



PROPHETIC TIMES

WEEKLY WORLD NEWS UPDATE

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ISRAEL, IRAN DEPLOY WARSHIPS IN RED SEA

August 31, 2011 SpaceWar.com reported: "Israel's dispatch of two corvettes to bolster its naval forces in the Red Sea and Iran's deployment of a submarine and a warship in the same waters have heightened the tensions pervading the Middle East amid political upheaval and rivalries. The Israelis said their warships were ordered south to patrol off Egypt in response to intelligence reports that more terrorist attacks from Egyptian territory were imminent.

Tehran said the deployment by its 15th Fleet was intended as a mission of "peace and friendship" to "display the capabilities of the Islamic republic of Iran." It would also focus on "fighting piracy."

All these things may be true. But having Israeli and Iranian warships cruising in the same waters, which just happen to be a conduit for Iranian arms smuggled to Egypt destined for the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip, raises the prospect, remote though it might be, of a confrontation at sea between these bitter rivals.

In 2010, the Israeli air force and navy intercepted several Iranian arms shipments destined for Iranian-backed Palestinian fighters in Gaza.

And right now, Gaza and the vast desert expanse of the Sinai Peninsula on its western flank is opening up as a new front for Islamist militants, imported al-Qaida veterans and indigenous Bedouin, to attack Israel.

Earlier this month, eight Israelis, five Egyptian army officers and at least 15 infiltrators, including Egyptians, were killed in fighting along the southern end of Israel's border with Sinai. That bloodletting threatens to remilitarize Israel's southern front, which has been dormant, and unfortified, since the historic peace treaty between Israel and Egypt signed in March 1979.

That was the first such pact between the Jewish state and an Arab adversary and it's been the bedrock of Israel's strategic policy ever since... Suddenly Sinai, the battleground of four wars between Israel and Egypt between 1948 and 1973, was a hot zone again."..."



'PA UN STATE BID MORE DANGEROUS THAN THREATS FROM HAMAS'

August 29, 2011 The Jerusalem Post reports: "The threat of Palestinian state recognition at the UN is more dangerous to Israel than Hamas control in the Gaza Strip, Finance Minister Yuval Steinitz (Likud) told Israel Radio Wednesday. Steinitz said that Israel is unquestionably opposed to the Palestinian move, which Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's government has often called a unilateral action that undermines the peace process.

The finance minister also said that it is out of anyone's power to stop Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas from making his bid at the UN opening session on September 20. This sentiment echoed Defense Minister Ehud Barak, who told EU foreign affairs chief Catherine Ashton earlier this week that officials were beginning to work on influencing the wording of the Palestinian petition.

Steinitz, however, took a less conciliatory tone. 'This is a Palestinian attempt to get a state without giving anything to Israel in return, without peace, without security, and without giving up on the demand to return [Palestinian] refugees [to Israel],' he said.

Abbas said recently that he would not give up on the right of return for refugees, despite some legal experts saying refugee status would be affected by UN state recognition, and that the PLO would continue to function until all Palestinian issues were resolved..."..."

'EXTERMINATE CHRISTIANS, CLOSE PYRAMIDS, SPHINX'

August 30, 2011 WorldNetDaily.com reports: "A rising leader in the radical Islamic movement in Egypt that has become a major political player since the demise of Hosni Mubarak's regime says Christian churches may need to be blown up and Christians exterminated to allow the advance of Islamic law, or Shariah.

The comments come from Sheik 'Adel Shehato, a senior leader with the Egyptian Islamic Jihad terrorist group. The sheik was jailed in 1991 because of his positions but was released earlier this year in the revolution that removed Mubarak from power...The sheik, a senior jihadist leader, responded to a question about using violence against Christians, who make up a substantial minority in Egypt.

'Are you against blowing up churches?' the newspaper interviewer asked Shehato.

'Yes and no,' he replied. 'The Christian is free to worship his God in his church, but if the Christians make problems for the Muslims, I will exterminate them. I am guided by the Shariah, and it stipulates that they must pay the jizya tax while in a state of humiliation.'

'These positions of yours frighten us, as Egyptians,' the interviewer said.

'I will not act [in ways] that contradict my faith just in order to please the people. ... We say to the Christians, convert to Islam or pay the jizya, otherwise we will fight you. The Shariah is not based on logic but on divine law. That is why we oppose universal, manmade constitutions.'..."

