t even allow that for democratic South Korea.

The prime minister offered a concrete alternative. Sunset? Yes, but only after Iran changes its behavior, giving up its regional aggression and worldwide support for terror.

Netanyahu’s veiled suggestion was that such a modification — plus a significant reduction in Iran’s current nuclear infrastructure, which the Obama deal leaves intact — could produce a deal that “Israel and its [Arab] neighbors may not like, but with which we could live, literally.”

[Obama’s petulant response](#) was: “The prime minister didn’t offer any viable alternatives.” But he just did: conditional sunset, smaller infrastructure. And if the Iranians walk away, then you ratchet up sanctions, as Congress is urging, which, with collapsed oil prices, would render the regime extremely vulnerable.

And if that doesn’t work? Hence Netanyahu’s final point: Israel is prepared to stand alone, a declaration that was met with enthusiastic applause reflecting widespread popular support.

It was an important moment, especially because of [the libel being perpetrated by some](#) that Netanyahu is trying to get America to go to war with Iran. This is as malicious a calumny as [Charles Lindbergh’s charge](#) on Sept. 11, 1941, that “the three most important groups who have been pressing this country toward war are the British, the Jewish and the Roosevelt administration.”

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WSJ

How the White House Botched Bibi's Speech

The public relations assault on an ally gave the address far more attention and import.

by Karl Rove

Put aside the policy implications of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's powerful speech to Congress on Tuesday, and the dire consequences if President Obama bungles his dealings with Iran.

Instead, consider how badly the Obama administration has handled things during the six weeks since Jan. 21, when House Speaker [John Boehner](#) invited Mr. Netanyahu to address Congress. Mr. Obama and his team pride themselves on their communications prowess, but they've made a hash of the situation.

White House spokesman Josh Earnest delivered the initial response, suggesting a protocol violation and implying Mr. Netanyahu needed Mr. Obama's permission to come to the U.S. The administration was clearly piqued. That soon gave way to anger—and a series of steps to escalate the confrontation with our most stalwart ally.

Within days, the White House announced the president would not meet with the Israeli prime minister. Within a week, an unnamed senior official expressed "outrage" to the [New York Times](#), saying the White House was "angry" at Mr. Netanyahu. The Times found this "unusually sharp criticism."

In early February, Vice President [Joe Biden](#) announced he would not attend the speech and the administration reportedly encouraged congressional Democrats to boycott it. Eventually nearly 60 Democratic congressmen and senators refused to attend the speech.

Even that wasn't the end of it. The White House then orchestrated a three-day assault. On Feb. 23 Senate Democrats demanded a private meeting with Mr. Netanyahu, saying his visit "sacrifices deep and well-established cooperation on Israel" and warning of "lasting repercussions" if he refused their invitation to visit their woodshed.

In an interview on "Charlie Rose" the next day, National Security Adviser [Susan Rice](#) declared the prime minister's appearance was "destructive of the fabric of the relationship" between the U.S. and Israel.

And in congressional testimony the following day, Secretary of State [John Kerry](#) questioned Mr. Netanyahu's judgment for having supported the 2003 invasion of Iraq, saying, "We all know what happened with that decision." Mr. Kerry neglected to mention that as a U.S. senator in 2003 he voted for the war.

What the Obama administration succeeded in doing with its unceasing assault on Mr. Netanyahu was to make his speech much more significant and the setting much more dramatic than

otherwise. They took an important address and turned it into a must-see event. With the stage set, the Israeli prime minister, after beginning his address with generous praise about the president's past support of Israel, proceeded to demolish Mr. Obama's arguments one by one. It was a devastating takedown.

It was obvious in advance how the White House should have handled Mr. Netanyahu. Rather than bashing him, they should have played down his appearance. Rather than incite the party's congressional hotheads to say stupid things, the White House should have publicly discouraged a boycott by congressional Democrats. Rather than snubbing Mr. Netanyahu by fleeing the country in a graceless and petty act, Mr. Biden should have occupied his seat and applauded occasionally.

