

THE STENOGRAPHY DANCE BETWEEN ISRAEL AND THE US

I've been meaning to comment on this story from Bill Gertz from last week. After reporting that the Israelis bitched about US reports of the Israeli strike on Russian made missiles shipped to Syria,

Israeli government officials voiced anger at U.S. press leaks traced to the Pentagon following the July 5 Israeli missile attack on the Syrian port of Latakia that destroyed a shipment of Russian-made anti-ship missiles, according to U.S. officials. Senior Pentagon officials, including Deputy Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter who is currently visiting Israel, discussed the leaks during meetings with Israeli officials this week. The Israelis argued in private meetings and other exchanges that the disclosures could lead to Syrian counterattacks against Israel and **should have been coordinated first** with the Israeli government. [my emphasis]

It catalogs multiple people – both American and Israeli – talking about the intent of the gag and concerns about secrecy.

A U.S. official said signs of Israeli anger over the Latakia raid disclosures appeared in several Israel press outlets. One Israeli official was described as “furious” over the leak because the Pentagon **did not coordinate its release of information first with Israel.**

Other Israeli officials were quoted as saying that in the aftermath of the Yakhont missile strikes that ties

between Israel and Syria had reached a new peak and that there are worries that tying Israel to the attack will prompt Syrian leader Bashar al-Assad to retaliate soon or against a future Israeli attack. [my emphasis]

As far as I know, no one besides Gertz has reported on Israeli anger, in spite of the fact that the reports were published by notorious DOD mouthpieces. There's Barbara Starr,

A series of explosions on July 5 at a critical Syrian port was the result of airstrikes by Israeli warplanes, according to multiple U.S. officials.

Regional media widely reported the predawn explosions at Latakia, but no one had officially claimed responsibility.

Three U.S. officials told CNN the target of the airstrikes were Russian-made Yakhont anti-ship missiles that Israel believes posed a threat to its naval forces.

And Michael Gordon,

Israel carried out an air attack in Syria this month that targeted advanced antiship cruise missiles sold to the Syria government by Russia, American officials said Saturday.

The officials, who declined to be identified because they were discussing intelligence reports, said the attack occurred July 5 near Latakia, Syria's principal port city. The target was a type of missile called the Yakhont, they said.

Mind you, the Israelis don't claim to be pissed that the leaks occurred (in spite of claims that revealing it publicly will make it more likely

someone – I'm not sure precisely who – will attack Israel. Just that they (allegedly) occurred without coordinating with the Israelis.

Compare this treatment with the efforts to mandate investigations of leaks last year that made it harder to gin up war against Iran.

And with reports that retired General Hoss Cartwright is being investigated for repeating stories about Israel's purported role in letting StuxNet escape Iranian nuke facilities (a leak which, it should be said, added to an earlier Michael Gordon co-byline).

Funny. Just a few weeks before the Latakia leaks to noted stenographers, leaking about Israel could get even a top General investigated.

But when stenographers report similar stories, crickets.