



Biden is begging Netanyahu 'not to rush' judicial overhaul that has shaken Israeli society. Will the Israeli leader listen?

Netanyahu argues unelected judges should not have the power to stop the policy agenda of an elected government.

By Raf Sanchez and Josh Lederman / July 19, 2023

TEL AVIV — Days before Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is poised to ram through the first part of his plan to weaken Israel's Supreme Court, President Joe Biden urged him "not to rush" the legislation that has so deeply divided Israel.

It was an unusually direct intervention by an American president into the affairs of one of the U.S.' closest allies.

[...]

"For the first time in the history of relations between the two countries, the United States is concerned that Israel will no longer be a democracy," said the **Institute for National Security Studies**, a leading Israeli think tank. "Tension in the special relations between Jerusalem and Washington is not new, but casting doubt on such a fundamental anchor of that relationship is an unprecedented development."

Compounding concerns about worsening ties is the growing sense that Biden's Democratic Party is moving farther away from Israel, with Democratic lawmakers particularly uneasy over its treatment of the Palestinians. Those concerns were on vivid display this week after Rep. Pramila Jayapal, D-Wash., who leads the Congressional Progressive Caucus, called Israel "a racist state," although she later walked it back.

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