

The Gaza-bound Flotilla Publicity Stunt -- A Reasoned Review

June 5, 2010

by Sandra Warmoth

As an angered and deceived international community held its breath, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) today redirected another Gaza-bound cargo ship, the 1200-ton Irish-owned Rachel Corrie, to the Ashdod Harbor. This latest challenge to the Israeli naval blockade of Gaza came on the heels of a May 30 clash aboard the Turkish flagship, Mavi Marmaris, which spearheaded a six-vessel flotilla of passenger and cargo vessels bent on breaking that blockade. Although today's event ended without incident, the May 30 face-off resulted in the deaths of nine militants; injury to activists; and a brief kidnapping of IDF soldiers, who, upon boarding the ship, sustained wounds, some critical, from gunshots, stabbings, beatings, and being thrown to a lower deck.

Today's event occurred in the shadow of mounting pressure by world leaders trying to head off outbreaks of organized Muslim rage and spiking oil prices within their own spheres of influence. Again, Israel is the subject of scathing condemnations from traditionally anti-Israel world bodies – this time expressing “alarm and concern” at the bloody outcome of “so many innocents” involved in the May 30 flotilla encounter (<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs//2010/sc9940.doc.htm> and http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/public/story_page/029-74911-141-05-21-903-20100521STO74897-2010-21-05-2010/default_en.htm).

Upon closer inspection, however, the May 30 incident was a carefully orchestrated provocation, timed to coincide with the May 29-June 4 World Week for Peace in “palestine” and Israel

(<http://www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/1002253.htm>). This brazen made-for-media publicity stunt – dubbed a humanitarian mission – achieved several Islamist objectives, and the ramifications from the high seas drama that ensued are foreboding and will prove to be far-reaching. The objectives: (1) Directly challenge Israel's sovereignty over its territorial waters. (2) Violate the Israeli naval blockade on Gaza, which frustrates Islamist maritime terrorism and smuggling operations in Middle Eastern waters. There is a lengthy history of the IDF intercepting numerous sea-based attacks and seizing tons of explosives, arms, and ammunition en route to Islamic terrorist organizations (<http://www.ict.org.il/Articles/tabid/66/Articlsid/251/currentpage/6/Default.aspx> and <http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Government/Communiques/2002/Seizing%20of%20the%20Palestinian%20weapons%20ship%20Karine%20A%20->).

(3) Thwart routine Israeli security inspections at the Ashdod Harbor, which all Gaza-bound people and cargo must undergo. Such a move was an attempt to set a precedent to open the corridor for unhampered HAMAS smuggling operations that could include advance weapons and long-range missiles to further fortify the Islamist organization's stronghold in Gaza. HAMAS, which seized power in Gaza in 2007, maintains a state of belligerence toward Israel and repeatedly shells Gaza-belt Israeli cities with Katyusha rockets. (4) Cement support and activism from the manipulatable, undiscerning masses in preparation of an upcoming move to achieve "palestinian" statehood. (5) Provide the Arab-



Pictured: Weapons smuggled aboard the Karine A, overseen by and intended for the "palestinian" Authority. Israel's Navy and Air Force captured the vessel in 2002 in the Red Sea. The seizure turned up 50 tons of advanced weaponry, including Katyusha rockets capable of reaching Israeli cities and the Ben-Gurion International Airport.

Muslim bloc with an excuse to wage another war aimed at ridding the Fertile Crescent Region of the Jewish State and its associated democratic check in anticipation of forming a caliphate spanning the Asian and African continents, which would radically advance Islam's global revolutionary agenda. (6) Flex the muscle of the Ummah – worldwide Muslim community – in hosting countries to demonstrate that the nations are powerless to stop the Islamic revolution, and to serve as a reminder that raging protests and violent eruptions await those countries that try to resist. This global revolution is tactically advancing under the guise of human rights and self-determination. (7) Further erode Israel's international standing by inducing a sweeping diplomatic crisis, which hampers her ability to effectively fight Islamic terrorism in the Middle Eastern theater.

Keeping in mind the above objectives, consider the following while trying to navigate the seascape during this latest Arab-Israeli test of wills:

A telling comment rolled off the tongue of Israeli Arab and flotilla participant, Sheikh Ra'ad Salah, influential leader of the militant Northern Branch of the Islamic Movement in Israel. The Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), which monitors Arab media, reported in a special dispatch (<http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/0/4265.htm>) that Salah warned that the May 30 flotilla served as a harbinger of another flotilla that would be "returning the palestinian refugees to our country, to our plains, to our sea and our land, to our fields and our

groves.” His comment reflected the Muslim world’s drive to propel the “final status” issue on the so-called “right of return” for an ostensible 4.6 million “palestinian refugees” to the forefront of the world political agenda. Should the Muslim world ever get its way on this issue, it would mean the end of the Jewish State. Indeed, during a scathing Security Council rebuke aimed at Israel, Permanent Observer of “palestine” to the United Nations was noted promising that such fleets would continue to head for Gaza “until the blockade was ended and the suffering ameliorated for the ‘palestinian’ people.”

