

## **Balfour Agreement, BP, Valdez, Horizon and their Israel connections - Bill Koenig**

### **The Anglo-Persian Oil Company and the Balfour Agreement**

The Anglo-Persian oil company that became British Petroleum in 1954, pressured the League of Nations and the British government to back off on their commitment to the Balfour agreement; thus, Israel received approximately twelve percent of the land intended for them.

At the time of the Balfour Agreement (1917), the saying was "the sun never sets on the British empire" because they had control of so much land worldwide. Today, the British have lost control of approximately the same percentage of land that they reneged on in the Balfour agreement.

### **The Exxon Valdez and the Israel connection**

The Exxon Valdez accident happened less than 48 hours after George H.W. Bush and James Baker's staff opened talks with the Palestinians on March 22, 1989. The Valdez accident began to develop late the night of March 23 with the first spill at 12:05 a.m. on March 24.

## **On March 21, 1989: U.S. Secretary of State James A. Baker concludes that Israel may have to negotiate directly with the PLO**

Secretary of State James A. Baker III, attempting to soften the impact of his conclusion that Israel eventually may have to negotiate directly with the Palestine Liberation Organization, Tuesday reaffirmed the Bush Administration's opposition to the creation of an independent Palestinian state.

"It is the policy of the United States that we do not support an independent Palestinian state," Baker told a House panel. His statement was intended to reassure Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, who has vowed that his government will never relinquish control over the West Bank and Gaza Strip territories that Israel occupied during the Arab-Israeli war of 1967. (Los Angeles Times)

## **March 23-24, 1989: Exxon Valdez Accident**

Exxon Valdez left the Valdez oil terminal in Alaska at 9:13 pm on March 23, 1989 bound for Long Beach, California. A harbor pilot guided the ship through the Valdez Narrows before leaving the ship and returning control to Joseph Jeffrey Hazelwood, the ship's master. The ship maneuvered out of the shipping lane to avoid icebergs. Following the maneuver and sometime after 11 pm, he left Third Mate Gregory Cousins in charge of the wheel house and

Able Seaman Robert Kagan at the helm, both of whom had not been given their mandatory 6 hours off duty before their 12-hour duty began. The ship was on autopilot, using the navigation system installed by the company that constructed the ship. The outbound shipping lane was covered with icebergs so the ship's captain, Hazelwood, got permission from the Coast Guard to go out through the inbound lane. The ship struck Bligh Reef at around 12:04 am March 24, 1989.

Beginning three days after the vessel grounded (March 27), a storm pushed large quantities of fresh oil on to the rocky shores of many of the beaches in the Knight Island chain.

The result was the largest oil spill in US history: 11 million gallons covering 11,000 square miles, including 1,300 miles of pristine shoreline. The spill devastated the local economy as well as the environment. Estimated losses in the sport fishing industry alone were almost \$600 million over the two years following the accident. Within days an estimated 250,000 seabirds perished, along with thousands of otters and seals. Despite billions of dollars in cleanup, the environmental effects of the spill still linger. Much of the oil seeped below the surface of affected beaches, decaying at a rate of about three to four percent per year. Animals that dig in the sand for their food continue to be contaminated. (Wikipedia)

## **British Petroleum's (BP) Horizon Oil Spill Began on April 20**

BP's Horizon spill in the Gulf of Mexico began on April 20 — at the very time Obama's team was pressuring Israel to restart talks. BP and the U.S. are still working to contain the oil spill, which is expected to be larger in size than Exxon Valdez.

The two largest oil spills in U.S. history corresponded to U.S. actions on Israel's covenant land and talks with the Palestinians. The spills have and will cause America to forgo more offshore exploration and become even more reliant on rogue nations for oil.

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