

# NEWS REVIEW



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## The Myth of the Siege of Gaza

Jonathan D. Halevi | Jerusalem Centre for Public Affairs | June 2010

- Since 2007, Israel has maintained a legal maritime blockade around Gaza whose purpose is to keep rockets and other weapons out of the hands of Hamas, while letting food and other humanitarian aid in. Yet there have been a wide variety of officials and commentators who insist that Gaza is starving, setting the stage for the repeated efforts of "humanitarian" ships to break the Gaza blockade.
- Gaza is not cut off from the outside world. In the last year, the markets of Gaza have been flooded with produce and merchandise. In fact, in 2009, a total of 7,233 truckloads of humanitarian aid from the international community passed from Israel into Gaza. From June 2007 (the date of the Hamas military takeover of Gaza), overall monetary transfers to Gaza have totaled over \$5 billion from governmental and extra governmental sources. The governor of the Central Bank of the Palestinian Authority, Jihad al-Wazir, confirmed that 56 percent of the PA budget is designated for Gaza. Gaza receives additional aid funds directly from Iran and the Arab countries.
- There is also an established economic system of Palestinian imports from Egypt via hundreds of tunnels operating under the control of a Hamas government that grants approval for operating them and collects taxes from their owners. The tunnel network has increased imports from Egypt to Gaza from \$30 million annually during the years 1994-2006 to more than \$650 million annually. Given the abundance of supply, the price of diesel fuel and gasoline, delivered to Gaza through pipes from Egypt, is half that of the price in Israel.
- Farid Zakout, director of the Gaza Construction Association, told the Palestinian newspaper *Al-Ayyam* that the price of a ton of cement now stands at NIS 800 as opposed to NIS 1,200 two months ago, and over NIS 3,000 more than a year ago. Cement prices fell after some 80 percent of tunnel owners began to import cement. The renewed surge in construction activity has fostered a rise of 25 percent in the number of those employed in the industry. [Read the full article](#)

## If Israel is not evil, the world is in big trouble

Dennis Prager | Townhall.com | 8 June

With the exception of the United States, nearly all the world's nations; newspapers, radio and TV news stations; the United Nations; and the world's Leftist academics and organizations have condemned Israel over the Gaza flotilla incident. The characterizations of the Jewish state range from a society so evil that it should not be allowed to exist to a villainous nation that is responsible for a) the suffering of millions of innocent Palestinian men, women and children; b) the lack of Mideast peace; therefore c) the Muslim world's anger at the West; and therefore d) Islamic terrorism itself. Let's hope the world is right.

Israel is almost totally isolated. A visitor from another planet would have every reason to report back home that the greatest problem on planet earth was this planet's Jewish state.

Though Israel is the size of the American state of New Jersey and smaller than El Salvador, and though its population is smaller than that of Sweden, Burundi and Bolivia, it is the most censured

country in United Nations history.

The reason mankind has to hope that the world, its leaders, its newspapers, its so-called human rights organizations and the United Nations are right about Israel is quite simple: If Israel is the decent party in its war with the Palestinian Authority and Hamas -- and nearly all the world's countries, nearly all the world's media and the United Nations are morally wrong - what hope is there for humanity? If the world's moral compass is that broken, are we not sailing into a dark age?

[Read More](#)

## What about Hamas's siege of Gaza?

Khaled Abu Toameh | Hudson New York | 8 June

As Israeli naval commandos raided the flotilla ship convoy that was on its way to the Gaza Strip, Hamas security officers stormed the offices of five non-governmental organisations, confiscated equipment and documents, and ordered them closed indefinitely.

