



PROPHETIC TIMES

WEEKLY WORLD NEWS UPDATE

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

JUNE 16 2007

U.S. SHOCKED BY HAMAS WIN

June 14, 2007 The Middle East Newline reported: "The Bush administration has been stunned by Hamas's capture of the Gaza Strip. Officials said the defeat of forces aligned with PA Chairman Mahmoud Abbas took the administration by surprise. They said that neither the administration nor the U.S. intelligence community expected Fatah to collapse.

"There is shock and awe," an official said. "It's a major blow to the administration's policy."

At one point, the administration urged Egypt to send troops into the Gaza Strip to save Fatah. Officials said the regime of President Hosni Mubarak refused, and the administration then pressed Abbas to launch a full-scale offensive against Hamas."..."

HAMAS SEIZES U.S.-FINANCED WEAPONS, EQUIPMENT

June 14, 2007 The Middle East Newline reported: "Hamas has captured thousands of assault rifles and scores of combat vehicles financed by the United States and supplied by Egypt and Jordan to the Palestinian Authority. The Islamic movement acquired the weapons, ammunition and vehicles during Hamas's capture of security installations in the Gaza Strip aligned with PA Chairman Mahmoud Abbas. For the most part, Fatah-aligned PA officers fled the Hamas assaults.

"I would say that they have most of the weapons and armored vehicles sent by Egypt and Jordan over the last year," a PA security officer said. The officer said Hamas seized thousands of U.S.-origin M-16 and Soviet-origin AK-47 Kalashnikov assault rifles as well as military radios. He said other booty captured by Hamas included trucks, mortars and hand grenades."..."

US MILITARY PREPARED FOR WORST WITH CHINA

June 14, 2007 SpaceWar.com reported: "China's secretive transformation of its military power leaves the United States preparing for the worst eventualities, including over Taiwan, a Pentagon official said Wednesday. About 900 Chinese missiles are in place opposite Taiwan, while China is also rolling out far more sophisticated long-range nuclear missiles, combat planes, warships and submarines, the Department of Defense official said.



Richard Lawless, the Pentagon's deputy undersecretary for Asia-Pacific affairs, said the US government urgently wanted to launch a strategic dialogue to discuss China's military intentions, especially over nuclear arms.

"I think if we had a true dialogue of depth... we might be able to constrain and put some of those issues of (Chinese) intent to bed," he told a hearing of the House of Representatives armed services committee.

"Not being able to, we must plan and prepare for the worst," he said. "It is an area of intense concern and we're giving it due attention from the highest levels of the Department of Defense and the inter-agency discussion."

The United States and China have long been at loggerheads over Beijing's military build-up, although US Defense Secretary Robert Gates expressed optimism about future relations at a Singapore security conference this month. Gates called for a more detailed military dialogue with China to avoid future miscalculations, while a top Chinese general said Beijing was prepared to open a "hotline" with Washington.

Lawless alleged "a deliberate effort on the part of China's leaders to mask the nature of Chinese military capabilities," which he said could only ring precautionary alarm bells for the US and other governments.

China's successful test of an anti-satellite weapon in January could "disrupt, delay and frustrate our ability to operate" in space, he also said. And its growing sophistication in "cyber-warfare" has given China the capacity "to attack and degrade our computer systems," he cautioned.

Lawless was briefing US lawmakers on an annual Pentagon report issued last month that questioned China's lack of transparency in its defense budgeting and suggested that it could be "planning for pre-emptive military options in advance of regional crises."

Although Beijing announced an official defense budget figure of 45 billion dollars for 2007, the US Defense Intelligence Agency estimates China's total military-related spending for this year could be up to 125 billion dollars."..."

PUTIN 'NOT KIDDING' ON MISSILES: YUSHCHENKO

June 12, 2007 GlobeandMail.com reported: "Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko said he took seriously Russian President Vladimir Putin's recent threat to target Europe with ballistic missiles, and said such talk has heightened his country's desire to quickly join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

In a wide-ranging interview with The Globe and Mail, Mr. Yushchenko also complained of Russian interference in his country's turbulent domestic politics. Despite heated opposition from the Kremlin, the pro-Western politician said he still plans to take his country into NATO

and the European Union.

