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Preclusionary Engagement

by Jon B. Perdue, inFocus Quarterly, Summer 2010

<http://www.jewishpolicycenter.org/1744/preclusionary-engagement>

Quintus Fabius Maximus Verrucosus Cunctator, known to modernity simply as Fabius, served as a Roman general during the second century BC. He remains relevant today for the indirect, delaying tactic he advocated and utilized successfully against Hannibal's forces in the Second Punic War. His unorthodox method was considered cowardly at the time and several upstart rivals lost disastrous battles and many lives trying to upstage him by engaging in direct confrontation with the Carthaginians.

The Fabian strategy has been adapted in many iterations of warfare since its success against Rome's enemies. Wellington is said to have utilized it to defeat Napoleon, as well as Sam Houston against Santa Ana. And George Washington was called the "American Fabius" for using similar tactics to defeat the British during the Revolutionary War.

Now, in the hands of revolutionists like Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and Hugo Chavez, the Fabian strategy is being used offensively as a "soft subversion" tactic with which to undermine enemies without traversing the "threshold of concern" - the point at which their enemies are roused to diplomatic or military action. Chavez and Ahmadinejad have developed their strategic relationship based on mutual support for these soft subversion tactics against their common enemies.

Asymmetric Alliance

After decades of humiliating military campaigns against Israel, despots throughout the Middle East now utilize this "offensive Fabian strategy" along with highly developed propaganda efforts to weaken enemies while maintaining a posture of plausible deniability. The 2006 summer war between Israel and Hezbollah was a telling example. Like the Yom Kippur War in 1973, the 2006 conflict was a military victory for Israel, although it was a short-term propaganda victory for its enemies.

A Congressional Research Service report stated that although Hezbollah's military capabilities were substantially reduced and its support from Iran and Syria were temporarily hampered, its "long-term potential as a guerrilla movement appears to remain intact." The report further noted that "Hezbollah's leaders have been able to claim a level of 'victory' simply by virtue of not having decisively 'lost'."

Two years later, Israel adapted its tactics to more readily confront the asymmetric war practiced by Hamas in the Gaza Strip during Operation Cast Lead. But this well-planned and decisive victory for Israel, which was noteworthy for its ability to avoid civilian casualties that were pre-planned by Hamas, was met with international condemnation as a "disproportionate response." Indeed, the term "disproportionate response," as well as the oft-heard "cycle of violence," is part of the arsenal of asymmetric warfare propaganda that, ironically, has the effect of propagating more long-term violence.

Regardless of the military or propaganda victories of either side in both of these wars, the real winner has been Iran. The proxy groups, Hamas, Hezbollah, Islamic Jihad and

others, are either directly controlled or greatly supported by Iran. Both the 2006 and the December 2008 wars allowed Iran to use these proxy forces in a probing action - allowing the regime to discern Israel's strengths and weaknesses without firing a shot and while avoiding international condemnation.

Iran has exploited this type of asymmetric warfare ever since the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s. Even prior to the decision to remove Saddam Hussein in 2003, Iran was perfecting the use of this type of asymmetric warfare by funding and training Shi'ite groups in Iraq. Rather than build up its conventional forces, Iran has concentrated mostly on its navy, to cause problems in the Persian Gulf, while fortifying its proxy forces to undermine its enemies ... while maintaining an arms-length distance from the wars that these proxies initiate.

Iran has also used this strategy against Egypt by building up a presence on its southern border with Sudan in order to support terrorist operations there, and it has placed subversive groups in Yemen to threaten Saudi Arabia's oil infrastructure. In April 2009, Egypt arrested members of a Hezbollah cell that was smuggling arms to Hamas, and later arrested four agents from the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) that were sent to establish an intelligence network. Amidst this proxy warfare, Egypt also has to contend with an insurgency from the Muslim Brotherhood within its own borders.

A recent Defence Intelligence Agency report stated that Iran was using a multi-faceted approach to subvert democracy in Afghanistan and Iraq, and that it was expanding the number of its Qods Force in Venezuela. The report states, "We assess with high confidence that over the last three decades, Iran has methodically cultivated a network of sponsored terrorist surrogates capable of conducting effective, plausibly deniable attacks against Israel and the United States."

