

GNITN Special Edition

Israel At War Day 533

Different Views

Surprising Assessments

In an interview with Tucker Carlson, the US Special Middle East Envoy makes quite a few controversial comments as we read in a report from *The Jerusalem Post*:

Hamas could still be involved in Gaza politically after it has been demilitarized, said Steve Witkoff, US President Donald Trump's envoy to the Middle East, in an interview with Tucker Carlson on Friday.

With the assessment right there Witkoff is at odds with Prime Minister Netanyahu. But his logic puts his words into context with something Hamas will never do:

"They need to demilitarize, and then they might also be politically involved in Gaza," he said while discussing Hamas's rationale and goals for negotiations.

He then gives his overall view of how the conflict can be resolved but then drops another political bombshell:

"We need to understand what Hamas wants and then think about what we can offer them to make them leave. That is what needs to happen here," the envoy said. "At the start of the conflict, we heard that 'Hamas is an ideology, and they are ready to die.'"

Witkoff challenged this idea, saying, "I don't think they are as ideologically extreme as they're often portrayed. They send young children who understand nothing to commit suicide with explosive belts. Once we understand that they want to live, we can talk to them more effectively."

I would advise Witkoff to read the charter of Hamas where we read this:

Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it, just as it obliterated others before it"

I'd make them renounce that more than ideological stance before I'd let them exist right next to Israel's border. The interview then moved to rebuilding the Gaza Strip:

He also discussed Gaza's reconstruction and the breadth of the proposed solutions.

"When I first returned from a trip there – before Trump was inaugurated – we had permission from the Biden administration to collaborate with them. Trump asked, 'When do you think Gaza can be reconstructed?' My answer was 15 to 20 years. He asked why, and I explained the battlefield conditions: 'Gaza is decimated – there are tunnels underneath, making it like Swiss cheese. Then the area got hit with bunker-buster bombs, so there's no rock left to build on.'

He disputes the timeline originally given for reconstruction this way:

"Yet, the world kept pushing a five-year reconstruction plan. Why? Because of the Biden administration's May 27 protocol, which was based on false assumptions," he said.

"Level-setting the facts was critical. At first, people dismissed us, but then The Wall Street Journal wrote about it – 15 to 20 years. Trump's approach was about understanding the reality before making decisions."

Making More Sense

Witkoff then said that Hamas could part of Gaza, but again, in my opinion they won't do it: *However, Witkoff did reiterate the Trump administration's policy on Hamas. "A terrorist organization cannot govern Gaza – that is unacceptable to Israel. What is possible, however, is for them to disarm. Then they can stay for a while and even be politically involved."*

He then noted that Netanyahu is the one the made these negotiations possible:

Witkoff also praised Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for his efficiency in decapitating Hezbollah and Hamas but noted that his decisions to continue the fighting in Gaza are heavily opposed by Israeli public opinion.

"We would not be as effective in the region if he didn't do what he did [with Hezbollah and Hamas] – not even close. I think he did an exceptional job, but the rap he gets is that he's more concerned about the fight than he is about the hostages. I understand how people could make that assessment, but I don't necessarily agree with it," he said.

Witkoff then said that he thinks that the hostages can be released with diplomacy and he thinks that those trying to make it happen truly do want peace in the area:

On how to bring the remaining hostages home, Witkoff said, "I think Bibi believes that he's doing the right thing. I think he goes up against public opinion 'cause the public opinion [in Israel] wants those hostages home."

Witkoff also discussed Qatar's role in negotiations, defending its involvement and dismissing criticism of its intentions.

"They are decent people with very good intentions. Why? Because they are a small country that wants to be recognized as a peacemaker. The president understands this, and I understand it now as well," he added. "People accuse them of having ulterior motives – that's nonsense."

He feels that Qatar is not as ideologically aligned against Israel and even America now:

He also noted the economic incentives behind Doha's mediation efforts. "Everyone thinks this is a security issue, but ultimately, it is a financial question," Witkoff said. "Qatar, like the other Gulf States, wants stability – they want to do business with the United States. They used to be more religiously radical, but today, they have moderated. There's no doubt – they are our allies."

Can a leopard change its spots? Former president Reagan says what I think needs to be heeded with Qatar and that is trust but verify. Witkoff needs to hear them actually state that Israel should be recognized as a nation and has a right to the land before I think they've changed. But I digress.

Is Peace Possible?

Witkoff then turned his attention to having peace with Lebanon:

Shifting the focus to regional diplomacy, the Mideast envoy addressed the potential for improved relations between Israel and Lebanon.

He stated the obvious when saying how Lebanon can get along with Israel and it starts and ends with eliminating Hezbollah:

"If we can remove terrorist organizations as a threatening factor, then we can achieve normalization everywhere. I believe Lebanon can normalize relations with Israel – real normalization, meaning a peace agreement between the two countries. It is absolutely possible."

When he turned to Iran, he also thinks a deal can be reached:

He also spoke about Trump's preference for diplomacy over confrontation with Iran. "Trump wants to engage with Iran with respect, build trust, and avoid war."

That's a lot of optimism for a country and leadership that not too long ago held Americans hostage for 444 days. And the guys in charge of that debacle and the religious mindset that caused it are still there. Good luck with getting a deal done with those people in charge. And that also affects the nuclear power concern:

On the nuclear issue, Witkoff stressed the need for a structured approach to prevent proliferation. "There needs to be a plan for nuclear certainty so that no one fears the possibility of nuclear weapons."

He argued that a diplomatic resolution was not only achievable but also the most logical path forward, adding that Trump saw negotiations as a way to "integrate [Iran] into the world, lift sanctions, and lead to economic prosperity."

Again, Witkoff is overly optimistic with that as well. While I hope he's right, unless there is a regime change at the top we're playing with fire in Iran. Personally I think if the US goes soft on stopping Iran's nuclear ambitions Israel will need to do the dirty work of destroying the Iranian nuclear ability. Still it is a lofty goal to bring Iran into the international community, but one that I see as a fairy tale tantamount to finding and breeding unicorns who are managed and funded by leprechauns who found the pot of gold at the end of a rainbow. Yes, that is impossible unless new leaders are in charge and not just in Iran, but in Gaza, Lebanon, Jordan and really just about all around Israel. And these leaders need to also recognize Israel as a nation who has a right to exist on the land they live on right now and not seek to kill them. If Trump and Witkoff can pull that off, give them a truckload of Nobel Peace prizes because they will have earned it and then some. I trust the Bible and Bible prophecy and it says that they will get all the land promised to them, even land that is already occupied by nations right now. And I see a lot of that land taken back with the **Psalm 83** war which is being setup right now.