There should have been administration officials in the House chamber, even if Mr. Kerry had negotiations in Geneva to attend to. Mr. Obama's refusal to even send the U.S. ambassador to Israel to Mr. Netanyahu's address was small-minded. So was his refusal to see the prime minister while he was in Washington. Instead, Mr. Obama pointedly scheduled a meeting with congressional Democrats on trade issues to coincide with Mr. Netanyahu's Capitol Hill appearance.

Mr. Kerry's attempts last weekend to assure everyone that "the administration is not seeking to politicize this" was an admission the White House had screwed up, but it was too late.

A president who came into office promising to repair relations with our friends has made them worse—and not just with Israel but with our Arab allies, all of whom are fearful of a nuclear Iran. The administration has said and done things it cannot take back and that have united Israel and key Arab nations—against us.

It is interesting that Mr. Obama's antipathy has recently been focused not on the planet's most evil regimes, including Iran, but on America's most dependable ally, Israel, a vibrant nation that is a champion of liberty and human rights and a beacon of freedom in a sea of oppression.

The president's behavior has provided ample additional evidence that he lacks the skills and patience to deal with allies with whom he disagrees. He and his team of public-relations geniuses couldn't have bungled this affair worse had they tried.

Contentions

[The Speech and Friedman's Recycled Slurs](#)

by Jonathan S. Tobin

The Obama administration is determined to treat Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu's speech to Congress on Iran as a non-event. As negotiations with Iran continued, the White House and its apologists in both Congress and the press dismissed Netanyahu's pointed criticisms of the nuclear deal President Obama is offering the Islamist regime and acted as if he hadn't proposed a sensible alternative to his policy of appeasement and acceptance of Iran as a threshold nuclear power and, in the long run, one with weapons capacity. But that isn't enough for some of Obama's partisans in the media who aren't satisfied merely to see the administration continue on its path to disaster but wish to use this controversy to delegitimize the entire pro-Israel coalition in Washington. Unsurprisingly, *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman is at the head of the pack in this regard [but his column about the speech](#) was a triumph of incoherence and specious arguments even by the debased standards by which he has operated on the Grey Lady's op-ed page. Worse

than that, the speech gave the writer an excuse to recycle anti-Semitic slurs he floated the last time Netanyahu spoke to Congress.

Friedman didn't claim that Netanyahu misrepresented the facts about the proposed Iran deal or even dispute the danger that an Iranian bomb would represent. His problem is with what is to him an even more dangerous idea: that the security interests of Israel and the United States might overlap. He asserts that a weak deal that might prevent Iran from getting a bomb for ten years would be perfectly adequate as far as defending American security even if, as he seems to be implying, it might not be what is good for Israel or the Arab nations in the region that are every bit as upset with the administration policy as the Jewish state. Demands that Iran give up its nuclear infrastructure, something that President Obama promised in his 2012 foreign policy debate with Mitt Romney would be integral to any deal struck by the United States, are simply unrealistic and therefore must be dismissed even if that's what most Israelis and Arabs think is necessary for their security.

Friedman's right about one thing. A nuclear deal with Iran would only work if the regime changed its nature and was ready to "get right with the rest of the world," as President Obama put it. But though he likes to pose as a tough-minded analyst, he leaves unsaid the fact that no serious person thinks Iran is moderating under its current government. Nor is logical to believe that it would do so if that tyrannical, terror-supporting, anti-Semitic regime were to get the major economic boost and political prestige that would it get from a nuclear deal with the United States.

But by the end of his column, Friedman runs out of ideas or even the energy to try and square his prejudices with the facts and simply lets loose with an anti-Netanyahu rant. He argues that if Netanyahu really wanted support for his position on Iran, he'd make concessions to the Palestinians even though he knows very well that those wouldn't bring the region one inch closer to peace. In fact, Netanyahu has the tacit support of most of the Arab world for his speech. It's only the Obama administration and others obsessed with the idea that détente with Iran is possible that didn't like it.