"I think the President of Russia is not kidding," he said, referring to Mr. Putin's warning last week that Russia could aim its missiles at "new targets in Europe" if the United States pushes ahead with its controversial plans to build an anti-missile shield based in Poland and the Czech Republic.

Although Mr. Putin has since moved to defuse the standoff by suggesting the former Soviet republic of Azerbaijan as a possible location for a joint missile-defence system that would include Russia, Mr. Yushchenko said the new belligerence of Ukraine's larger neighbour demonstrates the need for his country to be swiftly brought under NATO's security umbrella.

"The recent events, I think, show to everyone that we have quite a creaky security balance. This really triggers some concerns and could be really painful."

"It's becoming more and more apparent that the best response to all the challenges regarding defence and security policy can only be given through a collective system of defence," he said, sitting in a chandelier-lit meeting room in the country's Soviet-era Presidential Administration building. He gave the interview one day after meeting Mr. Putin in the Russian city of St. Petersburg.

"Our defence and security doctrine is formally determined in law. And a key aspect of this doctrine is to provide Ukraine's accession to the European Union and the North Atlantic bloc."...

Russia, which was furious over NATO's 2004 expansion into the former Soviet republics of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, has already made it clear that it would view Ukraine's accession with hostility. Despite repeated assertions that NATO does not view Russia as an enemy, the Kremlin remains suspicious of the military alliance's relentless eastward expansion."..."

IRAN EXPANDS HORMUZ FLEET

June 13, 2007 The Middle East Newslite reported: "Iran has expanded its naval fleet in the Straits of Hormuz, the passage for an estimated 40 percent of global crude oil shipments. The U.S. Navy has determined that Iran has amassed a huge fleet of fast patrol boats in the 43-kilometer straits. The navy said the effort was led by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, responsible for strategic programs."



"This marks the implementation of Iran's swarm program, where dozens of armed speed boats attack much larger naval vessels from all sides," an official said. At this point, officials said, IRGC has deployed more than 1,000 FPBs in and around the straits. The vessels, armed with cruise missiles, mines, torpedoes and rocket-propelled grenades, were described as measuring up to 23 meters and could reach a speed of 100 kilometers per hour."..."

SUIT TO DECIDE WORKPLACE 'HATE SPEECH'

June 11, 2007 The Washington Times reported: "The words "natural family," "marriage" and "union of a man and a woman" can be punished as "hate speech" in government workplaces, according to a lawsuit that is being appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Briefs for Good News Employee Association vs. Hicks, which were filed June 5 with the nation's highest court, lists D.C. school board President Robert C. Bobb as one of two plaintiffs. The case originated five years ago in Oakland, Calif., during his tenure there as city manager.

The dispute began in January 2003, when the two Oakland employees created a subgroup at their workplace called the "Good News Employee Association." It was partly in response to a group of homosexual employees having formed their own group 10 months before and being given access to the city e-mail system. One e-mail, dated Oct. 11, 2002, invited city employees to participate in "National Coming-Out Day."

When several employees asked whether such a posting was legitimate city business, they got an e-mail from City Council member Danny Wan, reminding them that a "celebration of the gay/lesbian culture and movement" was part of the city's role to "celebrate diversity."

In response, the Good News employees posted an introductory flier on the employee bulletin board Jan. 3. It said: "Preserve Our Workplace With Integrity: Good News Employee Association is a forum for people of faith to express their views on the contemporary issues of the day." It said it opposed "all views which seek to redefine the natural family and marriage," which it defined as "a union of a man and a woman, according to California state law."

Anyone who wanted to help preserve "integrity in the workplace" was invited to contact the two employees: Regina Rederford and Robin Christy.

A lesbian co-worker, Judith Jennings, spotted the flier and complained to the city attorney's office that it made her feel "targeted" and "excluded," according to a deposition. The flier was removed by a supervisor because it violated the city's anti-discrimination rules.

A U.S. District Court for Northern California ruling said the words "natural family" and "marriage" had "anti-homosexual import."

However, Miss Rederford was told she could announce the group's presence on the city's e-mail system if she removed "verbiage that could be offensive to gay people."..."