

Netanyahu on the Ropes

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

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On Tuesday, March 17, Israelis vote. Will they decide six years of Netanyahu are enough?

He was elected in March 2009. Earlier he served as prime minister from June 1996 - July 1999. At the time, he was Israel's youngest ever leader.

In 1993, he succeeded Yitzhak Sharmir to head Likud. He strongly opposed Oslo.

He served as Israeli embassy in Washington chief of mission, UN envoy, deputy foreign minister, foreign minister, and finance minister.

He's current Likud party chairman and Public Diplomacy and Diaspora Affairs minister.

He's a former Boston Consulting Group Mitt Romney colleague. In 1978, he told local television viewers:

"The real core of the conflict is the unfortunate Arab refusal to accept the State of Israel."

He consistently blames Palestinians for Israeli crimes. He ludicrously claims to speak for Jews worldwide.

Jewish Voice for Peace executive director Rebecca Vilkomerson says "American Jews are largely appalled by the notion that Netanyahu, or any other Israeli politician - one that we did not elect and do not choose to be represented by - claims to speak for us."

He speaks for increasingly fewer numbers of Jews worldwide. Why Israelis tolerate him they'll have to explain.

He's a world-class thug, an unindicted war criminal, a threat to world peace.

On Tuesday, Israeli voters will decide if he remains prime minister. Polls show a close race. As Likud party head, he'll retain his Knesset seat whatever the outcome.

A Panels Research poll published Friday found 12% of eligible Israeli voters still undecided. Who they choose may decide things.

On Sunday, Netanyahu addressed thousands in Tel Aviv's Rabin Square. He rallied supporters under the slogan "United for the Land of Israel."

Demagogic bluster characterized his comments like always. Fascists dominate Israeli politics. He warned of a nonexistent left wing electoral victory.

He vowed Jerusalem would always remain Israel's exclusive capital. He claimed main rival Zionist Union party would divide the city.

He said right-wing supporters observe Jewish tradition. They “believe in Israel’s eternal values.”

He claimed

“something is going on during this election that was hidden at first.”

“Now I’m sure everyone is aware of it. A fortune was funneled from abroad to the left-wing organization V15, with one goal, to replace the government led by me with a government led by Tzipi (Livni) and Bougie (Isaac Herzog), supported by the joint Arab party.”

“These efforts focus on one message. Just not Bibi. They’re doing it.”

Ahead of Sunday’s rally, he said

“Scandinavian governments have spent millions of dollars on a campaign to remove me from power.”

“Western governments, but mostly Scandinavian...They know perfectly well why they prefer Buji and Livni to me.”

“Foreign governments, specifically Scandinavians, are part of a worldwide campaign to topple me.”

Israeli historian Gershom Gorenberg called his comments the “last refuge of the fading strongman.”

He invents enemies. He accuses “outside agitators and foreign governments” of conspiring against him. He’s his own worst enemy.

Days earlier, he noted “a very tight race. Nothing is guaranteed because there is a huge worldwide effort to topple the Likud government,” he blustered.

A Zionist Union statement called Sunday’s rally a “horror show. Bibi is the prime minister of the extreme right, and only (ZU) can halt their control of the state and the government.”

Fact: Not a dime’s worth of difference separates Likud from Zionist Union and most other competing parties.

Fact: Fascists dominate Israeli politics. So do monied interests.

Fact: Whatever new government is formed post-election, Palestinians, Israeli Arab citizens, and most Israeli Jews lose.

Fact: White supremacist privileged Jews run Israel. They’ll continue doing so like always since 1948.

Expect nothing different this time. Business as usual will continue.

Late pre-election polls show Zionist Union winning 24 of 120 Knesset seats to Likud’s 20.

Coalitions always run Israel. Winning doesn't mean the prevailing party gets to form the new government.

Whoever wins, Netanyahu may be better able to cobble together coalition partners than Herzog.

He's on the ropes, widely disliked, despised by many, but could remain prime minister.

It may be days post-election before a new government is formed. Likud and Zionist Union are competing for coalition partners.

Who'll prevail remains to be seen. It bears repeating. For Palestinians, Arab Israeli citizens and ordinary Jews, it's no more different than if Republicans or Democrats prevail in America.

Same old, same old wins every time. Don't expect this time to be different.

Palestine will remain occupied. Racist apartheid policies will continue.

Settlements will keep expanding on stolen Palestinian land. They'll continue being denied virtually all fundamental rights.

Israeli Arabs are considered more fifth column threats than citizens. Neoliberal harshness remains official policy. Wars of aggression will continue being waged at Israel's discretion.

Stephen Lendman lives in Chicago. He can be reached at lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net. His new book as editor and contributor is titled "Flashpoint in Ukraine: US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III." <http://www.claritypress.com/LendmanIII.html> Visit his blog site at sjlendman.blogspot.com. Listen to cutting-edge discussions with distinguished guests on the Progressive Radio News Hour on the Progressive Radio Network. It airs three times weekly: live on Sundays at 1PM Central time plus two prerecorded archived programs.

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About the author:

Stephen Lendman lives in Chicago. He can be reached at lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net. His new book as editor and contributor is titled "Flashpoint in Ukraine: US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III." <http://www.claritypress.com/LendmanIII.html> Visit his blog site at sjlendman.blogspot.com. Listen to cutting-

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