Regarding Iran in Afghanistan, the report states:

Iran continues to influence events in Afghanistan through a multi-faceted approach involving support for the Karzai government while covertly supporting various insurgent and political opposition groups. Tehran's support for the Government of Afghanistan is reflected in its diplomatic presence and the numerous Iranian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) active in the country.

Lawfare in Latin America

This use of dummy NGOs as a propaganda tactic has been exploited in Latin America as well. Many non-governmental organizations operating in the region that claim to advocate for human rights actually receive funding from radical leftist groups sympathetic to so-called revolutionary movements in the hemisphere. Many of these groups derive much of their legitimacy from unwitting representatives of the EU, the UN and even from the U.S. Department of State, who designate them as official liaisons for human rights reporting.

One of the most effective tactics of these NGOs is to subvert justice systems and to immerse the military and security forces in endless lawsuits and false accusations, allowing seasoned soldiers to be pulled from the battlefield without a shot being fired. The military has been the bulwark against communist/terrorist subversion in Latin America, and one of the stated objectives of radicals in the region has been to destroy its popular support.

The results of this campaign are now becoming more profound, with many military officers suddenly finding themselves in jail under a civilian court system that assumes guilt upon incarceration, while unrepentant ex-terrorists fill government posts that oversee their jurisprudence.

Though these tactics have been effective, they can be exploited and turned into a liability by leaders that take the threat seriously. In Colombia, Operacion Jaque (Operation Checkmate) freed three American and 12 Colombian hostages in a daring and flawlessly executed rescue mission. Outgoing President Alvaro Uribe's willingness to carry out such a risky operation, coupled with an aggressive pursuit of the terrorists throughout the country, led to numerous desertions of top commanders and foot soldiers from the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC).

In 2003, Uribe had drawn international ire for his statement that some supposed human rights organizations in Colombia were fronts for terrorists. Yet the success of Operation Checkmate proved the point, and its success was actually dependent upon Uribe's claim. The FARC commanders were tricked into handing over their most highly valued hostages because they were told that a helicopter was being loaned to them by an NGO sympathetic to their cause. The NGO was completely fictitious, but the ruse was successful because the terrorist group had become accustomed to getting help from similar groups.

Mary Anastasia O'Grady, the *Wall Street Journal's* Americas writer, noted in her weekly column, "It may have taken years for army intelligence to infiltrate the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, and it may have been tough to convincingly impersonate rebels. But what seems to have been a walk in the park was getting the FARC to believe that an NGO was providing resources to help it in the dirty work of ferrying captives to a new location."

The War of Legitimacy

When FARC-friendly Ecuador continued to allow its borders to be used as a FARC redoubt, President Uribe allowed a controversial attack on a FARC hideout a mile inside Ecuador's border. The Organization of American States and many in the international community condemned the action, but had been silent about the Colombian government's complaints about Ecuador's porous border policy with terrorists.

Moreover, the attack killed the FARC's international spokesperson, "Raul Reyes," and captured a prodigious cache of intelligence from laptops and hard drives that revealed suspected ties between the FARC and Hugo Chavez, and to many of the groups that Uribe had earlier accused of collaboration.

Uribe's predecessor, Andres Pastrana, had granted the FARC a swath of land the size of Switzerland as a demilitarized zone, which allowed the FARC the opportunity to recruit, re-supply, and re-arm. The ancillary effect of Pastrana's policy was to tacitly grant an aura of legitimacy to the narco-terrorists.

These sequential, and antithetical, counterinsurgency policies of Pastrana and Uribe provided a useful pilot test. What Uribe accomplished, more successfully than any of the Colombian military's operational tactics, was to change the political perspective from

what had been seen as a 40 year conflict between rival political parties to a proper view of a legitimate, elected government versus an illegitimate narco-terrorist group.

'Be Bold Early': Subverting the Subversives

Despots and dictators tend to operate under what economists might call a "marginal propensity to oppress" - meaning that as they discern a greater unwillingness by internal and external opponents to check their actions, they will be more likely to commit greater and greater acts of aggression.

There is always a balance to be struck between strategic indifference to a tyrant like Hugo Chavez, which denies him the importance he seeks by provocation, and strategic resistance designed to help those oppressed by his regime. What we give up by ignoring a tyrant's histrionics is the ability to prevent the incremental destruction of democratic institutions that solidify his power. But that decision must be balanced against bold action, taken early, that could check the progress of a budding dictatorship.

