



# ***ISRAEL MATTERS!***

Publication of the Israel Affairs Committee of Temple Beth Shalom

Issue Number 39  
September 2010

## **House Republicans Give Green Light for Israeli Strike on Iran**

### **Iran Warns Against Israeli Invasion of Lebanon**

Iran has warned that if Israel were to invade Lebanon, it would be counter-attacked by several countries in the region. According to Iran's Fars News Agency, an Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman issued the warning saying that while it's unlikely Israel will invade Lebanon, the "Zionist regime would be slapped hard in the face by the regional states if it dares to attack Lebanon again."

The possibility of clashes between Israel and Lebanon was heightened recently after Lebanese snipers shot and killed an Israeli officer along the northern border and wounded a second officer during routine IDF tree-clearing work on the Israeli side of the border. Israeli soldiers returned fire, killing three Lebanese soldiers and a journalist who had been invited to observe the pre-planned Lebanese army ambush. Arabic and Muslim media was quick to blame Israel for the incident, reversing the chronology of the events and suggesting that the assault was due to an Israeli incursion.

The Lebanese Daily Star reported that Lebanese Foreign Minister Ali Shami applauded Iran's support of Lebanon against "Israeli aggression." Ali Shami, who was in Tehran when the comments were made, said Lebanon was grateful for the "material and moral support of Iran against the Zionist regime."

Nearly one third of the Republican congressmen in the U.S. House of Representatives have introduced a resolution that would support Israel's right to use "all means necessary to confront and eliminate nuclear threats posed by Iran", including military force. The resolution was introduced by Rep. Louie Gohmert [R-Texas, photo at left] and 46 co-sponsors.



House Resolution 1553 "condemns the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran for its threats of 'annihilating' the United States and the State of Israel, for its continued support of international terrorism, and for its incitement of genocide of the Israeli people." It "supports using all means of persuading the Government of Iran to stop building and acquiring nuclear weapons" and pledges that the U.S. will ensure that Israel "continues to receive critical economic and military assistance, including missile defense capabilities, needed to address the threat of Iran."

In addition, the resolution "expresses support for Israel's right to use all means necessary to confront and eliminate nuclear threats posed by Iran, defend Israeli sovereignty, and protect the lives and safety of the Israeli people, including the use of military force if no other peaceful solution can be found within a reasonable time."

The National Iranian American Council (NIAC), a pro-Iranian lobby group, is indignant over the resolution. "Obviously we are reaching silly season in Washington with the elections in November," said NIAC's founder-president Trita Parsi. He added that "there have already been some signs that Israel is going to be a major element that some Republicans will use to get both voters as well as finance donations to campaigns, away from the Democrats." However, Parsi said, "even silly season has real repercussions on the real world." The resolution sends "a dangerous signal" to Israel, that some in congress welcome military action by it against Iran, while the White House and U.S. military oppose such a strike, he argued.

NIAC warned that an attack on Iran would ignite a regional war that would put the lives of "innocent Americans, Iranians, and Israelis" in harm's way, as well as risking the pro-democracy movement in Iran, U.S. national security, and the stability of Iraq and Afghanistan and the global economy, which relies on oil from the Persian Gulf.

## Israeli "Trophy" Anti-RPG System to be Installed on US Armored Vehicles

FoxNews has reported that Israel's "Trophy" double-radar anti-RPG (rocket-propelled grenade) system will soon be installed on US Army armored vehicles in Iraq on a trial basis. The report details the system that "works like a futuristic force field," and which sources say has already been installed in Israeli Merkava 4 tanks.

Trophy, which looks "no more menacing than an automatic tennis ball launcher," one analyst said, is designed to be mounted on a fighting vehicle while it provides a virtual bubble of protection. The system uses one radar to detect the launching of an RPG at it. Another radar then tracks the incoming missile and detects when it is in range. At that point, Trophy employs a counter-measure, the details of which are still secret, to directly hit and neutralize the threat, thus detonating it before it makes contact with the targeted tank or vehicle. The now-powerless RPG might still hit its target, but with no more force than any other metal object, and would certainly not be able to penetrate.

John Pike, director of the GlobalSecurity.org website, says, "The future of the United States Army is riding on the proposition that something like this can work." The report emphasized that Trophy does not work against IEDs (improvised explosive devices, otherwise known as roadside bombs) or land mines, but rather is designed to eliminate the explosive capability of threats flying at a vehicle. It can also be outfitted for helicopters, but not on ships. Only IEDs have killed more American soldiers in Iraq than RPGs.

## Greece, Israel to Tighten Ties

Greece and Israel will undergo "a major upgrade of relations," said Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's spokesman following a recent meeting between Netanyahu and Greek Prime Minister George Papandreou, whose visit was the first by a Greek prime minister in decades.



Israel's tighter ties with Greece come on the heels of a sharp deterioration in ties between Israel and Turkey. Papandreou denied a connection between the two, telling reporters, "I've been thinking of forging closer ties with Israel for about two years." However, the history of Greek-Turkish relationships has been characterized more by conflict than by cooperation, with the once violent controversy of the two countries over control of Cyprus a noted example. Both country's national days celebrate victories over one another.

Papandreou also met with President Shimon Peres, Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman, and Opposition leader Tzipi Livni.

The two prime ministers discussed their common ground. Jerusalem and Athens provided the basis for Western civilization, Netanyahu said, and Israel and Greece are now sources of stability in the Middle East. Papandreou recalled the Holocaust, in which many Greeks were killed, concluding, "We too say 'never again.'" The planned upgrade in ties is expected to include closer cooperation regarding finance and technology. Greece has been experiencing a severe economic crisis in recent months.

