

## Scimitars, Settlements and UNESCO

The sabers are rattling in their scabbards across the Middle East. There are several cross currents here that must be examined in detail. Last week the United Nations Economic, Social and Cultural Organization admitted the Palestinian Authority to membership.

*The vote by the Paris-based U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, or Unesco, to accept the Palestinian Authority as a full member—well exceeding the two-thirds majority needed for approval—was seen by U.S. and Israeli officials as undercutting attempts to relaunch those talks. Israel is worried as well that Palestinian membership in international organizations could be used to undermine legitimacy of the Jewish state.*

(<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204528204577009593895018740.html>)

Responding to this action, Israel will expand the construction of housing units in East Jerusalem.

*JERUSALEM — Israel gave preliminary approval Tuesday to the construction of about 1,100 new housing units in East Jerusalem, brushing aside pleas from U.S. and European diplomats to delay the controversial project as they attempt to restart peace talks.*

*The Interior Ministry's green light will clear the way for a significant expansion of the Jewish development of Gilo, located on land seized by Israel during the 1967 Middle East War. (*  
<http://www.leaderpost.com/life/Israel+units+Jerusalem+settlement/5462654/story.html?id=5462654#ixzz1ca8kS7Ra>)

To this we must add some of the more explosive events of the last few days.

*Beersheba, Ashkelon, Ashdod and Sderot were under missile attack from Gaza Monday night, Oct. 31 - hours after Israel's Home Front Minister Mattan Vilnai stated the Jihad Islami offensive launched Saturday was over. Seven missiles flew across the border on Day 3 of the assault, one intercepted in Beersheba by an Iron Dome battery. Sunday night Israeli mayors and council heads of key southern towns questioned the military assessment and kept schools closed. The continuing barrage and the army's decision to park an nterceptor battery in Rehovot, 32 kilometers northeast of the Gaza Strip, proved they were right. (*  
<http://www.debka.com/article/21435/>)

*The Israel Air Force completed a large-scale drill with Italy and NATO over the Italian island of Sardinia in recent days. Details of the exercise were released on Wednesday, in the shadow of intensive media reports over a possible Israeli attack on Iran's nuclear program.*

*Li.-Col. Y, commander of the 117th Squadron of F-16 fighter jets which took part in the simulation, said his pilots flew over ocean waters west of Italy and carried out maneuvers together with the Italian air force. (*  
<http://www.jpost.com/Defense/Article.aspx?id=244131>)

And finally:

*Wednesday, Nov. 2, shortly after announcing the successful test launch from the Palmachim base of a new, intercontinental ballistic missile capable of carrying a nuclear warhead, Israel disclosed in unusual detail a joint Israeli-Italian air exercise ending last Friday, Nov. 29, at Sardinia.*

*Foreign sources identified the ICBM as an upgraded Jericho 3 said able to deliver a 750-kilo nuclear warhead to a distance of 7,000 kilometers - further, if fitted with a smaller warhead. Western intelligence experts estimate that 42 missiles with conventional warheads are enough to seriously*

*disable Iran's main nuclear facilities in Natanz, Isfahan and Arak.*  
(<http://www.debka.com/article/21441/>)

**ANALYSIS.** Lots of cross currents going on here. Lots of moving pieces means more chances for something to go wrong. The first thread is the Palestinian Authority's (PA) attempt to circumvent the "peace process" by obtaining recognition by various international bodies that they hope will culminate in a Security Council declaration of a Palestinian state. Israel's almost immediate response was to punish the PA by approving construction of additional housing units in parts of East Jerusalem that the PA wants as part of the State of Palestine.

It would appear that Netanyahu is prepared to trap the PA by taking land off the table every time that the PA attempts to circumvent direct talks. This the PA will continue to do and is undoubtedly part of their plan to get their state without having to recognize Israel. Recognizing a Jewish state or national homeland in the "lands of Islam", and especially failing to have total control of the third holiest site in Islam, is religiously impossible.

This is something that is understood by both sides but unfortunately not by most of the rest of the World. This is the part of the World that refuses to recognize that the conflict between Israel and the rest of the Middle East is religious and therefore cannot be solved except by the defeat of one side or the other in combat.