This "preclusionary engagement" - smaller, strategic, preemptive action, executed early - has shown empirical success. Col. John Boyd wrote about this strategy in his report, "Patterns of Conflict," during the Vietnam War:

Undermine guerilla cause and destroy their cohesion by demonstrating integrity and competence of government to represent and serve needs of the people - rather than exploit and impoverish them for the benefit of a greedy elite.

Boyd's advice was prescient, not only for Vietnam but for most of the trouble spots in Latin America over the last half century, as successive governments have revolved from rent-seeking elites to revanchist caudillos with the predictability of Kabuki theater.

The greatest part of any strategy going forward will have to be convincing those elites that their long term security rests on relinquishing their patronage, and opening their economies to the competition of the market and its natural meritocracy and wealth-spreading effects. Short of that, we will continue to see the emergence of terror-supporting despots that will spread their wealth for them in a far less cooperative manner.

Israel's 60-Year Quest for Peace: AIPAC

JCRC Israel Update: Re-Launching Direct Peace Talks

http://www.aipac.org/Publications/AIPACAnalysesMemos/Issue_Brief_-_Quest_for_Peace.pdf

Even before Israel was established, the leaders of the Jewish community in then-British Mandate

Palestine sought peace with their Arab neighbors. The State of Israel has remained committed to that goal throughout its history, repeatedly demonstrating its desire to live side-by-side with neighbouring states and peoples. Israel's willingness to trade land for peace has led to peace treaties with Egypt and Jordan. Likewise, Israel proved its willingness to make bold, painful concessions in order to secure agreements that it hoped would end the conflict with the Palestinians. The current Israeli government continues on this path.

1918 - 1919 – Early Zionists reach out to Arabs

Chaim Weizmann, who was to become the first president of Israel, led a mission to Cairo in 1918 to meet with leading Syrian Arab nationalists. He expressed the Jewish people's desire to live in harmony with the Arabs. The following year, he entered into an agreement with the Arab nationalist leader Emir Faisal, in which the two agreed to support each other's nationalist aspirations.

1937 – Jews accept Peel Commission report

In 1937, Israel's future Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion accepted the recommendations of the official British Peel Commission report as a basis for negotiations. The Commission allocated a very small percentage of Palestine to a Jewish state, while most of the country would have gone to an Arab state and Jerusalem would have remained under the British Mandate. The Arab governments vehemently rejected the plan.

1947 – Jews accept UN Partition Plan

The Jewish community of Palestine, and Zionists worldwide, accepted the partition plan approved by the United Nations that would create a Jewish state alongside an Arab state. They accepted the plan although the Jewish state it envisioned was truncated and non-contiguous, without Jerusalem. The Arab states rejected the UN resolution, invading Israel in 1948 with the explicit purpose of destroying the Jewish state. Israel won the war.

1948 – A State is born

Declaring independence, David Ben-Gurion, Israel's first Prime Minister, said Israel would "extend the hand of peace to all its neighbors" as well as "full and equal citizenship and due representation" for the non-Jewish population.

1967 – Israel's offer to withdraw is rejected

Days after successfully defending itself in the Six-Day War, Israel offered to return captured territories in return for peace treaties. Egypt and Syria immediately rejected the offer, as did the rest of the Arab League countries.

1978 – Israel signs Camp David Accords with Egypt

Israel agreed to return the entire Sinai Peninsula, an area more than twice the size of Israel, to Egypt in return for a peace agreement and normalization of relations. In 1979, Egypt and Israel signed a Treaty of Peace – the first such treaty between Israel and an Arab country.

1993 – Israel Inks Oslo Agreement

Israel granted the Palestinians unprecedented authority over Gaza and parts of the West Bank and commenced negotiations designed to end the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians in exchange for a Palestinian agreement to recognize Israel and end terrorism.

1994 – Israel establishes peace with Jordan

Jordan's King Hussein and Israel's Yitzhak Rabin signed a treaty of peace. Jordan became the second Arab state to formally come to terms with Israel.

