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Netanyahu: A War on Iran Would Be Good for Arabs

By John Glaser

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Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Tuesday tried to convince Arab states that an Israeli military strike on Iran **would benefit their interests** and that “a feeling of relief would spread across the region” immediately following an attack.



After **failing** to pressure the Obama administration to back a preventive Israeli strike on Iran before the US presidential elections, Netanyahu has continued to make veiled threats of war catered for different audiences.

In an interview with a French magazine, Netanyahu pushed back against the claim that an Israeli strike on Iran would destabilize the region and worsen tensions.

“Five minutes after, contrary to what the skeptics say, I think a feeling of relief would spread across the region,” he said.

“Iran is not popular in the Arab world, far from it, and some governments in the region, as well as their citizens, have understood that a nuclear armed Iran would be dangerous for them, not just for Israel,” he said.

But experts generally agree that such an attack would spark a regional war, embolden Iran, and in fact motivate Tehran to build a nuclear weapon, a decision they have not yet made and one that Netanyahu is right to say Arab governments don’t want.

As a recent report by former government officials, national security experts and retired military officers concluded last month, the Iranian nuclear program is too redundant for a surgical strike – probably all Israel is capable of – to delay the program for any considerable length of time.

The report also concluded that an attack would prompt a large-scale Iranian retaliation that would spark an uncontrollable regional war, and this would be severely destabilizing for Arab governments, contrary to Netanyahu’s pandering.

Importantly, the report also warned the attack would increase Iran’s motivation to build a bomb, in order to deter further military action and that “achieving more than a temporary setback in Iran’s nuclear program would require a military operation – including a land occupation – more taxing than the Iraq and Afghanistan wars combined.”

Netanyahu’s claim that a war on Iran would be good for Arabs is based on the tensions the Arab dictatorships in the Middle East have with the government of Iran. Those tensions come from incompatible competing national interests, and do not reflect how the actual Arab population feels about an Israeli strike. That is something Netanyahu ignores completely.