

## John Kerry Coordinating with PLO Against Netanyahu



On Monday, Abbas met in Paris with four retired Israeli ambassadors. There he said he had expressed a willingness in recent weeks to meet with Netanyahu but that "a third party who is not Israeli" had blocked the meeting. Senior Palestinians and Israelis said Abbas was alluding to an incident that took place this month.

Netanyahu has been conveying to Abbas for weeks now, both publicly and through official and unofficial channels, that he wants to meet to discuss the possibility of reviving the peace process. Netanyahu is doing this amid concerns about initiatives by international players, and amid the escalating violence in the territories and Abbas' threat to tell the UN General Assembly he will reassess or suspend clauses in the Oslo Accords.

In the framework of the messages between Netanyahu and Abbas, an official who is not American tried to initiate a meeting between the two leaders. Abbas responded positively but said he had to consult with Kerry on the matter.

Palestinian and Israeli officials said Kerry asked Abbas not to hold the meeting and to wait a few weeks until the two met at the UN General Assembly in New York.

What game is Kerry playing here?

1. Kerry would like credit for any positive developments. Much the way that Carter got credit for an Israeli-Egyptian peace deal that he nearly wrecked, Kerry needs credit for this. Even though there is 'this' here. Nothing could come of it. But Kerry still doesn't want Abbas meeting with Netanyahu unless Kerry brokers the deal.

Pro-Israel activists need to remember this the next time Obama proxies blame Israel for not wanting to negotiate. There have been plenty of cases where Abbas refused to meet with Netanyahu. Here's a case where Netanyahu and Abbas wanted to meet, but Kerry didn't want them to.

That's right. Kerry is now more "Palestinian" than Abbas.

2. Kerry is trying to undermine Netanyahu. This administration introduced the bizarre phenomenon in which Israel had to make major concessions before negotiations even started. Kerry wants to exact another kind of price here.

One official interested in the peace process with whom Kerry has met is opposition leader Isaac Herzog. The two held a two-hour private meeting 10 days ago in London that dealt almost exclusively with the peace process.

Israeli sources who were informed about the details of the discussion said Kerry did not come with a set plan but told Herzog he wanted to make another effort to push the process forward. Israeli political issues also came up during the meeting; for example, Kerry asked about the government's stability and Netanyahu's maneuver room with his current coalition.

According to one Israeli source familiar with details of the meeting, Herzog and Kerry also discussed the scenario of an Israeli unity government.

This is an old theme, but it would mean that Kerry wants a different government than the one Israeli voters picked and might be holding on to that as a pre-condition for talks. That's crazy. But it would be consistent with this administration's obsession with destroying Netanyahu.

3. Kerry is blatantly coordinating with Abbas to pressure Israel.

That's the real message here. Abbas is now checking with Kerry on whether to meet with Netanyahu. Kerry isn't "facilitating" peace. He's actively obstructing it. He wants to coordinate with Abbas in person before Abbas meets with Netanyahu while emphasizing the timing.

This is what allies do before meeting with an enemy.

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