2000 – Israel makes historic offer for peace

Following talks at Camp David, Yasir Arafat rejected Israel's far-reaching peace offer and the Palestinians

launched sustained terrorist attacks. Nevertheless, by the end of 2000, Israel agreed to President Clinton's proposals for a final peace between Israel and the Palestinians: Israel would cede all of Gaza, 96% of the West Bank and additional territory from within pre-1967 Israel, recognize an independent Palestinian state, cede parts of eastern Jerusalem to serve as the Palestinian capital, and recognize the right of Palestinian refugees to return to a new Palestinian state. Arafat rejected these proposals as well. Israel also offered Syria a peace deal in which Israel would withdraw from the Golan Heights, but the deal was rejected.

2000 – Israel unilaterally withdraws from Lebanon

With backing from the USA, Israel unilaterally withdrew from southern Lebanon after 18 years of maintaining a security zone to prevent attacks on its northern communities. Israel's step toward peace was met with a massive military buildup by the terrorist group Hizballah, which regularly fired rockets into Israel and launched a war against the Jewish state in the summer of 2006 by ambushing and killing three IDF soldiers in Israeli territory and abducting from Israel and subsequently killing two more soldiers.

2005 – Israel unilaterally withdraws from Gaza

With US support, Israel took a historic step and unilaterally withdrew from Gaza, and parts of the West Bank, providing the Palestinians with an unprecedented chance to prove their intention to fight terrorism and govern effectively. Unfortunately, the Israeli step has been met by nearly 7,000 rockets and mortars fired from Hamas controlled Gaza.

2007 – Israel extends hand in peace at Annapolis Conference

At the U.S.-sponsored Annapolis conference, Israel reiterated its commitment to peaceful negotiations with the Palestinians and Arab states. Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said he believes "that there is no path other than the path of peace. I believe that there is no just solution other than the solution of two national states for two peoples."

2008 – Israel continues to seek peace despite daily attacks

Despite daily Hamas rocket fire and other terrorist attacks against its civilians during the year, Israel held intensive negotiations with the Palestinian Authority to reach an agreement covering all remaining issues.

2009-2010 – Israel endorses demilitarized Palestinian State; Implements Settlement Moratorium

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu formally endorsed the creation of a demilitarized Palestinian state and announced a 10-month moratorium on the construction of new homes in the West Bank.

Bomb Iran's Bushehr nuclear reactor?

Michael Anton, Weekly Standard, August 14, 2010

Speculation about a possible attack on Iranian nuclear sites has reached a fever pitch over the summer. The talk is so wild that even level-headed commentators on the right like Michael Barone opine aloud that perhaps Israel won't be the instigator; rather the Obama administration might order a U.S. strike.

This still seems beyond unlikely but there is no question that the climate has changed. True, the president's National Security Advisor the other day reiterated the administration's willingness for Obama to meet with his Iranian counterpart assuming certain conditions were met - conditions that no one expects will be met. But inside the White House and national security bureaucracy, opinions about Iranian behaviour and intentions appear to be hardening. Robert Kagan recently recounted a briefing by the president and top officials in which they made as clear as they could that their patience with Iran has all but run out....

[O]nce fueled and operational, [the nuclear reactor at] Bushehr will produce plutonium 239, which can be used to make nuclear weapons. The plant is also large, impossible to conceal or move, and relatively easy to destroy from the air. But once it has gone critical, any attempt to do so would risk the release of a radioactive plume that might kill civilians and poison surrounding areas.

This leaves any would-be attacker of Iran's nuclear sites with a difficult choice. An attack is likely to cause collateral damage no matter how carefully it is planned and is certain to result in a PR uproar. A radioactive release would compound both problems by several orders of magnitude. Israel in particular can expect outrage - some, but by no means all, feigned - from virtually the whole world should it move against Iranian nuclear sites. Jerusalem presumably does not wish to intensify the inevitable vitriolic reaction by causing radioactive contamination....

The possible repercussions of an attack on Iran have been gamed out thoroughly. Opinions differ on how serious they might be. It seems reasonable to assume that adding one target to a lengthy list would not make them materially worse. Any nation prepared to incur all that risk from striking Iran's HEU sites may as well take out Bushehr as well. If nothing else, at least the attacker could know for sure that the plant would be gone. As many opponents and skeptics of a strike have noted, no such certainty would apply to attacks on the buried and largely hidden Natanz and Qom sites. Plus, the Israelis have twice destroyed nuclear reactors in the region but never enrichment cascades. It's hard to see what sense it would make to mount the difficult, unprecedented, uncertain operation while leaving standing the one site they know they can eliminate.