The bogus May 30 humanitarian mission to bring aid to the supposedly suffering “palestinians” of Gaza was organized and spearheaded by the HAMAS- and al-Qaeda-affiliated Turkish Humanitarian Relief Foundation, or İnsani Yardım Vakfı (IHH). Turkey has been warming up to Iran these days. The lightly armed Israeli soldiers had prepared for a mission to intercept peace activists, using riot dispersal equipment if necessary, and instead encountered well-armed al-Qaeda mercenaries (http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Government/Communiques/2010/Israel_Navy_warns_flotilla_31-May-2010.htm#weapons) donning bullet-proof vests. While some 560 civilian protestors were sent to a lower deck of the IHH flagship, the Mavi Marmaris, prior to the confrontation, an estimated 40 seasoned fighters who remained on the uppermost deck attacked the boarding soldiers with live fire; bladed weaponry, including large curved daggers and axes; as well as metal clubs, chains, bats, and slingshots with glass marbles. One soldier, displaying the entry and exit wounds he sustained from taking a bullet to the stomach reported to Prime Minister Binyamin “Bibi” Netanyahu the following first-hand account of the initial surprise encounter: “I came down second and as I did, they shot at me. Seven or eight fighters jumped on me and began to beat me with a bar. I was hit on the head and neck. Another man attacked me with a knife. I lost consciousness for forty-five minutes and when I came to it was already light. My friends came and saved me.”



Head of the IHH, Bulent Yildirim, at one point posing for the camera with a baby, gave media interviews on the evening of the face-off (see Turkish Television Channel NTW’s multi-language broadcast at

http://www.livestream.com/newchannel/popoutplayer?channel=insaniyardim&clip=pla_f18a073c-35dc-4288-92b0-bd0f9c37c61d) aboard the IHH vessel, whose largeness and weight afforded it the capability of breaking through the naval blockade. While he and the

rest of the well-oiled Islamic propaganda machine painted the activists aboard the flotilla as unarmed humanitarians – women, children, and the elderly – the MEMRI dispatch revealed that flotilla participants were determined to reach Gaza or die, and had been asked by organizers to prepare wills in advance in anticipation of possible martyrdom. Among the flotilla participants the report cited were heads of the Muslim Brotherhood, government officials with ties to this worldwide terrorist organization, terror-affiliated journalists, individuals and representatives of groups advocating armed resistance against Israel, and anti-Western supporters of terrorist organizations. This latter group included a bishop convicted and imprisoned in Israel for smuggling weapons from Lebanon to the “palestine” Liberation Organization and then later released at the Vatican’s request.

The Mavi Marmaris was determined to chart the flotilla’s deviant course to the Gaza port, which was repaired for the occasion, and where HAMAS awaited. The numerous official Israeli appeals to flotilla organizers and governments prior to the convoy’s departure, and then ample warnings from the IDF to the approaching convoy to redirect its route to the Ashdod Harbor to undergo the necessary security inspections all fell to deaf ears. In addition to the cache of weapons pictured in this report, the May 30 Gaza-bound cargo contained other contraband: firebombs, smoke bombs, gas masks, night vision equipment, a rifle scope and military-grade camouflage material.

The Ashdod Harbor is the proper channel from which to deliver legitimate humanitarian aid to Gaza. Israel routinely inspects and clears shipments of hundreds of tons of food, merchandise and supplies bound for the Arab nationals and Sunni Muslims – the so-called “palestinians” – living in the Strip. Israel even extended an offer to transfer the flotilla aid cargo after the security examinations; yet, this, too, for obvious reasons, was rejected out of hand. The organizers also had the option of having the Red Cross or the United Nations conduct the inspections.

The bottom line is that the politics of oppression and victimhood are serving Arab and Muslim interests well. They have succeeded in making the “palestinian question” the poster child for Islam’s sinister agenda. With all the short-lived memories, moral equivalency, and political expediency prevalent in international forums, our world leaders have blinded themselves to the fact that the Arab-Muslim bloc is sinisterly using the “palestinians” as a heart-wrenching political ploy to advance the Islamic revolution. The political fallout from just this one publicity stunt is noteworthy: The blustering anti-Israel declarations of outrage and dismay. The behind-the-scenes snubs of the Israeli Prime Minister. The heightened proclamations that a two-state “solution” on Jewish soil must go forth. The summoning of Israel’s ambassadors for explanations and rebukes. The recalling of ambassadors from Israel. The cancellations of planned joint military exercises and drills with Israel. The anti-Israel protests in capitals throughout the world. The frenzied calls from rogue regimes for Israel’s demise. The solidarity protests of rage from the Ummah.

The Arab-Muslim bloc has effectively tied the satisfactory resolution of the “palestinian question” to the unleashing of worldwide chaos. In the Islamist mindset, resolving the “palestinian question” means making Israel drink from the Gaza Sea – a popular euphemism for her obliteration. Hence, the “return” of a purported 4.6 million Jew-hating “palestinian refugees” flooding the Jewish State.

An honest review of history demonstrates that the only truly just solution to the “palestinian question” is repatriating these peoples back to their Arab and Muslim homelands. Standing up against the multi-faceted Islamist campaign of unrelenting terror, brinkmanship-style politics, major historical revisionism, and brazen publicity stunts is also the right thing to do. Yet, spineless, and well invested in the Middle Eastern oil and arms industries, our world leaders, in word and deed, demonstrate clearly that they have bought into the lie. Meanwhile our dithering is further emboldening the Islamists; inviting more outrageous acts, and advancing Islam’s revolutionary reach.

For well-researched, easy-to-understand backgrounders, read [“Revolutionary Islam and the Arab-Israeli Conflict: Connecting the Dots,”](#) or view The Zionists Series video, [“A Roundtable Discussion with Hilltop Youth Leader and ‘First Lady’ of Judea and Samaria, Daniella Weiss, and Fellow Activists.”](#)

The author is an independent Christian journalist and political scientist studied in the dynamics of revolutionary movements and political violence.