

No Go

When will the Americans understand that it is not how much they pay (or rather how much they make their protégés pay) that will ensure the passing of the deal of the century? Last I read, it was \$60 billion for the Palestinian Authority, \$40 billion to Egypt, \$20 billion to Jordan, and a similar amount to Lebanon. The point is that no Palestinian leader is even able to accept a deal that essentially will sell out Jerusalem.

Neither ousting a leader who clearly rejects the deal and replacing him with someone who is willing to negotiate, nor putting economic pressure, however extreme, will work. Recent popular demonstrations against some terms of the social security law proposed by the government have ultimately led to the resignation of the government. That in turn has empowered the people, who now know that no law or even proposed law can pass without their consent. You can imagine the intensity of the demonstrations that would erupt if a deal that includes selling out Jerusalem is put on the table. The partner that the Americans are looking for is a fictional character that only exists in their imagination. And without a partner, there is no “deal,” is there?

On the other hand, the Americans are able to suffocate the Palestinians economically. In fact, they are doing that right now. Today, there is zero USAID money and zero contributions to UNRWA. Even the \$20 million committed to the East Jerusalem hospitals was cut. However, even if the day comes when the PA declares bankruptcy, it still would not be able to accept the infamous deal. There would be chaos and an open Pandora’s Box, but still no deal. The people would no doubt suffer a lot and they would demonstrate in demand of better social and economic conditions, but I believe that they are mature enough to realize that as long as the PA does not cave in to the deal of the century, people will put the blame of their hardship on the freezing of American aid to the PA, on hampering the arrival of other aid, and on Israel’s tampering with Palestinian VAT money.

Having lost their directional compass, some Arab regimes now see Iran as their main foe. Fortunately, those regimes are not able to totally focus on Iran mainly because their peoples still think that the unsolved problem of Palestine still takes precedence. It is no secret that the deal of the century is meant to rid those regimes of the Palestinian “nuisance,” but as weak as those wretched Palestinians are, they hold the key to sabotaging a major political scheme that would change the strategic geopolitical situation of the area and possibly beyond. Without mincing words, the deal of the century is a no go.

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