[Fueling Bushehr] would appear to be one more move on the chessboard that suggests the endgame may be coming soon. A grandmaster might assume that anything he could game out, the Russians and Iranians could too. Are the Russians fueling Bushehr knowing - or even hoping - that doing so might precipitate an attack? Certainly Moscow has reasons not to welcome a nuclear armed Iran. Goading someone else into doing the

dirty work has significant advantages. As does the inevitable rise in hydrocarbon prices following a Middle East conflagration....

The Wall Street Journal reported that the Obama administration, as part of the price for a Russian vote in favor of June's UNSC sanctions resolution against Iran, agreed not to oppose Russian help to get Bushehr started. Their rationale is that Bushehr doesn't pose a proliferation risk because the Russians will be reclaiming all of the plant's spent fuel rods. This of course entails trusting three parties - the governments of Iran and Russia, plus the International Atomic Energy Agency - which have not exactly proved trustworthy on this issue in the past. It's an odd position for an administration so committed to "nuclear zero" to take.

However, it should put to rest any speculation that the United States might be contemplating an attack of our own - at least on Bushehr. It also must complicate Israeli calculations.... One of the many difficult calculations Jerusalem must make is whether a potential U.S. backlash over a strike the Obama administration doesn't want is worse than the consequences of not striking. No Israeli government could take lightly the prospect of a serious and potentially fatal breach of relations with the USA. That's not an existential threat. But it would be dire enough that it's not worth risking unless the consequences of inaction truly are existential. That's a hard and unenviable call to have to make.

I am a refugee

Danny Ayalon, Jerusalem Post, September 2, 2010

<http://www.jpost.com/Opinion/Op-EdContributors/Article.aspx?id=186742>

As a sitting member of a democratic government, it might appear strange to declare that I am a refugee. However, my father, his parents and family were just a few of the almost one million Jews who were expelled or forced out of Arab lands. My father and his family were Algerian, from a Jewish community thousands of years old that predated the Arab conquest of North Africa and even Islam. Upon receiving independence, Algeria allowed only Muslims to become citizens and drove the indigenous Jewish community and the rest of my family out.

While many people constantly refer to the Arab or Palestinian refugees, few are even aware of the Jewish refugees from Arab lands.

While those Arabs who fled or left Mandatory Palestine and Israel numbered roughly 750,000, there were roughly 900,000 Jewish refugees from Arab lands. Before the State of Israel was reestablished in 1948, there were almost one million Jews in Arab lands, today there are around 5,000.

An important distinction between the two groups is the fact that many Palestinian Arabs were actively involved in the conflict initiated by the surrounding Arab nations, while Jews from Arab lands were living peacefully, even in a subservient dhimmi status, in their countries of origin for many centuries if not millennia.

In addition, Jewish refugees, as they were more urban and professional, as opposed to the more rural Palestinians, amassed far more property and wealth which they had to leave in their former country.

Financial economists have estimated that, in today's figures, the total amount of assets lost by the Jewish refugees from Arab lands, including communal property such as schools, synagogues and hospitals, is almost twice that of the assets lost by the Palestinian refugees. Furthermore, one must remember that Israel returned over 90 percent of blocked bank accounts, safe deposit boxes and other items belonging to Palestinian refugees during the 1950s.

Even though the number of Jewish refugees and their assets are larger than that of the Palestinians, the international community only appears to be aware of the latter's plight.

There are numerous major international organizations devoted to the Palestinian refugees. There is an annual conference held at the United Nations and a refugee agency was created just for the Palestinian refugees. While all the world's refugees have one agency, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Palestinians fall under the auspices of another agency, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

UNRWA's budget for 2010 is almost half of UNHCR's budget.

Equally impressive is the fact that UNHCR prides itself on having found "durable

solutions” for “tens of millions” of refugees since 1951, the year of its establishment. However, UNRWA does not even claim to have found “durable solutions” for anyone.

If that is not distorted enough, let’s look at the definitions and how they are applied: normally the definition of a refugee only applies to the person that fled and sought refuge, while a Palestinian refugee is the person that fled and all of their descendants for all time. So, according to the UNRWA definition of conferring refugee status on descendants, I would be a refugee.