Friedman concludes his piece by saying that it "rubs me the wrong way" to see a foreign leader pointing out the mistakes of an American president in front of Congress. But in that paragraph he lets us on to his real problem with the speech and the entire discussion about Iran: the existence of a solid pro-Israel coalition in Congress that thinks Netanyahu's concerns are worth a hearing. Friedman says, "I have a problem with my own Congress howling in support of a flawed foreign leader."

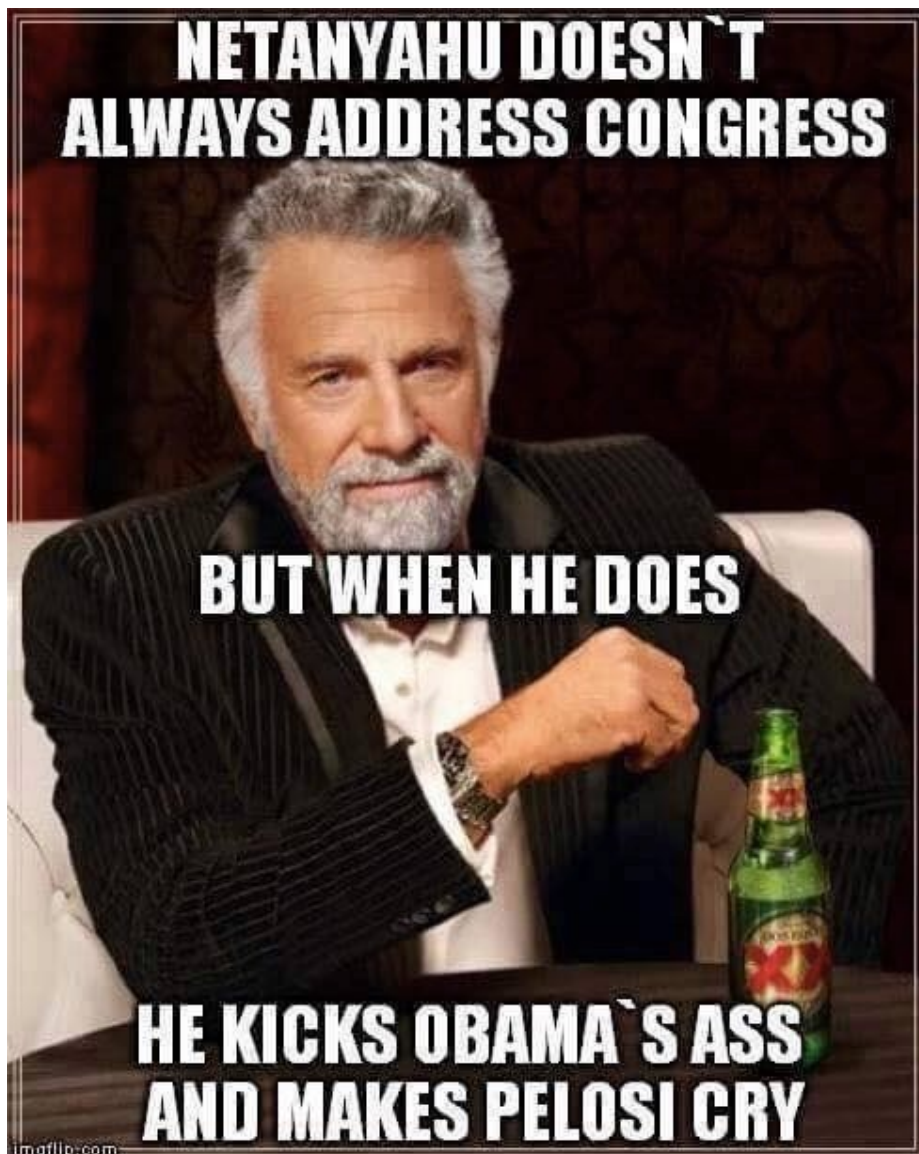
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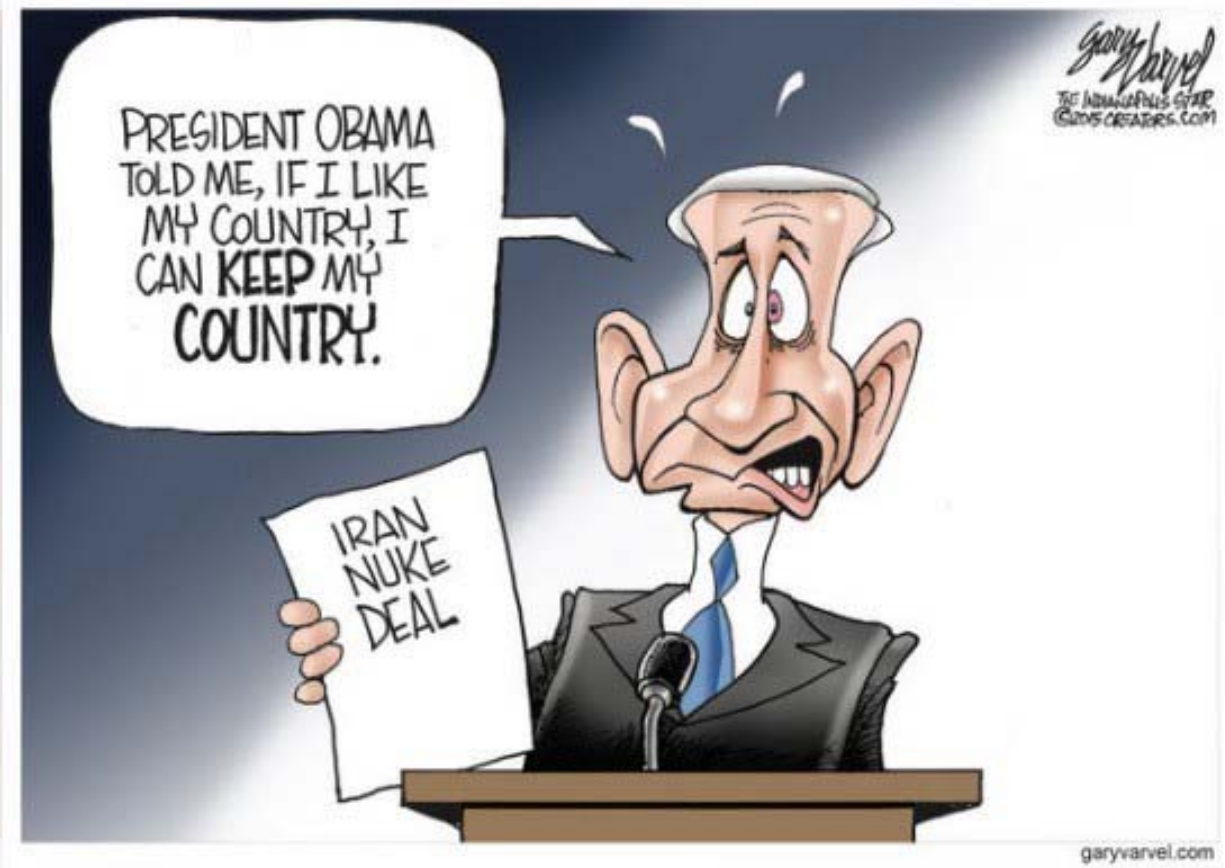
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I have developed a perfect way for handling the Middle East and the Palestinian crisis



I know, playing Golf and blaming Israel



IRAN WANTED A MUCH **BIGGER** NUKE, BUT I WAS ABLE TO NEGOTIATE IT **DOWN** TO THIS....

YOU'RE WELCOME!



Come on, Bibi. I've got half of America drinking it.
Just try a sip, come on.