

# Netanyahu's Coalition Games

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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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In the early morning hours of May 8, 2012, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Kadima party chief Shaul Mofaz dropped a bombshell on the Israeli political system by announcing the formation of a national unity government. Kadima's shocking entry into the Netanyahu government -- only weeks earlier, Mofaz had stated that "the current government represents all that is wrong with Israel," asking "Why should we join it?" -- swelled the coalition's ranks to a historic 94-seat majority in the 120-seat Knesset. Early elections that had been expected for that fall were thought to be put off indefinitely; the media, with some reason, took to calling the prime minister "King Bibi."

The Netanyahu-Mofaz union was the last instance of a national unity government in Israel. It lasted less than 90 days and effectively ended Mofaz's political career. Perhaps willfully ignoring that recent history, Israeli opposition leader and Labor party chairman Isaac "Boujie" Herzog entered into serious talks with Netanyahu about joining the current government -- talks that blew up in Herzog's face last week, when Netanyahu made a last minute volte-face and nearly closed a deal to bring his former foreign minister Avigdor Lieberman's right-wing Israel Beitenu party into the coalition...

**[Read the full article on the Foreign Affairs website. \(https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/israel/2016-05-23/netanyahus-coalition-games\)](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/israel/2016-05-23/netanyahus-coalition-games)** ❖

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