However, I do not consider myself so; I am a proud citizen of the State of Israel. The Jewish refugees found their national expression in Israel, so to, the Arab refugees should find their national aspirations being met by a Palestinian state.

With direct negotiations about to resume between Israel and the Palestinians, the spotlight will be returned to this issue. The so-called Palestinian ‘right of return’ is legal fiction. United Nations General Assembly Resolution 194, the supposed source for this ‘right’ does not mention this term, is not legally binding and, like all other relevant United Nations resolutions uses the intentionally ambiguous term ‘refugees’ with no appellation.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 242, still seen as the primary legal framework for resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict asserts that a comprehensive Middle East peace settlement should necessarily include “a just settlement of the refugee problem.”

No distinction is made between Arab refugees and Jewish refugees.

In fact, one of the leading drafters of the resolution, Justice Arthur Goldberg, the United States’ Chief Delegate to the United Nations, said: “The resolution addresses the objective of ‘achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem.’ This language presumably refers both to Arab and Jewish refugees.”

In addition, every peace conference and accord attended or signed between Israel and its Arab neighbors uses the term “refugees” without qualification.

During the famous Camp David discussions in 2000, president Clinton, the facilitator and host of the negotiations said: “There will have to be some sort of international fund set up for the refugees. There is, I think, some interest, interestingly enough, on both sides, in also having a fund which compensates the Israelis who were made refugees by the war, which occurred after the birth of the State of Israel. Israel is full of people, Jewish people, who lived in predominantly Arab countries who came to Israel because they were made refugees in their own land”.

In 2008, the US Congress passed House Resolution 185 granting, for the first time, equal recognition to Jewish refugees, while affirming that the US government will now recognize that all victims of the Arab-Israeli conflict must be treated equally.

I am proud of the fact that the Knesset passed a resolution this February that will make compensation for Jewish refugees expelled from Arab countries after 1948 an integral part of any future peace negotiations. The Israeli bill stipulates that “The state of Israel will not sign, directly or by proxy, any agreement or treaty with a country or authority dealing with a political settlement in the Middle East without ensuring the rights of Jewish

refugees from Arab countries according to the UN's refugee treaty."

Before 1948 there were nearly 900,000 Jews in Arab lands while only a few thousand remain. Where is the international outrage, the conferences, the proclamations for redress and compensation? While the Palestinian refugee issue has become a political weapon to beat Israel, the Arab League has ordered its member states not to provide their Palestinian population with citizenship; Israel absorbed all of its refugees, whether fleeing the Holocaust or persecution and expulsion from Arab lands.

People like my father, the hundreds of thousands who came to Israel and the millions of Israelis descended from these refugees are entitled to redress. It is vital that this issue return to the international agenda, so we don't once again see an asymmetrical and distorted treatment of Arabs and Jews in the Israeli-Arab conflict.

***Bits and Pieces* Clips from various media in the Middle East and elsewhere**

ICEJ News, 25 August 2010: Israeli-Palestinian peace talks set to begin on Thursday

On the eve of his departure for Washington to join renewed peace talks with the Palestinian Authority, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told a meeting of the Likud party on Monday evening that he would not extend the ten-month settlement freeze and will insist on US security guarantees to guard against a repeat of the 2005 disengagement from the Gaza Strip, after which nearby Israeli communities were bombarded with rockets fired by Hamas and other Palestinian terror militias.

ICEJ News, 25 August 2010: Iran threatens to target Dimona reactor if West attacks

A senior Iranian official told the Arabic-language newspaper *Asharq al-Aswat* that the Islamic Republic will target Israel's nuclear reactor at Dimona if Israel or the US launches military strikes against it.

ICEJ News, 25 August 2010: Egyptian forces discover huge weapons caches in Sinai

Egyptian security forces have uncovered as many as ten caches of weapons in scattered locations across the Sinai which were destined to be smuggled into Gaza through the hundreds of tunnels running under the Philadelphi Corridor. The weapons included artillery shells, high-quality explosives, automatic rifles and thousands of rounds of ammunition, in addition to almost 200 shoulder-held anti-aircraft missiles that could have posed a serious threat to Israeli aircraft. Israeli officials had warm words on Monday for Egypt's recent efforts to keep smugglers from delivering weapons to the Gaza Strip, but were uncertain about the numbers of anti-aircraft missiles.