

Let\222s Have Another Look at the \223Humanitarian\224 Flotilla
Posted On:December 31, 1969

A supposedly humanitarian flotilla that set out in June to break the Israeli blockade of Hamas in Gaza can be looked at a number of ways. The event was not what it seemed in the first 24 hours, when the world press was treated to conflicting video tapes from both sides. What really went on?

The Players.

\225 The Israelis have grown increasingly sour over events in Gaza, a region once occupied by Egypt and later by the PLO. When the Israelis, under world (and domestic) pressure, moved settlers and the military out of Gaza, leaving behind factories and an entire truck gardening business for the people of Gaza, they were met with mobs who looted and torched all of these enterprises, depriving their fellow citizens of their work and opportunity.

\225 Hamas. As the world\222s elite (in the UN) pushed a democratic election on Gaza, they got "one man, one vote, one time." Hamas, an Islamist fascist group supported by Iran and Syria, won that election and immediately caught and killed every PLO official they could find. There will never be another election there, unless it is a charade to fool the gullible.

\225 Turkey. Turkey, the once staunch secular Muslim country in the region with solid friendships with the US and Israel, is changing. The Turkish leadership is now Islamist\227and they smarted in the past at the ability of the Army to keep Turkey from falling into their hands. Unfortunately, the Turkish poor and pious now outnumber the elite and secular. European pressure on \223democratic reforms\224 has defanged the military. Once more, elections produced a result that threatens the future of the democracy. The Islamist government is already preparing a \223show trial\224 of the country\222s leading military, accused of plotting a coup.

\225 The Fellow Travelers. Since the anarchist terrorist days of the 1970s in Europe (and partly in US universities), there has been an unseemly love affair between political radicals and Palestinians. It is not that Palestinians representing human rights; they do not; it is that Israel is seen as a neo-colonial power and a microcosm of the United States, whom political radicals detest. Israel has become the straw-man for everything that the far left detests: industrialization, capitalist economy, a powerful military/industrial complex, and unwillingness to be a victim again.

The Capers Unfolds. Israel was challenged by a motley flotilla of \223human rights advocates\224 who wanted to break the embargo. Israel wanted to tow the ships to the harbor, check their cargo, and send the contents on to Gaza. They have cause. Hamas has been armed before (by Iran and Syria) and shelled Israeli cities and towns until the Gaza war put an end to it for now.

The Israelis boarded the first Turkish ship, manned by Turkish Islamists\227associates of Hamas\227who beat and knifed the Israeli special forces. Under rules of engagement, the Israelis fought back, killing nine Turks. This event was publicized as an \223attack on unarmed aid workers\224 by enraged fellow travelers. However, nobody explained why the Turks on this ship left behind martyrdom tapes\227the procedure used by suicide bombers. They knew that their deaths were possible\227and they were willing to do this to delegitimize Israel.

Conflicting Motives. The Turks have failed to gain entrance into the EU, so they now are re-embracing the Muslim world. They once ruled it, and perhaps think to do so again.

Israel, in its continuing frustration, let itself be set up. They could have waited until these ships were in their waters to board. They also need to reconsider the items on the embargo list. Jam, nutmeg, and other such items do not belong there\227and the concrete is needed to rebuild housing destroyed in the war. If it is used by Hamas to build bunkers, there are other ways to address that.

Consequences. Israel got a black eye in this fracas. Turkey is now being looked at harder by its former friends. And real democracy has been the victim of premature enthusiasm for it. One man, one vote, one time, is not democracy.

681 words

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