

That Oil Spill That Ruined Israeli Beaches Was No Accident

by Hugh Fitzgerald



We haven't forgotten the oil spill in the Mediterranean, this past February, that led to hundreds of tons of tar (the thicker emulsion that results from the oil-and-water mix) coming ashore along almost all – 160 km. out of a total of 190 km. – of Israel's coastline. The damage to marine life was extensive, to the beaches, horrific. Thick gobs of the tarry stuff, in places some four to five inches thick, along with many thousands of smaller blobs, covered the waters and the rocky shore, spread over the the beaches that for a very long time will be unfit for use. Thousands of volunteers have been working ever since, laboriously collecting the tarry globs. Sea turtles, marine birds and endangered marine mammals were some of the wildlife that have perished or have been affected by the spill.

Israel's Environmental Protection Ministry estimates that the oil spill occurred more than 50 km. off the coast of Israel, outside its territorial waters. Not only will the waters and rocky shores be arduously difficult to clean, but the oil spill event will also continue to corrupt the Mediterranean's natural marine ecosystem for many years to come due to the widespread nature of the incident.

Israeli investigators immediately got to work trying to determine from what ship the oil had been spilled and whether the spill was deliberate or an accident. At first they had thought it might have been a Greek ship, the Minerva Helen, which years ago had caused a similar oil spill elsewhere in the Mediterranean. But after a surprise raid on the ship by Israeli and Greek investigators, it was determined that the Minerva Helen had nothing to do with the latest oil spill off the Israeli coast.

Now the Israelis believe they have the culprit. It's a Libyan ship that was sailing from Iran, and the oil spill was no accident. A recent report is [Jihad Watch](#).