

Sing it! Bye, bye, bye, Obama; fly, fly, fly, Credibility ..

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McKinney to Obama: "Say Something" About Gaza Humanitarian Crisis

Former Georgia Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney has called upon President-Elect Barack Obama to "please, say something about the humanitarian crisis that is being experienced by the Palestinian people, by the people of Gaza." McKinney spoke to CNN news from the Lebanese city of Tyre, where she had debarked from the relief vessel Dignity after it was rammed on the high seas by an Israeli patrol boat, early Tuesday morning. Passengers also report the Israelis fired machine guns into the water near their ship.



Cynthia McKinney

McKinney was among the passengers on an attempted voyage from the island of Cyprus to Gaza, where Israeli bombs and missiles have killed hundreds of Palestinians, including many civilians, since Saturday. The Dignity carried three tons of medical supplies and a number of doctors prepared to treat the more than 1,000 Gazans wounded in the Israeli attacks. The 66-foot craft had made two previous humanitarian relief trips to Gaza since the summer. Israel has blocked food, medicines and other essentials from entering Gaza in a campaign of collective punishment against the 1.5 million Palestinians that live there under a Hamas Party administration.

President-Elect Obama has been silent on the Israeli attacks, while President George Bush has supported Israel's actions.

"I would like to ask my former colleagues in the United States Congress to stop sending weapons of mass destruction around the world," said McKinney, who was the Green Party's presidential candidate in November. "As we are about to celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's birthday, let us remember what he said. He said that the United States is the greatest purveyor of violence on the planet. And guess what: we experienced a little bit of that violence, because the weapons that are being used by Israel are weapons that were supplied by the United States government."

A CNN reporter who accompanied the passengers and crew of the Dignity confirmed that the boat "was sailing with full lights" when "one of the Israeli patrol boats, with no lights on, rammed the Dignity, hard."

Israel blames the collision on the relief vessel.

Said McKinney: "Our boat was rammed three times, twice in the front, once on the side.... What the Israelis are saying is outright disinformation."

McKinney compared the Israeli action against the Dignity to the attack on a U.S. naval vessel during the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. "I recall that there was another boat that was attacked by Israelis, and it was the U.S.S Liberty." Thirty-four crewmen died and 170 were wounded by fire from Israeli planes and torpedo boats. The Israelis claim it was a case of mistaken identity. "People would like to forget about the U.S.S. Liberty," said McKinney, "but I haven't forgotten about it and the people who were on that ship have not forgotten what happened to them."

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