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## Opinion Blog / Guest Columnist

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OPINION

# Netanyahu before Congress: Courage in the face of persecution



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U.S. House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA) and Senate Foreign Relations Chair, Senator Ben Cardin (D-MD), listen as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu addresses a joint meeting of Congress at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, U.S., July 24, 2024. (REUTERS/Craig Hudson)



Thanks to a generous invitation from House Speaker Mike Johnson, I was blessed to attend Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's speech in the United States Capitol on Wednesday, July 24. The speech marked Mr. Netanyahu's fourth appearance before Congress – a record for foreign leaders likely never to be tied, let alone broken. As pro-Hamas protestors burned American flags and chanted "Allahu Akbar" in front of Union Station, Prime Minister Netanyahu stood proud, brave, defiant, and fearless.

On October 7, 2023, Hamas terrorists led an attack on Israel marked by murder, infanticide, and rape. It was the deadliest day for the Jewish people since the Holocaust. While some individuals and groups around the world are unthinkableably excusing Hamas' demonic attacks on Israel as justifiable, I am an American



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Auschwitz, which I recently toured as part of a trip to Ukraine for the National Prayer Breakfast in Kyiv. From the Golan Heights to the fence line in Gaza, from the shores of Galilee to the Western Wall, I am honored to have borne witness to the powerful history of Israel that Prime Minister Netanyahu explained to Congress.

During the Prime Minister's speech, I was reminded of the new axis of evil operating in our world today. Iran supplies Hamas and Russia with the same exact drones to kill civilians in Israel and Ukraine, Vladimir Putin signed a war pact with Kim Jong Un of North Korea, and China is lying in wait to attack Taiwan. Prime Minister Netanyahu was very clear in his speech when he said, "For the forces of civilization to triumph, America and Israel must stand together, because when we stand together, something very simple happens. We win, they lose."

Mr. Netanyahu recognized Israeli heroes and soldiers during his speech. He honored one soldier who grabbed a rifle and ran eight miles to the front line to defend people on October 7. Mr. Netanyahu also recognized rescued Israeli hostage Noa Argamani, whose bravery reminded me of the two Ukrainian Greek Catholic priests Ivan Levitsky and Bohdan Geleta, who had just been released after over a year of captivity in Russia when I met them in Ukraine. Tyrants always persecute innocent people for their faith – both Hitler and Stalin are prime examples of that. Hamas has weaponized a corrupted version of Islam to legitimize the indiscriminate murder of Jewish people, and Russia has weaponized the Christian religion to create its own Kremlin-directed, Orthodox jihad. Just like Prime Minister Netanyahu said on Wednesday, "It's a clash between barbarism and civilization. It's a clash between those who glorify death and those who sanctify life."

The question for Americans, and the rest of the world, is quite simple: do you want to be on the side of life, or death? I know what side I stand on, and the unwavering support for Israel that my country and my church offer Israel makes me proud to be an American and a follower of Jesus.

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Gary Marx is the President of Madison Strategies and the former executive director of the Faith and Freedom Coalition. This material is distributed by Madison Strategies LLC on behalf of Kyiv Global Outreach, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.



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-  **Daniel** 7 hours ago
- Love this piece. We all must stand against evil with righteousness, against infiltration of lies with truth, against dark with light, etc in terms of defense and for good with offense. This has been case in the past and so it must be in the our days and adjust as we go forward.
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