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**Israel/USA**

# Netanyahu gets his cheque and Obama cashes in

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**Description:**

This week, Benjamin Netanyahu's adviser on questions of security, Jacob Neguel, went to Washington to sign a strategic ten-year agreement with the United States, a little matter of $3.8 billion [sic] After having covered Barack Obama and his administration with insults, the Israeli Prime Minister had no problem about taking the money, and I imagine he even said thank you, out of the corner of his mouth.

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Obama, who likes neither Netanyahu nor his policies, will certainly make a speech about the eternal friendship between the United States and Israel, all the more so as he wants to help Hillary Clinton in her electoral campaign; and like all the presidential candidates, she needs the support of the friends of Israel.

Netanyahu also presents this agreement as a great personal victory. In fact, it is "no big deal" as the Americans say: for several decades already Israel has been receiving from the American Treasury more than $3 billion of military aid every year, and so there is no substantial change, in spite of the boastfulness of a Prime Minister who neds to reinforce his popular support, at a time when the courts seem to have decided to go all the way with their inquiry into the affairs of corruption of the Netanyahu family.

Why, in spite of flagrant mutual dislike and important political disagreements, is the administration renewing its massive support for the State of Israel? Some people will mention the influence of the pro-Israel lobby (Jewish and especially Evangelical) as the primary reason for this unprecedented military aid. In fact, although the influence of this lobby is real in relation to members of Congress, it remains relative on the level of the United States administration, whether Democrat or Republican.

What underlies the perennial strategic alliance between Washington and Tel Aviv is first and foremost the role of Israel in the Middle East and its place in the system of defence of the Empire. In exchange for the $3.8 billion and the diplomatic shield that that Washington provides for it, Israel protects the global interests of the United States in the region...and sometimes further afield.

Finally, when you add it all up, it is a good deal for the United States: the Jewish state replaces a Ninth Fleet in the region, which would have cost much more than $3.8 billion; moreover, if anyone was to get killed it would be Israeli soldiers and not GIs; Israel is an immense aircraft carrier of the American armed forces, at a relatively modest cost.

The problem with which Americana administrations are sometimes confronted is that it sometimes happens that the Israeli ally takes initiatives that are not always in accord with the priorities of the White House and the State Department. The tail is trying to wag the dog... But when American strategic interests are involved, the tail has to submit to the will of the dog, as has just been confirmed by the agreement between Washington  and Iran, which is still considered by the Israeli neocons to be a menace for the free [sic] world, and one which can only be defused by force. Along with the cheque, the United States would have done well to explain to Benjamin Netanyahu the new geo-strategic realities and the need for Israel to change its hard disk.