

GNITN Special Edition

Israel At War Day 521

Not Helping

All Things On The Table

According to the US Middle East envoy a deal with Hamas can be reached is the terrorists do two things as we read in a [report](#) from *The Times Of Israel*:

US Middle East envoy Steve Witkoff on Monday said that deadlines were needed on a deal for the next phase of the hostage-ceasefire deal between Israel and Hamas and that “all things are on the table” if the terror group agrees to demilitarize and leaving the Gaza Strip

And if Witkoff thinks Hamas will do that he hasn't been listening to them for the last 520 days as I have. They have no intention of surrendering, laying down their weapons and leaving Gaza.

None. Zip. Nada. But he can certainly try:

Speaking on Fox News a day before he is slated to fly to Qatar for talks with Israel and Hamas, Witkoff said the terror group has “no alternative” other than disarming and leaving Gaza.

“If they leave, then all things are on the table for a negotiated peace, and that’s what they’ll need to do,” said.

To his credit, Witkoff understands the clock is ticking for the hostages:

“We need deadlines” for an agreement on the next phase in a deal, Witkoff said, adding that the conditions the hostages are being held in are “unacceptable” and “deplorable.”

The current offer will be discussed:

Channel 12 news reported earlier in the day that the so-called Witkoff outline — which the US backed, but did not claim credit for — is up for discussion in this week’s negotiations. The framework would see Hamas release 10 living hostages, including American-Israeli Edan Alexander, in exchange for a further 60 days of ceasefire.

Israel is heading to Doha in case a deal can be reached:

An Israeli official familiar with the negotiations told AFP that the country’s team had left for Doha on Monday. Media reports said the delegation was led by a top official from the Shin Bet security service.

One group hoping to get the remaining living hostages back all at one time spoke up:

Ahead of the delegation’s departure, the Hostages and Missing Families Forum demanded the government give negotiators a “full mandate” to ensure the remaining 59 hostages — 58 of them kidnapped during Hamas’s October 7 massacre — would be returned in a single phase.

“An agreement including the return of all hostages is possible and is the duty of the Israeli government to its citizens that remain in Hamas tunnels,” the forum said in a statement.

Being Flexible

Hamas maintains they are the ones who are willing to bend to get a deal done:

Hamas said Monday that it is showing “flexibility” in the talks with mediators and is awaiting the outcome of efforts from Egypt, Qatar, and the United States in negotiations with Israel.

“We dealt flexibly with the efforts made by mediators and [US President Donald] Trump’s envoy, and we await the results of the upcoming negotiations and oblige [Israel] to agree and go to the second phase,” the terror group said.

Hamas said negotiations are focusing on ending the war, the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Gaza, and reconstruction of the Strip.

Flexibility in their minds is then ending the war with them still in Gaza, Israel no longer there and the world rebuilding Gaza for them to be their nest for terrorism going forward. Right. It makes total sense. The terrorist group wants things to go back to October 6th of 2023 as if nothing happened. And they want the phase 2 talks to start since it still is in their favor:

The first phase of the three-phase hostage-ceasefire deal agreed to in January ended on March 1 with no agreement on subsequent stages that could secure a permanent end to the war, but both sides have since refrained from resuming full-scale fighting.

Talks regarding terms of a potential second phase were supposed to have begun on February 3, but Israel has largely refused to engage in them.

Hamas has repeatedly demanded a move to the second phase of the deal, which would include the release of the 24 remaining presumed-living hostages in exchange for a permanent end to the war. A further 35 bodies are still held by the terror group — 34 of those taken captive on October 7 and the remains of one soldier killed in 2014.

The US and Israel want to go a different direction with discussions to end the war only after all the hostages and bodies are returned:

Israel and the US have sought some arrangement that would extend the first phase of the truce and see the release of further hostages without initiating a permanent end to the war against Hamas.

Not Helping

The US hostage envoy tried to explain things over the weekend, but he wasn't exactly helping: *Meanwhile, Israel "held discussions" with White House officials in the wake of US hostage envoy Adam Boehler's interviews on US and Israeli TV on Sunday, a source familiar with the matter told The Times of Israel.*

Boehler on Sunday defended his direct talks with officials in the Hamas terror group, pushing back against private but intense criticism from Jerusalem. Some of Boehler's remarks further annoyed senior Israeli officials, who told The Times of Israel they were surprised to hear the envoy comment that the US is "not an agent of Israel."

Boehler opened himself up to more criticism instead of clearing things up:

Some Israeli officials believe that Boehler went on television to send a pointed message to Israel. After his evening interviews on Israel's leading TV outlets and the Israeli conversations with Washington, Boehler issued a post on X clarifying some of his statements.

Boehler made this mistakes in interviews:

Among a number of missteps Sunday, Boehler sometimes appeared to refer to Palestinian security prisoners as hostages; called Israeli hostages "prisoners"; talked about the "human elements" of Hamas leaders; critiqued Israel for accepting the term of the ceasefire deal with Hamas; stressed that the US is "not an agent of Israel"; and intermittently contradicted himself.

He is not doing very well at all and probably needs to be replaced before he does more damage. According to Boehler his mission was to discuss just the Americans release and if that was all he did, he would be fine. But that's not what happened:

Boehler has been involved in separate, direct talks with Hamas that, while broadly aimed at ending the war without the terror group in power, are specifically focused on freeing Edan Alexander as well as securing the release of the bodies of four slain Americans still held by the group.

He seemed to think a deal for all the hostages was close and that peace could be achieved soon and then said that fighting was also imminent:

Boehler told CNN Sunday a deal could be reached “within weeks” to secure the release of all remaining hostages, not just the five dual US-Israelis.

He added that a “long-term truce” was “real close,” but later Sunday he told Israel’s Channel 12 that Washington would back any Israeli decision, including a return to war.

In a [separate](#) article from *The Times Of Israel* Boehler actually called Hamas “pretty nice guys: The first reference was when he was again discussing Dermer being upset: “I spoke with Ron, and I’m sympathetic. He has someone that he doesn’t know well, making direct contact with Hamas. Maybe I would see them and say, ‘Look, they don’t have horns growing out of their head. They’re actually guys like us. They’re pretty nice guys.’”

The second reference was when he was asserting that Israel knows that his contacts with Hamas were ultimately going to prove beneficial to Israel: “Israel knows walking out of that, that it’s not like Hamas got the world because I thought they were a bunch of nice guys.”

Can Boehler dig himself out of the hole he’s in? I don’t think so. I could give you more examples of interviews where he just isn’t dealing with sound logic about Hamas, getting the hostages back and ending the war. Suffice it to say Boehler had a bad weekend, one where he simply needs to stop talking and let the others take over.