Ever since it seized control over the Gaza Strip in the summer of 2007, Hamas has imposed a reign of terror on the local population in general and its critics in particular. Hamas has brought nothing to the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip other than death and disaster. [Read More](#)

## BICOM Analysis:

### Turkish-Israeli relations and the Gaza flotilla incident

#### Key points

- The events surrounding the Gaza flotilla are the latest in a series of crises that have hit relations between Ankara and Jerusalem.
- The AKP and its Islamist ideology exacerbate growing Turkish hostility to Israel. But the picture is complex, with Turkey's considerations influenced by its changing interests and ambitions in a rapidly shifting region.
- Turkey is currently turning eastwards. A large, rich and powerful Sunni Muslim country, it is seeking to emerge as the central power broker in the region. A gradual shift away from Israel forms a part of this larger ambition. It is important to remember, however, that Iran and Turkey are vying for the same goal - namely, regional domination.
- The presence of a powerful, probably Islamic oriented Turkey seeking to emerge as the key power broker in the region is serving to severely complicate efforts to isolate and eventually roll back truly dangerous and destructive forces, such as the regime in Iran and its client Hamas. [Read More](#)

## Shouldn't we all be Israelis now?

Kyle-Anne Shiver | American Thinker | 8 June

...Remembering the fears of my Jewish friend, I must now ask whether Barack Obama is signaling to the entire Muslim world that Israel is theirs for the taking, that America will stand aside and twiddle our collective thumbs while Iran and her Muslim neighbours finally get to carry out Holocaust II.

And for the very first time in my life, I am ashamed of my country.

The only thing I can add is that I now declare myself, a devout Catholic, Jewish too. And it would seem the only moral thing any of us can do is to proclaim this as loudly and as furiously as we can. When Helen Thomas says the Jews need to go back to Poland and Germany, and those on a "peace flotilla" tell an Israeli soldier to "go back to Auschwitz," and a president looks the other way while evil parades as good right under his nose, then the time for silence has passed. There is a quirky

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Contact the Board for more information:

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verse in the book of Genesis which any God-fearing person ought now heed, in my opinion. Speaking of the Jews, His chosen people, God told Abraham: "I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse."

I say again, shouldn't we all be Israelis now? Yes, we should. [Read More](#)

## The Jews couldn't just 'go home': A history lesson for Helen Thomas

Richard Cohen | Daily News NY | 8 June

Ah, another teachable moment! This one comes to us from Helen Thomas, the longtime White House reporter and columnist who announced her retirement yesterday. Thomas, of Lebanese ancestry and almost 90, has never been shy about her anti-Israel views, for which, as far as I'm concerned, she is both wrong and entitled. Then the other day, she performed a notable public service by revealing how very little she knew. Asked if she had any comments about Israel, Thomas said, "Tell them to get the hell out of Palestine. . . . Go home. Poland. Germany. And America and everywhere else." Well, I don't know about "everywhere else," but after World War II, many Jews did attempt to "go home" to Poland. This resulted in the murder of about 1,500 of them - killed not by Nazis but by Poles, either out of sheer ethnic hatred or fear they would lose their (stolen) homes. [Read more](#)

## In search of peace



In the wake of the Gaza flotilla raid, the world's press may now be focusing exclusively on the seemingly unsolvable battle between the Arabs and the Jews, but peacemakers all over the region continue to work quietly towards a better future. [Read all the stories](#)

The Board of Deputies Executive does not believe that public rallies, especially outdoor rallies, are the best way to counter the delegitimisation of Israel in the aftermath of the flotilla incident. Our hasbara has to become as smart and effective as the campaign being waged against the Jewish people. The Board and the SZC organised a well-attended gathering at Central Synagogue last Sunday night (see You Tube) and Board, and SZC, speakers addressed an information evening at Kehillat Masada. But we are otherwise focussing our energies on what works as the most effective way to support Israel. Some in the community, however, want to have a rally and they are entitled to do so. We asked them to take CSG's advice, which they have now done. The SZC has sent us the following flyer and the Board is circulating it, as a further expression of its solidarity with Israel and of community unity.

**Stand with Israel** SZC NSW  
public support rally

Monday, 14 June 2010  
(Queens Birthday Long Weekend)

3pm - 4pm

**Barracluff Park**  
(Cnr Old South Head Rd & Warners Ave, Nth Bondi)

In the event of wet weather, proceed to Mizrahi Synagogue next to the park. Enquiries call 9360 6300