It would appear from the last two articles that Israel is preparing for just that combat as is Iran. I have flown over the same areas that the Israeli Air Force just conducted its exercise. Orisano Bay has two great advantages. First it has a fine air-to-ground range located on the north tip of the land that forms the bay. Second, it is home to the Air Combat Maneuvering Instrumentation Range (ACMI) that runs from Orisano Bay south over the water for about 50 miles. I have flown there many times. It is a great place to do air-to-air training as you can fly your aircraft to their limits. A week's worth of this kind of training is invaluable especially if you are getting ready for a major operation.

Then there is the test of an improved Jericho ballistic missile. I presume that 7,000 kilometers is sufficient to reach Tehran from the Negev. A throw weight of 750 kilograms (1653 pounds) is sufficient to get a rather large yield nuclear weapon to Iran. Alternatively, Israel could construct a conventional penetrator warhead to go after Iranian facilities buried underground. Additionally, the US recently transferred approximately 55 GBU-28 penetrators to Israel. (<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/systems/munitions/gbu-28.htm>)

Against this background of preparations for war we must also look the recent three day missile and mortar barrage fired into Israel from the Gaza. This latest barrage has been credited to Jihad Islami. Jihad Islami is purported to be a smaller but more militant group than Hamas. Jihad Islami is also reported to be funded by and at the direction of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards (IRGC) Qods Force. Exactly what the Iranians were trying to do here is unknown. However, it is likely that the Qods Force was attempting to undermine the authority of Hamas in the Gaza to prevent the Hamas political organization from moving to Cairo from Damascus. Once in Cairo Hamas could be insulated from influence by Iran. Iran is loathe to lose control of Hamas and the ability to harass Israel from Gaza.

Into this witch's brew we must add the situation in Syria. It is apparent that Assad cannot crush the opposition as his father did. The Syrian opposition has more outside support than it did in the early 1980s. Turkey is, by all accounts, aiding the opposition with logistics support and training. It is allowing the opposition to perhaps conduct operations against the Syrian Army from its territory. How long Assad can last against this revolution is unknown. But while the Syrian Army is busy killing its own people, it cannot be preparing for an offensive against Israel or Saudi Arabia. This is the Iranian

dilemma. Syria: use it or lose it.

This puts significant pressure on Iran to complete the Shiite Crescent by co-opting the Shiite lead government of Iraq or openly invading and taking control of the Shiite portions of Iraq, especially the Imam Ali and Imam Hussein mosques. It is from the Imam Hussein mosque that the Mahdi is to reappear. I would expect Iran to move into Iraq shortly after the US troop withdrawal is complete. For the background of this analysis see *The Coming is Upon Us* ( <http://atimetobetray.com/blog/iran-leaders-the-coming-is-upon-us-%E2%80%93-israel-shall-be-destroyed-watch-the-video/> ).

Upcoming on November 8 is the supposed release of a new report from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) detailing Iran's progress towards a nuclear weapon. This report will not be favorable to Iran. The Obama administration is reported to be considering either an embargo on the sale of Iranian oil or an embargo on dealing with the Iranian central bank. The oil embargo would attempt to cut the income of Iran down to nothing. This is probably not possible in the short run. The People's Republic of China buys too much Iranian oil.

The second sanction would, I believe, be much more effective. No matter how much oil you sell, you must still process the payments through some sort of international clearing mechanism. That is normally the Bank for International Settlements. Same goes for your international purchases. So Iran could sell but not get paid and buy but not be able to pay. Iran has already declared that the implementation of either sanction would be a *casus belli*. Implementation of these or other such debilitating sanctions would also most likely lead to the ascendancy of the faction of clerics lead ostensibly by Ayatollah Mesbah Yazdi (AKA the crocodile) that wish to accelerate the return of the Mahdi by creating the conditions of chaos that will prompt his return.

Ever since the death of Mohammad, the Sunni have been able to keep the Shia under control by sheer weight of numbers. Now that the Shia control a major nation state with a large population, that is no longer possible. The Shia also realize that the time remaining to them to attempt to wrest control of the Two Mosques and therefore the leadership of Islam from the House of Saud is growing shorter. Iran is in approximately the same position as the Japanese Empire prior to world War Two. After Roosevelt imposed the oil and scrap iron sanctions and moved the Pacific Fleet from San Diego to Pearl Harbor, Japan was faced with the choice of either backing down and getting out of China or war. They chose war. Given the theology of Islam and Shi'i Islam in particular, I do not doubt that Iran will choose war ... and soon.

