

Obama-AIPAC conflict reaching climax: Analyst

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The conflict between the Obama administration and the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) is reaching a “climax,” says a political analyst from Canada.

US President Barack Obama said on Sunday that Republican lawmakers are opposing the Iran nuclear agreement for political reasons.

Analysts say Republicans are opposing the Iran deal to avoid angering the pro-Israel lobby and prevent their Democratic rivals from getting any political advantage.

“The current conflict between US President Barack Obama and AIPAC is coming to a climax,” Edward Corrigan told Press TV on Tuesday.

“The only people, who are complaining about it (the agreement) are (Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin) Netanyahu and the pro-Israeli lobby in the United States and the Republican Party who are trying to outdo each other to get dollars for their campaigns in support of their stance on Israel,” he said.

Obama has accused the Israel lobby of spending millions of dollars to spread false claims about the Iran nuclear agreement, and vowed to push back.

At a meeting in the White House last week, Obama told AIPAC leaders that he would counter their efforts to scuttle the nuclear agreement with Iran, The New York Times reported, citing people present at the gathering.

The US president has launched an aggressive campaign of private entreaties and public advocacy to rally enough Democratic support to preserve the nuclear agreement ahead of a September vote on it in the Republican-led Congress.

However, several Democrats have broken ranks with the White House on the issue.

“But now it’s also a number of prominent members of the Democratic Party particularly members of the Jewish wing like the New York senator, (Charles Schumer), who was originally supporting the agreement, but he is now opposing it,” Corrigan noted.

“You have a real power struggle going on between the pro-Israel lobby and of course the administration led by Barack Obama and supported by many Democrats,” he said. “This is almost the first time there’s a full-out war between the pro-Israel lobby and the president of the United States.”

The Israeli prime minister and his Republican allies in Congress are trying to convince as many Democrats as possible to reject the nuclear accord.

“Netanyahu has no qualms about intervening in American politics and of course that would be almost unconscionable for any other country to do, but Netanyahu has done, but he’s done it repeatedly,” Corrigan said.

“The pro-Israeli Republicans and Democrats are very much beholding to money raised by people who support Israel,” he concluded.

US House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer, Democrat of Maryland, and 21 freshman House Democrats met with Netanyahu for more than two hours on Monday. The trip to Israel is funded by the American Israel Education Foundation, the charitable arm of AIPAC.