

The growing pressure against Israel

This collection of news items is from the "Among Friends" section of the Church of God Big Sandy's Web site, churchofgodbigandy.com. It was posted for the weekend of June 5-6, 2010.

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BIG SANDY, Texas—Because of the abundance of material for "Eye on the World" this weekend, I decided to move the following 10 news items to the "Among Friends" section of the Web site. You will notice that these articles are primarily about events occurring in Israel.



An article titled "10 Killed in Israeli Raid on Aid Flotilla" was posted at msnbc.com on May 31, 2010.

It said: "Israeli commandos on Monday stormed six ships carrying hundreds of pro-Palestinian activists on an aid mission to the blockaded Gaza Strip, killing at least 10 people and wounding dozens.

The article later said: "The two sides offered conflicting accounts of what happened.

"A reporter on one of the boats said the Israelis fired at the vessel before boarding it. Israeli officials said the soldiers were attacked with knives, clubs and iron bars as they boarded the six vessels. The Israeli military said the violence turned deadly after one of the activists grabbed a weapon from one of the commandos. The weapon discharged, though it wasn't clear whether the activist fired it or if it went off accidentally."

The article described negative reactions in various countries from leaders and from the populace. It described the reaction of Turkey this way: "About 10,000 Turks also marched from Israel's Consulate in Istanbul toward the city's main square, shouting slogans denouncing Israel. The protesters earlier Monday tried [to] storm the Consulate building but were blocked by police."



An editorial titled "The Facts About the Israeli Commando Raid" was posted at thefoxnation.com on June 1, 2010.

It said: "Yesterday's 'aid convoy' incident off the coast of Gaza wasn't about bringing humanitarian supplies to the terrorist-ruled territory. It wasn't even about Israel.

"It was about Turkey's determination to position itself as the leading Muslim state in the Middle East."

The article later said: "Turkish decision-makers knew Israel would have to react—and were waiting to exploit the inevitable clash. The provocation was as cynical as it was carefully orchestrated.

"The lead vessel, the *Mavi Marmara*, just happened to have an al-Jazeera TV crew on board to film Israel's response. Ironically, the early videos would've been counterproductive, had world leaders and journalists not been programmed to blame everything on Israel.

"Those videos showed Israeli commandos rappelling onto the ship with both hands on the rope (making it rather hard to use a weapon), yet activists claimed the Israelis opened fire as they descended.

"Purely by coincidence, dozens of 'peace activists' waited with sharpened iron bars, clubs, slingshots—and rifles."

The article later said: "The first wave of Israeli commandos reportedly were armed only with paintball rounds for crowd control. Inspect those videos of maddened peaceniks assaulting the soldiers as they landed on deck. You don't see any Israelis pointing rifles—they're fending off blows.

"But the claims of pro-terrorist 'peace advocates' are given instant credence."



Here are excerpts from a transcript of comments made by Charles Krauthammer about the Israeli commando raid while he was a guest on *Special Report* with Bret Baier on the Fox News Channel on May 31, 2010:

The fundamental deception here is the use of the word "humanitarian." As we saw, humanitarians don't wield iron clubs and would have killed the Israelis had the Israelis not drawn their pistols in self-defense.

But there's a larger issue here. What exactly is the humanitarian crisis that the flotilla was actually addressing? There is none.

There's no one starving in Gaza. The Gazans have been supplied with food and social services, education, by the UN, by UNRWA, for 60 years in part with American tax money. Second, when there are humanitarian needs, the Israelis allow every day food and medicine overland into Gaza.

The reason that it [Israel] did not want this flotilla is because, as the spokesman for the flotilla said herself, this was not about humanitarian relief, it was about breaking the blockade. And the reason the Israelis have a blockade is because they only want to allow humanitarian supplies and not weaponry.

The flotilla was not about humanitarian needs. It was about smashing the blockade.

I am somewhat encouraged by the fact that the U.S. has not joined the lynch mob at the UN attacking Israel on this and thus far have held off. I hope it will exercise a veto if it has to because Israel clearly is a victim here. If these people had wanted [to provide] humanitarian aid, Israel offered to take the ships into Haifa, peacefully, unload all the stuff inside and to allow all the humanitarian aid immediately into Gaza, all the food and medicine. And it [the flotilla] refused because it was meant to be a provocation and to create an incident.



An editorial by Michael Goodwin titled "Anti-Israel Sharks Sniff O's Weakness" was posted at nypost.com on June 2, 2010. Here are excerpts from the article:

In the aftermath of the Gaza flotilla fiasco, the air is thick with nonsense. Chief among the instant myths is that Israel has created a dilemma for President Obama.

Actually, it's the other way around.

The president's appeasement policies helped to create the incident. Israel took the bait, but the trap was set in Washington.

Weakness always begets aggression, and, like clockwork, Obama's repeated signals that he is weakening America's commitment to Israel are emboldening the Jewish state's enemies. From Syria to Iran to Lebanon, from Hezbollah to Hamas and the PLO, the wolves smell blood and are trying to gauge whether they can get close enough for the kill.

And whether the United States will stop them. That they even dare hope we won't reflects the danger of Obama's demented decisions.

Obama says he wants the facts of the incident, but let's hope he also wants the truth, even if it is inconvenient to his worldview.

The first fact is that the flotilla was not really a humanitarian effort. The compassion claim was a fig leaf for the political aim of busting the three-year-old maritime blockade, as organizers admitted last week.

They knew they would not be allowed to dock in Gaza, but still rejected Israel's offer to unload the goods in Israeli ports and, after inspection, truck them overland.