#### **Addendum.**

I took a break to let this article sit for a while and go bang on some drums. When I got home I found that the war drums were being beaten as loud as the tympani I just got through banging very loudly.

Jerusalem Post, Haaretz and the UK Guardian are all carrying the same story (sourced to the Guardian) about Her Majesty's Chief of the General Staff, General David Richards, having made a discreet one week visit to Israel. Now almost immediately after General Richards returns to London, Ehud Barak goes to London.

*The British military is accelerating planning for its part in a potential US-led attack on Iran's nuclear facilities, The Guardian reported on Wednesday, days after the UK's military chief visited Israel.*

*Defense Minister Ehud Barak is currently in London on a state visit, where he met with senior officials, including British National Security Adviser Peter Ricketts. ( <http://www.jpost.com/DiplomacyAndPolitics/Article.aspx?id=244172> )*

Additionally, Debka has pumped up the volume on its wolf crying since earlier today Israel time.

*If the British general was in Israel only this week, why was Barak is such a hurry to visit London?*

*The answer came from the British media, which reported as soon as he arrived that the Ministry of Defense in London had accelerated and upgraded its contingency planning for participation in a US-led assault on Iran. They carried an account of plans for deploying large naval units including submarines to the Persian Gulf.*

*The UK was reported to have asked Washington for permission to station its fighter-bombers on the Indian Ocean island of Diego Garcia for launching bombing sorties against Iran.*

*This whirlwind of military activity was said to have been prompted by the approaching publication of the International Atomic Energy Agency's Iran report next Tuesday, Nov. 8 and the conclusion the nuclear watchdog had reached: Inside 12 months, Iran will have tucked all its nuclear and ballistic missile facilities away in deep underground tunnels where they will be invulnerable to attack. A potential US-British strike to pre-empt this move would also be timed for the run-up to America's next presidential election in November 2012. ( <http://www.debka.com/article/21443/> )*

We must also add to this the possible dissolution of the Eurozone and perhaps the European Union itself. I don't generally comment on economics because I don't consider my self qualified to do so. However, this is politics as much as it is money. Right now the attention is being directed at Greece and the possibility of either a referendum on the second bailout deal or a fall of the Papandreou government if it fails Friday's vote of confidence based upon the calling of the referendum.

At the same time, Zero Hedge is reporting that the Italian government of Silvio Berlusconi may be in serious trouble.

*Europe's core, call it Germany, is now caught in a war of reverse attrition on three fronts: with Greece, with Italy, and as of today, [with France](#). And unfortunately for the European monetary union, Europe, call it Germany, is losing. While the focus continues to be on G-Pap for the second day in a row following his shocking referendum announcement, the real diversion remains Italy, where the government is in as much of a state of chaos as that in Athens, and whose bonds, while not yet trading at Greek levels (remember when the Greek 1 year hit 100% two months ago? [Today it is at 225%...](#) and tomorrow the [two year](#) will be at 100%), are far, far greater in amount, and the only thing preventing their collapse so far has been the ECB, whose monetizing assistance has been contingent on Italy passing and enforcing austerity measures to deal with its runaway debt to GDP of over 120%. Unfortunately, when BTPs open for trading in 7 hours, the ECB bid may not be there, or any bid for that matter, because as the [WSJ reports](#), **"Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi on Wednesday failed to issue growth-boosting measures demanded by European Union authorities ahead of the Group of 20 summit**, raising further doubts about the government's willingness to pass economic reforms aimed at restoring investor confidence in the country." Now that the ejection of Greece is virtually certain, perhaps it would be a prudent idea for what little remains of the healthy European core to kick out all the stragglers before everything becomes infected, and before French bonds trade at yields indicative of a sub-IG credit, thus ending the myth of any European union for good?*

(<http://www.zerohedge.com/news/game-over-berlusconi-italian-anti-crisis-bill-fails>)

It is not inconceivable that the two problems are related. President Obama is attending the G-20 summit in Cannes where all of these problems will be discussed. The meeting starts tomorrow so not much will be known until after this article is published. I do fear that the outcome will not be positive.