


RELEASE IN PART B6

From: sbwhoeop [redacted]
Sent: Friday, August 20, 2010 10:52 AM
To: H
Subject: fyi, pat lang

B6

H: Pat Lang's view of the resumed talks. Sid

"Israeli-Palestinian peace talks expected to resume in September" Washpost

 "The Middle East peace process resumed in May, after a hiatus of 19 months, but it stalled again over the terms of moving from indirect talks, mediated by U.S. envoy George Mitchell, to direct negotiations.

Israel insists it is ready for direct talks, provided there are no preconditions. The Palestinians are ready provided there is a clear agenda. Israel says an agenda means preconditions. Resolving the snag over terms is crucial, diplomats say." Washpost

 The former NY Times reporter Judy Miller likes to address me as "gloomy gus" or some such thing when I encounter her. Well, stand by for some more gloom.

The second Camp David talks failed because Dennis Ross and company placed the Palestinian delegation in a position in which a "solution" was demanded and expected by the Americans and Israelis on the basis of bargaining during the negotiations themselves. This seemed reasonable at the time to the US and Israeli negotiators. After all, is this not what one does? Should not the outcome be the product of the dialectic of argument and persuasion?

Arabs generally think not. They tend to believe that negotiations are for the purpose of of arranging the details of outcomes that are understood in advance of the conference itself. For them, anything else is an attempt to win concessions through trickery.

"The Palestinians are ready provided there is a clear agenda. Israel says an agenda means preconditions."

Hello! What kind of nonsense is this? Have we learned nothing?

And then, there is the "little" matter of the non-participation of Hamas. Does the Obama Administration really think that this 600 pound gorilla can be ignored? Is this some sort of scheme on the part of Netanyahu, and "the boys" to discredit Abbas so that an isolated Hamas can be attacked and destroyed later?

Realism in diplomacy is a desirable thing. George Mitchell used to be smarter than this. His staff should be advising him not to do this. Failure will be catastrophic.

All the players should be engaged, and they are not. The outcome should be known in advance and it is not.

This is both childish and destructive. pl

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/08/19/AR2010081907203.html>