



House Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio) appeared to have pulled off a masterful political victory against the Obama administration Wednesday when he revealed that he had invited Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to address Congress on the dangers of the administration's negotiations with Iran.

Coming a day after President Barack Obama threatened to veto new Iran-related sanctions legislation that he said could harm the negotiations, Boehner's move looked like a smart way to reinforce support for such bills -- a priority for the Republican-led Congress -- by showing that the U.S.'s top ally in the region supported them.

Then things started to fall apart.

Secretary of State John Kerry, fresh off his fumbling on the issue of French solidarity, pulled off a diplomatic bank shot by using a different part of the Israeli government against Boehner. Asked about the invitation at a press conference with European Union foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini, Kerry diplomatically said Netanyahu was welcome in the U.S. any time -- and proceeded to both steal Boehner's thunder and turn news coverage in a different direction.

"In Israel, one of the top intelligence -- one of the top intelligence personnel within the Israeli intelligence field -- I won't name names, but this person was asked directly by a congressional delegation that visited there over the weekend what the effect of sanctions would be. And this person answered that it would be like throwing a grenade into the process," Kerry said. "So we're asking people to be responsible here, and then let's have a good, responsible debate about what the best way to proceed is."

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