IRANIAN NUCLEAR BID COULD PROVOKE ATTACK: SARKOZY

August 31, 2011 Breitbart.com reported: "France's President Nicolas Sarkozy warned on Wednesday that Iran's alleged attempts to build long-range missiles and nuclear weapons could lead unnamed countries to launch a pre-emptive attack.

"Its military nuclear and ballistic ambitions constitute a growing threat that may lead to a preventive attack against Iranian sites that would provoke a major crisis that France wants to avoid at all costs," he said. Sarkozy did not say which country might launch such a strike, but it has been reported that Israel -- perhaps with US support -- has considered bombing Iranian nuclear sites if it believes Tehran is close to building a weapon.

The French leader placed the blame for the crisis on Iran, which insists it has no intention of building a nuclear weapon, and is merely enriching nuclear fuel for medical research and a domestic atomic energy programme.

"Iran refuses to negotiate seriously," he told an annual meeting of French diplomats. "Iran is carrying out new provocations in response to the challenge from the international community for it to provide a credible response."

Sarkozy said France would work with its allies to build support for tougher international sanctions against Tehran's Islamist regime, in a bid to force it to back down over its enrichment programme."...

The UN Security Council has repeatedly ordered Tehran to halt all uranium enrichment until its agency the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is satisfied by of the peaceful nature of its nuclear activities."..."

CHINA CONFRONTS INDIAN NAVY VESSEL

August 31, 2011 The Financial Times reported: "A Chinese warship confronted an Indian navy vessel shortly after it left Vietnamese waters in late July in the first such reported encounter between the two countries' navies in the South China Sea. The unidentified Chinese warship demanded that India's INS Airavat, an amphibious assault vessel, identify itself and explain its presence in international waters shortly after it completed a scheduled port call in Vietnam, five people familiar with the incident told the Financial Times.

This latest example of China's naval assertiveness has irked defence officials in India and Vietnam. China claims the South China Sea in its entirety, rejecting partial claims by Vietnam, Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines and Taiwan over the resource-rich region.

"Any navy in the world has full freedom to transit through these waters or high seas," said one Indian official familiar with the encounter. "For any country to proclaim ownership or question the right to passage by any other nation is unacceptable."..."

SELF-IMPORTANT APPROACH WORRIES BERLIN'S ALLIES

August 31, 2011 Der Spiegel reported: "The euro has failed, though more politically than economically, according to an article in the September edition of US magazine Vanity Fair. "Conceived as a tool for integrating Germany into Europe, and preventing Germans from dominating others, it has become the opposite," financial journalist and author Michael Lewis writes. "For better or for worse, the Germans now own Europe."

The fact that a reunited Germany has weathered the Western world's financial crisis with ease, at least so far, has made its neighbors and friends uneasy. In the political salons of Washington and Paris, from Brussels to Madrid, and inside political broadsheets and think tanks, people are asking whether the new Germany is altering its foreign policy. Is Berlin turning away from the European Union, or is it the opposite, that it wants to use the currency to gain control of the entire continent -- something it couldn't do with weapons?

Geostrategists point to the emergence of a power imbalance, along with possible new conflicts between rival countries. In a guest commentary published by The New York Times last week, Former British Prime Minister Gordon Brown criticized Germany's approach. "Germany's recent failure to act from a position of strength endangers not only the country itself, but the entire euro project that Germany has spent decades developing," he wrote."...But at the heart of this debate remains the question: Where is Germany headed?

In Washington, Chancellor Angela Merkel is seen as an uncertain ally. The Americans question whether she has truly left her East German past behind, or if she is rediscovering it -- at least in terms of Germany's interests."... *Germany*

Conservative writer Ariel Cohen has even suggested that a "New Axis" has formed between Germany and Russia. The situation calls to mind the Italian seaside city of Rapallo, where both countries met in 1922 to sign a treaty of cooperation that indicated mistrust in the Western victors of World War I, he said."..."

"Right now there is a lot of uncertainty about Germany's possible turn towards the East," says Europe specialist Heather Conley, from the Center for Strategic and International Studies. Berlin's is on the brink of a new era in foreign policy based more on interest-driven politics than the perceived selflessness of a pan-European paymaster, an image that developed during former Chancellor Helmut Kohl's era."..."

In light of its strength, Germany needs to start asking itself a question that has long worried American politicians: As an export powerhouse, how does the country search for new markets in Russia and Asia without snubbing its traditional allies? Those allies include the other European Union nations, and their concern about Germany is growing."..."