## Shiloh, Israel's Capital for 400 Years, Being Uncovered



As Israel's enemies attempt to deny the nation's connection to its homeland, archaeologists keep digging at the facts. In Shiloh, north of Beit El, excavations are currently being carried out under the auspices of the Archaeological Staff Officer for Judea and Samaria in the IDF Civilian Administration Antiquities Unit and the Binyamin local authority. Shiloh was where the Holy Sanctuary – precursor to the Holy Temple – stood for about 400 years during the era of the Judges. It is first mentioned in the Book of Joshua, which also states that the Holy Sanctuary was built there. In the Book of Samuel, Shiloh is mentioned as a religious center, where Elkana and his family go to give sacrifices to G-d. During that pilgrimage, Elkana's wife, Hana, asks G-d to give her a son – and she eventually gives birth to Samuel the Prophet.



Shiloh is believed by researchers to have fallen into ruin after the Israelites' unsuccessful war with the Philistines, in which the enemy took the Holy Ark captive. The Ark was soon returned to Israel, but was never brought back to Shiloh. Instead, it was taken to Kiryat Yearim until King David had it delivered to Jerusalem. Archaeological findings indicate that a Jewish presence continued at Shiloh until the year 722 BCE, when the Kingdom of Israel was defeated by Assyria. According to the Book of Judges and the Mishna, unwed Jewish women traditionally went to the vineyards of Shiloh to dance on Tu B'Av.

## Gallup Poll Suggests: Move to Israel and Be Happy

Israelis are among the happiest people in the world, according to a new Gallup Poll published recently by Forbes magazine. Israel was tied with three other countries for eighth place, placing far ahead of the United States and Britain.

Gallup surveyed thousands of people in 155 countries between the years 2005 and 2009, asking respondents about their overall "life satisfaction" and about daily experiences on particular subjects and feelings. These included how they are respected and if they feel well-rested, free of pain, and intellectually active. Those who scored high on the poll were considered to lead thriving lives.

Following the four Scandinavian countries of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden atop the list, the next three rankings were shared by Holland, Costa Rica and New Zealand, with only a percentage point putting them ahead of the four-way tie among Israel, Canada, Switzerland and Australia. All four of the latter scored a 62 percent report of people whose lives are thriving.

The United States, where only 57 percent of the population are happy, was in 14th place, tied with Australia. The United Kingdom was in 17th place, with a score of only 54 percent.

Israel has one of the lowest suicide rates, as well as a high fertility rate, another indication of happiness.

## Lebanon to US: "Keep Your Money, and Israel Too"

Lebanon has told the United States to keep its money if America insists that it cannot be used on weapons with which to fight Israel. Lebanese Defense Minister Elias Murr told reporters at a Beirut news conference recently that those who want to help the Lebanese Army but place conditions on how their funds or weapons are used, should "keep the money." Murr's comments followed a U.S. Congressional decision to freeze a previously approved \$100 million aid package to Lebanon. The decision was made only 24 hours before an attack by Lebanese Army soldiers on an IDF unit conducting routine border maintenance. Snipers shot and killed an IDF officer and wounded a second.

House Foreign Affairs Committee chairman Howard Berman said he decided August 2 to suspend Lebanon's military funding in light of the increased involvement by the Hizbullah terrorist organization in Lebanese Army affairs, as he was concerned that the money would be spent on weapons with which to attack the U.S. ally. Berman added in a statement after the attack, "The incident on the Israel-Lebanon border only one day after my hold was placed simply reinforces the critical need for the United States to conduct an in-depth policy review of its relationship with the Lebanese military."

In response, Murr told journalists at a Beirut news conference, "Whoever sets as a condition that the aid should not be used to protect Lebanon's land, people and borders from the [Zionist] enemy can keep their money. Let them keep their money or give it to Israel. We will confront [Israel] with our own capabilities."

A second Lebanese official had preceded Murr earlier in the week by calling on the Beirut government to turn to Russia, China, Syria and Iran for future support.

## First Female Arab Combat Soldier in IDF

Cpl. Elinor Joseph, a Christian Arab from Haifa, completed an important stage of combat training in the IDF's Karakal Battalion - notable in that she is the first Arab female combat soldier in IDF history. Joseph grew up in a mixed Jewish-Arab neighborhood and attended an Arab school. She later moved to an all-Arab neighborhood. Her father served in the IDF Paratroopers Unit, but she never thought she would enlist. "I wanted to go abroad to study medicine and never come back," Joseph told the IDF Spokesman's Unit. Her father expected her to enlist in the army, but "I was scared to lose my friends because they objected to it. They told me they wouldn't speak to me. I was left alone."

Ultimately, despite their opposition, she decided to enlist. "I decided to go head-to-head," she said, "to check who my true friends are, to do something in life that I have never done before. I understood that it was most important to defend my friends, family, and country. I was born here.... With time, when you do things from the heart, you begin to understand their importance." She originally thought she might like to be a combat medic, but "the placement officer laughed in my face and said I was too delicate. I started to cry." She fought to receive a high enough medical categorization for combat placement, but it still took many months before she actually received a combat position.

After her basic training, Joseph took a medic's training course, in which she was selected as the outstanding soldier. She was assigned to a military police post at the Kalkilya crossing, east of Kfar Saba. "I enjoyed it there [and] liked the people," she recalls, though she felt the dilemma of serving at a border crossing. During moments of difficulty and misgiving, she says, "I would remember that a Katyusha [fired by Hizbullah] fell near my house and also hurt Arabs. If someone tells me that serving in the IDF means killing Arabs, I remind them that Arabs also kill Arabs." Elinor believes that being a combat soldier means that she is granting all Israeli citizens, including Israeli-Arabs like her parents, a better and quieter life. "I still believe that peace will come, and faith creates reality," she says.