

# It Sure Looks Like Trump and Adelson Have Cut a Deal on Annexation

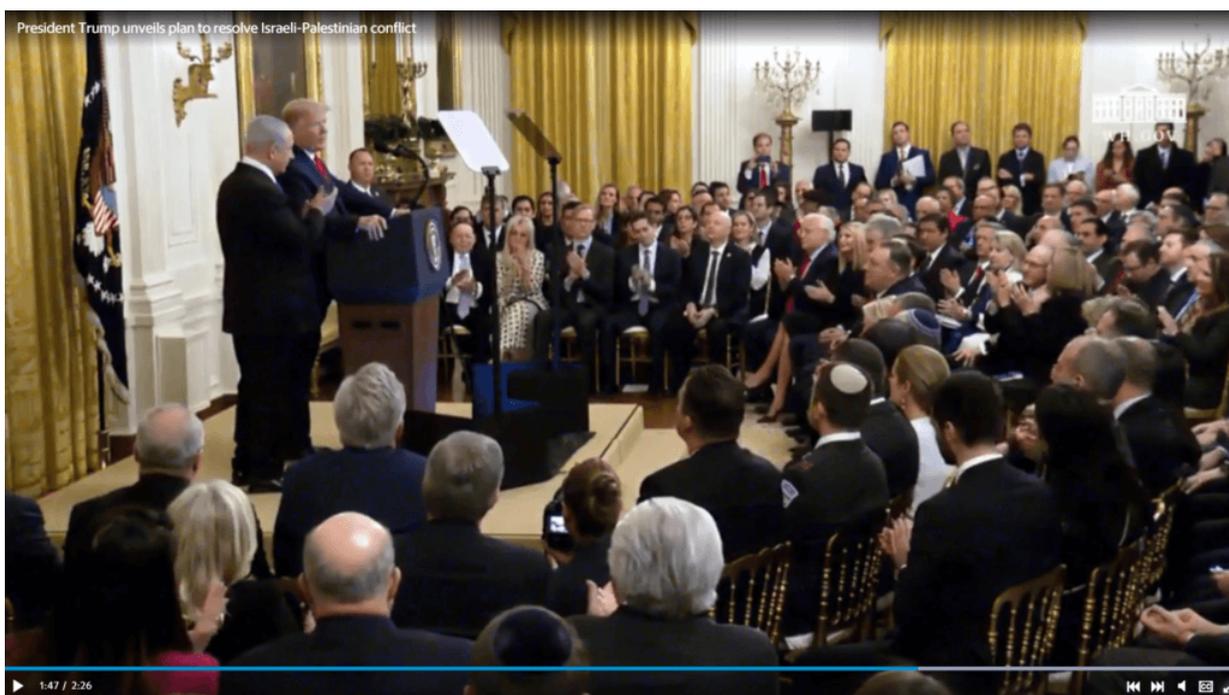
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*Sheldon Adelson, the Israel-loving, [Iran-war-craving](#) casino baron, talks to Donald Trump all the time, and for good reason, he and wife Miriam are the [biggest Republican donors](#), poised to give as much as \$200 million this year. Now that the White House [appears to be lying down](#) for the Israeli government as it moves to annex portions of the West Bank despite a growing chorus of international condemnation, the focus should be on Adelson. He has always been a strong supporter of Israeli expansion, [a man who says](#), “There’s no such thing as a Palestinian.”*

So far, the Adelsons have gotten everything they’ve wanted from our transactional president: tearing up the Iran deal, moving the embassy to Jerusalem, defunding Palestinians, recognizing the Golan annexation, treating settlement expansion as legitimate, even a presidential medal of freedom for Miriam, etc. Right up to yesterday — a Trump attack [on the ICC in the name](#) of Israel. As Trump once [said when](#) a Republican rival was getting Adelson’s money, Adelson wanted a “perfect little puppet.”

Most important, the Adelsons got the Trump “peace plan,” which paves the way for annexation of the West Bank. When Trump announced his “vision,” there they were in the front row.



Sheldon and Miriam Adelson in the background, center left, applaud as Trump announces his peace

plan with Netanyahu at his side, January 28, 2020. Screenshot via Mondoweiss.

Especially if Trump loses in November, as appears more and more likely — this is the Adelsons' last chance to get annexation. "They speak to Trump all the time," [Dan Raviv reported on i24 News](#).

Look at it from Trump's point of view. He doesn't care about peace in the Middle East or Palestinian human rights. He wants one thing, to win in November, and he needs money.

Why would the Adelsons risk \$200 million on a loser? Well, because it's not a losing cause; they get their payback now. They figure that Israeli annexation is permanent no matter what happens to Trump. "Facts on the ground" is the Israeli way of expansion. The embassy move will never be reversed by a Joe Biden. So let's annex.

Today, Sheldon's Israeli newspaper *Israel Hayom* is [promoting annexation](#). "[A]nnexation is Israel's right, and. . . it poses no threat to the interests of either the United States or the Jewish state." That paper is an important rightwing voice in Israel, and the Adelsons have been big supporters of Benjamin Netanyahu. So they may also play a role in Netanyahu's [zeal to annex, when he had a lot](#) of opportunities to dismiss that policy.

The *Guardian* [said in February that insiders expect the](#) Adelsons to donate between \$100 and \$200 million to Trump's reelection hopes this year. If that seems like a big lift, look at their track record: The Adelsons gave more than [\\$100 million to Republican](#) causes in 2016 and another \$123 million [during the 2018 election](#) cycle.

McClatchy reported last year that the [Adelsons were putting off their big donations](#) in 2020 until as late as possible, so as not to excite negative publicity.

And here's another tell, as we say in poker. Sheldon Adelson is a funder and board member of the Republican Jewish Coalition; the RJC [calls Trump the most](#) pro-Israel president ever and, big coincidence, the RJC "is launching a lobbying effort on Capitol Hill to rally support for Israeli annexation," [according to Jewish Insider](#). Says the *Guardian*:

The RJC is chaired by the ex-senator Norm Coleman. . . who is said to have strong ties to Adelson that benefit the RJC and other Super Pacs and dark money outfits where Coleman is a big player.

Coleman helps lead fundraising for a Super Pac, the Congressional Leadership Fund, and a dark money outfit, the American Action Network, that respectively back Republican House members and their policies and have received seven-figure checks from the Adelsons in recent elections.

The Adelsons have seemed to have their way on annexation so far. Annexation of large parts of the West Bank are greenlighted in Trump's deal of the century. Just look at this incredible map in the plan:



Map of Israel alongside Palestinian “Future State” in Green, in the Trump administration plan. (Image: The White House)

The Adelsons wanted the plan out well ahead of the election, Dan Raviv of i24 said, so that Israel would be freed to set its own border this year before November comes and possibly limits its autonomy.

Which is to say, the Adelsons may be the most important actors in this entire foreign policy discussion. Maybe the media should be telling us more about them now. . .

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*Featured image: Miriam and Sheldon Adelson present Trump with a menorah, Dec. 7, 2019. Israeli American Council National Summit. Screenshot via Mondoweiss*

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