"We're trying to break the blockade of the Gaza Strip and tell the world that Israel has no right to starve 1.5 million Palestinians," Greta Berlin, the head of an organization called Free Gaza Movement, said in typical exaggeration to a British newspaper.

Her group's boats were turned away before, but they vowed not to be stopped this time. "The previous boats were making a statement—these boats will be making a real impact," Berlin said four days before the launch.

It's fair to ask where Obama was while the problem was building. Even if he was too busy with the oil disaster in the Gulf, where was the secretary of state? It was long clear the flotilla had the potential to cause a regional ruckus, but Washington watched it unfold like a spectator.

That's strange in and of itself, because the U.S. and Europe supported the blockade to force Hamas from power in Gaza, or force it to recognize Israel and renounce violence. They might have stopped the dangerous flotilla simply by making it clear they would support Israel's right to interdict it.

The most troubling fact of shifting allegiances is Turkey's role as sponsor of the convoy. Not so long ago Israel and Turkey were allies, even conducting joint military exercises.

But Turkey, a member of NATO, has been moving away from Israel and the West and toward the Islamic bloc. Witness its recent, destructive foray into the Iranian nuclear game.

Instead of siding with Europe and America, ostensibly its allies, Turkey joined with Brazil to give cover for the Iranian program. Its prime minister even blasted the U.S., saying, "While they still have nuclear weapons, where do they get the credibility to ask other countries not to have them?"

These are the facts, and the truth. For the obvious stakes, they shouldn't present a dilemma for Obama.

He should do what any American president would—protect our friend and ally from the predators who want to devour it.



An article by Hillel Fendel titled "Obama Told Netanyahu: Go Home, Don't Explain From Here" was posted at israelnationalnews.com on June 2, 2010.

It said: "In the hubbub surrounding the 'battle of the flotilla,' Netanyahu's quick reversal of his decision to remain in the United States has been largely ignored. It turns out that Obama told him to leave because he didn't want Netanyahu to use the White House as a stage on which to present Israel's side of the story."

The article later said that there were "sources in both Jerusalem and Washington who say that Obama officials gave a clear message . . . Officials in both Washington and Jerusalem deny that this was the case."



An article titled "Israel Rejects Call to Join Anti-Nuclear Treaty" was posted at reuters.com on May 29, 2010.

It said: "Israel on Saturday rejected as 'flawed and hypocritical' a declaration by signatories of a global anti-nuclear arms treaty that urged it to sign the pact and make its atomic facilities subject to UN inspections.

"All 189 parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, including the United States, called on Friday in a declaration that singled out Israel for a conference in 2012 to discuss banning weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East."

The article later said: "Israel is presumed to have a sizable nuclear arsenal but neither confirms nor denies it. It is the only Middle East state that has not signed the NPT and, like fellow nonmembers India and Pakistan, did not take part in the review conference."



An article titled "Israel Recoils As U.S. Backs Nuclear Move" was posted at breitbart.com on May 30, 2010.

It said: "Washington's unprecedented backing for a UN resolution for a nuclear-free Middle East that singles out Israel has both angered and deeply worried the Jewish state although officials are cagey about openly criticizing their biggest ally."

The article later said: "Israel is widely believed to be the only nuclear power in the Middle East, with around 200 warheads, but has maintained a policy of deliberate ambiguity about its capabilities since the mid-1960s."



An article by Gil Ronen titled "Elite Troops Told: Prepare to Go Where We've Never Gone Before" was posted at israelnationsnews.com on May 30, 2010.

It said: "The newly trained soldiers of the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces'] top search and rescue unit—the Israel Air Force's Extrication and Evacuation Unit, known as Unit 669—received their unit wing pins Sunday. In his address to the newly inducted warriors, the highly revered unit's commander, Lt.-Col. Avinoam, hinted that they would soon find themselves far from Israel's borders."

The article later said: "While the remarks were purposely cryptic, they could be taken as referring to possible missions in Syria or Iran."



An article by Uzi Mahnaimi titled "Israel Stations Nuclear Missile Subs off Iran" was posted at timesonline.co.uk on May 30, 2010.

It said: "Three German-built Israeli submarines equipped with nuclear cruise missiles are to be deployed in the [Persian] Gulf near the Iranian coastline."

The article later said: "The submarines of Flotilla 7—*Dolphin*, *Tekuma* and *Leviathan*—have visited the Gulf before. But the decision has now been taken to ensure a permanent presence of at least one of the vessels."

The article quoted the flotilla's commander as saying: "We are an underwater assault force. We're operating deep and far, very far, from our borders."

The article quoted an Iranian admiral saying: "Anyone who wishes to do an evil act in the Persian Gulf will receive a forceful response from us."



An article by Chuck Freilich titled "Armageddon Scenario: Israel & the Threat of Nuclear Terrorism" was posted at israelnationalnews.com on May 31, 2010.

It said: "For the past 15 years Israel's focus on the Iranian nuclear program has been nearly all-encompassing, eclipsing virtually all other threats. A nuclear Iran would undoubtedly pose a severe threat to Israel; indeed, possibly even an existential one. The preoccupation with Iran, however, may have distracted Israel from another threat, one which may be less likely and actually far more difficult to counter: nuclear terrorism.

"Experts and policymakers are divided on the probability of nuclear terrorism, much as they are on the likelihood of Iran using nuclear weapons, should it succeed in attaining them. On one issue, however, they are in agreement: The threat of nuclear terrorism is not just a mirage. The risk is real, and cannot be discounted or wished away."