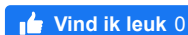




From AIPAC to Capitol, protesters have been on Netanyahu's heels



By [Jordan Gass-Pooré - Spring 2015](#) Mar 03, 2015



WASHINGTON — Among the sounds of car horns and megaphones, Tennessee business owner Michael Aliff, 44, stood silently outside the [American Israeli Public Affairs Committee's](#) annual policy conference Monday.

Aliff held the Israeli and American flags in his hand as a symbolic gesture of goodwill between both nations.

“I don’t usually stand for a whole lot other than my own principles,” he said.

[Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu](#) spoke at the conference the day before his more anticipated — and more controversial — speech

Tuesday at the Capitol. Since Netanyahu arrived in Washington on Monday, protesters both in support and against the prime minister have been shadowing his public appearances.

Protesters: 'Peace talks not bombs'



The controversy stems from Netanyahu's policies in the Middle East, as well as his invitation to the United States by [House Speaker John Boehner](#), which was not approved by the White House.

The Senate in February unanimously passed a [resolution](#) supporting the prime minister's invitation to the United States and endorsed Netanyahu's speech before a joint session of Congress.

Anti-war protesters [Codepink](#) demonstrated outside the conference to protest Netanyahu, as well as Iranian nuclear programs. They were joined Tuesday in front of the U.S. Capitol by members of

Washington-based [Act Now to Stop War and End Racism \(ANSWER\) Coalition](#).

Some of the protesters headed inside the Longworth House Office Building – where Boehner has his office.

[Medea Benjamin](#), co-founder of Codepink, said Boehner breached diplomatic protocol when he invited Netanyahu.

The door to Boehner’s office was locked when members of Codepink arrived.

Though Boehner did not show up, the protesters eventually found [Robert Cohen](#), the president of the pro-Israel AIPAC, in the office of [Rep. Steve Stivers](#), R-Ohio.

After unsuccessfully attempting to track down the speaker, the members of Codepink went in search of other members of Congress to ask them why they were attending Netanyahu’s speech.

While Republicans publicly announced their support of Netanyahu, many Democrats did not attend his speech, including President Barack Obama.

Obama said he didn’t attend the speech because of a conference call with European leaders.

“I did have a chance to take a look at the transcript, and as far as I can tell there was nothing new,” he said after the speech. “The prime minister appropriately pointed out that the bond between the United States of America is unbreakable, and on that point, I thoroughly agree.”

Tori Knueven contributed reporting to this article.

Correction: This article previously stated Michael Aliff was from North Carolina, though he is actually from Tennessee. It also stated AIPAC President Robert Cohen attempted to enter Rep. John Boehner’s office during the protest, when it

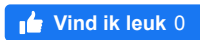
should have stated he was inside the office of Rep. Steve Stivers. Both errors have been corrected.

Reach reporter Jordan Gass-Pooré at jordan.gass-pooré@scripps.com or 202-408-1490. SHFWire stories are free to any news organization that gives the reporter a byline and credits the SHFWire. Like the Scripps Howard Foundation Wire interns on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#).



About Jordan Gass-Pooré - Spring 2015

Jordan Gass-Pooré is a Spring 2015 reporter for the SHFWire from Texas State University.



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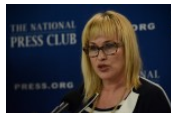
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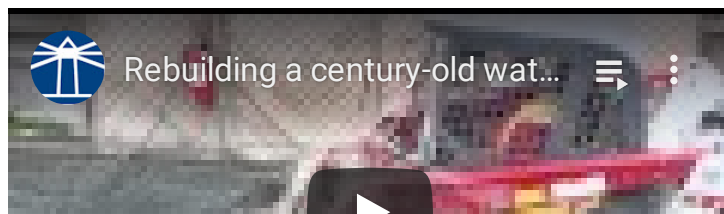


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