

Senior U.S. Official Describes Israeli Leader in Vulgar Term

In a column that appeared on Tuesday, October 28—titled, *The Crisis In Relations Is Officially Here*—Jeffrey Goldberg, national correspondent for *The Atlantic*, wrote:

“The other day I was talking to a senior Obama administration official about the foreign leader who seems to frustrate the White House and the State Department the most. ‘The thing about Bibi is, he is a ‘expletive,’ this official said, referring to the Israeli prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, by his nickname.

“This comment is representative of the gloves-off manner in which American and Israeli officials now talk about each other behind closed doors, and is yet another sign that relations between the Obama and Netanyahu governments have moved toward a full-blown crisis,” Goldberg added.

Reacting the same day, Economy Minister Naftali Bennett issued the following statement on Facebook: “Israel is stronger than all of its defamers.”

Cursing Netanyahu is an Insult to Israelis and Jews

“The Prime Minister of Israel is not a private person,” Bennett continued. “He is the leader of the Jewish State and the entire Jewish people. Cursing the prime minister and calling him names is an insult not just to him but also to the millions of Israeli citizens and Jews across the globe.

“The leader of Syria who slaughtered 150,000 people was not awarded the name ‘expletive.’ Neither was the leader of Saudi Arabia who stones women and homosexuals or the leader of Iran

who murders freedom protestors.

"If what appears in the press is true, then it seems that the current U.S. administration is throwing Israel under the bus."

Israel Leads Global War on Terror

"Israel is the only democratic state in the Middle East and has been fighting 66 years to survive. Israel is at the forefront of the free world's fight against the Islamic terror of ISIS, Hezbollah, Hamas and Iran. Instead of attacking Israel and putting it at risk, the world should be strengthening and supporting it.

"I call on the US administration to immediately reject these gross comments," Bennett concluded.

In his article, Goldberg blamed the Israeli leader for the seemingly increasing crisis in Israeli-U.S. relations. According to Goldberg, "the fault for this breakdown in relations can be assigned in good part to the junior partner in the relationship, Netanyahu, and in particular, to the behavior of his cabinet. ... For their part, Obama administration officials express, in the words of one official, a 'red-hot anger' at Netanyahu for pursuing settlement policies on the West Bank [Judea and Samaria] and building policies in Jerusalem, that they believe have fatally undermined Secretary of State John Kerry's peace process.

"Over the years, Obama administration officials have described Netanyahu to me as recalcitrant, myopic, reactionary, obtuse, blustering, pompous, and "Aspergery." (These are verbatim descriptions; I keep a running list.). But I had not previously heard Netanyahu described as a 'expletive'"

Joel Pollak, senior editor-at-large, , noted that Goldberg "admits that 'Jews have a moral right to live anywhere they want in Jerusalem,' and understands that the areas of Jerusalem that have irked Obama are hardly 'settlements,' yet

he still says Netanyahu is to blame for building there.

"Nowhere in Goldberg's article is there any acknowledgment that Gaza rockets, Hamas tunnels, and Fatah/PA incitement are what have made a Palestinian state in the West Bank unthinkable, for the moment, to the vast majority of Israelis. Nor is there any admission that Obama—and Vice-President Joe Biden, and Secretaries of State Hillary Clinton and John Kerry—have inflamed relations by publicly berating Israel on various occasions."

Netanyahu: 'I Will Continue to Defend our Country'

President Reuven Rivlin, in Poland on a state visit, told IDF *Radio*: "Construction is not a provocation. If it is carried out as a provocation and as a payback of some sort for a terror act, it is forbidden. We came to settle in our land, and we simply have to make clear to the world that we are building in places that we shall never abandon."

Speaking to the Knesset Wednesday morning, Netanyahu said: "I was personally attacked purely because I defend Israel, and despite all the attacks against me, I will continue to defend our country, I will continue to defend the citizens of Israel."

"I respect and appreciate the deep ties with the United States we've had since the establishment of the state. We've had arguments before," but there remains a "deep connection between our peoples and our countries."

"The unrestrained criticism of Israel and its leader attributed to officials in the White House have crossed all lines," Knesset Speaker Yuli Edelstein said in his opening remarks to the Knesset on Wednesday.

Sources in the Prime Minister's Office reportedly asserted: "Netanyahu will continue to uphold the security interests of the citizens of Israel and the historical rights of the Jewish people in Jerusalem. No pressure will change that."

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