

Congress invites mass murderer Netanyahu to address a special joint session on July 24

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On Thursday, US congressional leaders announced that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will address a joint session of Congress on July 24. This invitation, one of the highest honors that can be extended to a foreign head of state, identifies the entire US political establishment and both imperialist political parties with genocide.

The formal invitation dated May 31 was addressed to “His Excellency Benjamin Netanyahu” on behalf of “the bipartisan leadership of the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate.” It was signed by Republican Speaker of the House Mike Johnson, Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell, Democratic Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer and House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries.

“We join the State of Israel in your struggle against terror,” the joint letter states, going on to “highlight America’s solidarity with Israel,” which is allegedly in the process of “defending democracy.”

Underscoring the analysis made on the *World Socialist Web Site* of the violence in Gaza as one front of an expanding global imperialist war, the brief joint letter goes out of its way to identify Israel as a key ally against “the growing partnership between Iran, Russia, and China.”

The bipartisan invitation to Netanyahu was extended exactly one week after the International Court of Justice (ICJ) issued an emergency order under the 1948 Genocide Convention for Israel to “immediately halt its military offensive” in Rafah. The ICJ’s ruling was issued just days after the chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) sought arrest warrants against Netanyahu and Israeli Minister of Defense Yoav Gallant, accusing them of “extermination” of civilians.

Netanyahu’s regime responded to these decisions by

accelerating its war of annihilation against Rafah. More than two-thirds of Gaza’s population, 1.7 million people, have now been compressed into an area of less than a fifth of the Gaza Strip, where they face constant bombardment and lack basic civilian infrastructure or necessities.

In this context, the invitation to Netanyahu has an especially impudent character. Rolling out the red carpet for an infamous war criminal who is dripping from head to toe with fresh blood, it is as if to say, “Yes, we’re carrying out a genocide; and no, you’re not going to stop us.”

On Tuesday, to this end, the US House of Representatives passed a bill to sanction ICC officials in retaliation for the proceedings against Netanyahu. On Thursday, the same day that the details of Netanyahu’s July 24 address were formally announced, the Israeli government carried out yet another massive war crime, bombing a school run by the UN Agency for Palestinian refugees in the Nuseirat refugee camp in central Gaza, massacring at least 40 people.

The Netanyahu regime and its US backers are not only in open defiance of the highest judicial body of the United Nations, but they have effectively responded to its ruling by bombing a UN building directly. Defending the massacre, State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller subsequently claimed that Hamas militants were “hiding inside a school,” and “Israel has a right to try and target those civilians.”

Also Thursday, the *New York Times* released the findings of its three-month investigation into the conditions at the Sde Teiman complex in the Negev desert which can be characterized without exaggeration as a concentration camp. Thousands of Palestinians abducted from Gaza, including children, have been held there without charges or trial, where they have been

subjected to systematic torture, humiliation and starvation by their Israeli captors.

Buried in the *Times* report are accounts of torture that rival the worst crimes revealed at the Abu Ghraib torture center in Iraq under US occupation, including sodomy and electrocution.

A CNN report based on whistleblower accounts last month had already described how “doctors sometimes amputated prisoners’ limbs due to injuries sustained from constant handcuffing,” and “the air is filled with the smell of neglected wounds left to rot.”

With his July 24 speech, Netanyahu will hold the record for the most invitations to address a joint meeting of Congress in US history. His previous addresses were in 1996, 2011 and 2015, all during Democratic presidencies.

Eight months into Israel’s war of annihilation, Netanyahu has now secured his permanent historical reputation as the butcher of Gaza, alongside his American partner in crime “Genocide Joe” Biden.

This is the person “the bipartisan leadership” of Congress and US imperialism is preparing to honor. It doing so, it has administered another irreversible blow to its own credibility, including its claims to be bombing and sanctioning its way around the world in an effort to uphold “freedom,” “democracy” and a so-called “rules-based international order.”

Netanyahu’s invitation also thoroughly exposes all of the dishonest efforts to present the Biden administration as a “critic” of the number of civilian casualties in Gaza, as “concerned” about the “humanitarian situation” or as advancing one or another “peace plan.”

This includes Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Senator Bernie Sanders, who are in the midst of a public relations offensive to boost Biden as a “progressive” in the 2024 US elections, in particular, following Biden’s contrived gesture of withholding certain bombs destined for Israel last month. Against this backdrop, the announcement by Sanders that he will not attend Netanyahu’s speech lacks any integrity.

While the details of Netanyahu’s visit were being finalized, Biden was in Europe arguing for the removal of restraints on the US-NATO war against Russia in Ukraine. In Eastern Europe, in the Middle East, in Southeast Asia—and at home, in the form of the ferocious repression of student protests—the inherent

historical tendency of capitalism towards dictatorship and war is expressing itself.

Netanyahu’s visit will and should be met with mass protests. But any illusions that the policies of the US government will be changed by massive displays of popular anger have already been given a decisive answer by the invitation itself.

The American political establishment is not only isolated and alienated from the sentiments of the population, it is impervious and hostile to those sentiments. Attempts to exert “pressure” are met with tear gas, rubber bullets, zip ties, slander, layoffs and expulsions.

As Socialist Equality Party presidential candidate Joseph Kishore wrote yesterday, “The fight against the genocide requires the development of a movement in the working class. It is a question of mass struggle, connecting the fight against war with the fight against exploitation and the capitalist system.”

This development has already been given an initial expression by the ongoing political strike of University of California academic workers against genocide and attacks on democratic rights. But as the experience of that strike has already demonstrated, the working class must consciously break free of the narrow framework of protest politics and appeals to the Democratic Party, which is thoroughly implicated both in the repression and in the genocide itself.

If Netanyahu, Biden and their accomplices are going to be stopped, it will be by the international working class, acting with its own independent leadership, program and methods, including mass strikes to shut down production, stop the war machine, and challenge the dictatorship of the capitalist class over the economy.



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