

# Max Blumenthal

- [Home](#)
- [About Me](#)
- [Republican Gomorrah](#)
- [Feel The Hate: The Banned Video](#)

"Funny how the keyboard warriors calling for killing #flotilla2 passengers become frantic & defensive as soon as they're called out" — [maxblumenthal](#)

## [Anti-Flotilla video fraud linked to PM Netanyahu's office, official Israeli hasbara agents \(Updated\)](#)

On 06.24.11, By Max

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What is Netanyahu aide Guy Seemann's role in the anti-flotilla pinkwashing hoax?

As the new Free Gaza flotilla prepares to sail to Gaza, a [suspicious video](#) has emerged by an unknown “gay rights activist” claiming that he was rejected by the flotilla activists because of his sexuality. The anonymous activist, who had no previous online history, produced no evidence to support his claim. Within minutes, Benjamin Doherty — the man who helped expose our friend Tom MacMaster — was able to [cast serious doubt](#) on the video’s authenticity. It appeared pretty clear that the video was a [pinkwashing](#) hoax.

Since then, Doherty and I have gathered evidence suggesting that the video has links to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s office, or is at least being promoted through an official government hasbara operation.

The video was promoted early on — if not initially — by someone named Neil Lazarus, who shared it on Facebook (see screenshots [here](#) and [here](#)). I happened to have met Neil Lazarus during my Taglit/Birthright Israel trip in 2001. Lazarus was brought before my group to present the Israeli government's hasbara and to demonize the Palestinian Authority. He was as slick as any good used car salesman. Since then, Lazarus has become a major figure in the world of hasbara. From Neil's [bio](#):

His client list is extensive and includes; The Prime Minister's Office, The Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Israeli Ministry of Tourism, Jewish Federations...

He acted as the Israel advocacy policy advisor for Israel's leading reality television program, "[The Ambassador](#)"

Earlier today, the Israeli Government Press Office [promoted](#) the apparent hoax video on Twitter. In the tweet, @GPOIsrael cited @guyseemann. I headed over to [Guy Seemann's twitter feed](#) and found that he had only tweeted one item in his entire history: the pinkwashing anti-flotilla hoax. In fact, Seemann only joined Twitter on June 15, 2011. Then I took a look at [Guy Seemann's bio](#):

Guy Seemann studied government, international policy, philosophy and physics at American University in Washington, DC. Before moving to Israel, Guy worked for United States Senator Robert Menendez, and then as a special projects coordinator in the North Eastern campaign for then-presidential candidate Barack Obama.

Since the campaign and moving to Israel, Guy was awarded a fellowship to work with international journalists and diplomats at the Prime Minister's Office, served as the international director for Lev Echad, and volunteered for the IDF. **Guy will soon begin a new job at the Prime Minister's National Security Council** working on Iranian, US and UN policy.

Why would the Israeli GPO have tweeted at Guy Seemann, a Netanyahu aide who seems to have created a Twitter account for the sole purpose of promoting the pinkwashing hoax? And what was Seemann's role in the video's creation? How did Lazarus know about the video before it had garnered any media interest — and only a small handful of hits? These questions remain unanswered. However, the video's promotion by an exclusive cadre of official Israeli hasbara entities and figures suggest the hoax was part of a desperate government operation designed to discredit the Free Gaza flotilla. I will be updating here as I learn more.

**Update:** Guy Seemann's twitter page has disappeared and his bio has [changed](#). Seemann [told](#) Ali Abunimah that he promoted the hoax video but had no role in its production. Meanwhile, the character in the video has been [identified](#) by EI as Omer Gershon, an Israeli actor.

Tagged with: [benjamin netanyahu](#) • [flotilla](#) • [fraud](#) • [free gaza](#) • [gaza](#) • [internet hoax](#) • [israel](#) • [israeli government press office](#) • [palestine](#) • [pinkwashing](#) • [tom macmaster](#)

## 6 Responses to “Anti-Flotilla video fraud linked to PM Netanyahu’s office, official Israeli hasbara agents (Updated)”

1. *Seamus Darragh* says:  
[June 24, 2011 at 7:59 pm](#)

Once again, Max to the rescue – thankyou

2. *chayma100* says:  
[June 25, 2011 at 4:19 am](#)

Good digging. Thanks to both of you, Max and Ben Doherty.

*However, the video’s promotion by an exclusive cadre of official Israeli hasbara entities and figures suggest the hoax was part of a desperate government operation designed to discredit the Free Gaza flotilla. I will be updating here as I learn more.*

What I don’t understand is why Israeli Hasbarists like Seeman and Lazarus, find it necessary to promote Israel using gay rights or being “better” for homosexuality than Hamas controlled Palestine. The logical outcome of this thinking is that the Freedom Flotilla would have no credibility.

The basic message from this fake video can be summed up as the flotilla and Hamas are no good for gays. Why would this play a major part in discrediting the flotilla?

That would only make sense if winning the world’s gay community’s support for Israel was a necessary prerequisite for it’s legitimacy! Or if the activists on board are going to Gaza to try to convince Hamas to allow orgies of gay sex and lesbian sex. They are not. They are taking food and medical supplies. This has nothing to do with sexual freedom rights, straight or gay.

Is this some kind of selling point? Looked at from a religious angle it doesn’t make sense, it merely highlights the contempt Seeman’s administration shows to the religious sensitivities of his country.

Even if looked at from their secular right wing point of view, surely they can find more credible ammunition to use against Hamas and the flotilla than it’s opposition to gay sex?

3. *gileng* says:  
[June 25, 2011 at 5:03 am](#)

I know the guy in the video. He is an Israeli night club promoter called Omer Gershon, and as far as I know has never been to college... The way it looks, the entire thing is made up. You should try and contact him at Facebook, he is registered there under that name.

4. *mkayyef* says:  
[June 25, 2011 at 11:02 am](#)

If it was he said was right, why doesn’t he show the mail he received from the Ship to Gaza group in London. And if it was because he wants to fight for other rights than the gay movement, why should he talk the way he talked about Hamas and the people that met Hamas leaders, i thought he had enough knowledge of the area and the goal of the flotilla before he wrote his mail asking to participate. Another lie of the zionists to let the people think that the flotilla is helping terrorism

5. *AdamAW* says:  
[June 25, 2011 at 11:08 am](#)

This video looks and sounds like a comedy sketch. Did anyone even expect it to be taken seriously?!

George Galloway has defended the rights of homosexuals on his U.K. based radio programme, and says that he believes the rights of homosexual men and women to enjoy their relationships without fear of discrimination to be more precious than the sensibilities of Muslims or Christians.

Besides, are we expected to believe that people deserve to suffer on account of the prejudices held by the particular administration that they are living under?

6. *jim from iowa* says:

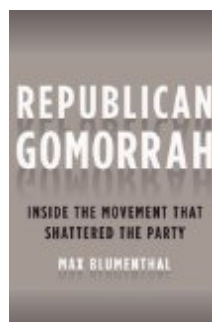
[June 25, 2011 at 11:29 am](#)

I have no basis to question the validity of your report, Max. I frequent pro-Israel blogs and there is some effort by some individual bloggers and commenters to promote the idea that the LGBT community should avoid supporting anti-Israel, pro-Palestinian groups because of the anti-gay positions of groups like Hamas. Hamas is definitely anti-gay (google "Hamas and homosexuality"). I'm pro-Israel and disagree with many of your characterizations of Israel and of some of their supporters. It would not surprise me if the Netanyahu government is doing some of the things you report here. But why would they choose an Elvis Costello look-alike to do the deed? Give me a good old Jake Gyllenhaal look alike instead, and I'm butter in your hands.

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