

EXCLUSIVE: The photographs Israel DIDNT want you to see

LIFE AND DEATH ON THE MAVI MARMARA

Canadian aid worker **Kevin Neish** tells how he hid the photographs he took during the murderous Israeli attack on the Mavi Marmara, the Gaza Freedom Flotilla's lead ship, as it tried to break the illegal blockade on Gaza last May

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Israeli commandos executed Turkish journalist Cevdet Kiliclar at close range with a bullet between his eyes on Deck 4 of the Mavi Marmara © KEVIN NEISH



Kevin Neish, from Victoria, British Columbia, was one of 581 passengers on the Mavi Marmara, the lead vessel of the Gaza freedom flotilla that was attacked in international waters on May 31, 2010, while on a mission of mercy to deliver aid to residents of Gaza. Israeli commandos boarded the ship, killed nine of its passengers, arrested the others and confiscated their cameras and film-making equipment. Neish, however, hid the memory card from his camera and smuggled it to safety. In this special photo report, **ColdType** publishes many of the pictures for the first time, along with Neish's story of how he managed to get the photographs away from his interrogators. The next Freedom Flotilla attempt to break the Israeli blockade will leave for Gaza at the end of May. Neish will travel again, this time on a Canadian ship (details at <http://www.canadaboatgaza.org>)



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LEFT: This Israeli commando screaming and crying on Deck 4 of the Mavi Marmara was the first one captured and disarmed. I suspect all the captured Israelis were terrified because they were expecting to be treated the way they had treated the aid workers, but they weren't. Instead, they were protected and taken to Deck 2 for medical treatment and then taken down to Deck 1 to be detained.

ABOVE: A second Israeli commando laying on his back and still wearing his balaclava was the second one captured and disarmed. He was attacked by an enraged passenger but his life was saved by one of the IHH workers who protected him.



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ABOVE: Aid workers' blood on the stairs of Deck 4. LEFT: "The Medical area" in the stairway lobby on Deck 2. This is at the end of the resistance when the whole of the lobby area was filled with the dead and wounded.



I was an aid worker on the Mavi Marmara when it was attacked by Israeli commandos on May 31 last year. Due to the heavy gunfire on the outer decks I mainly stayed inside the stairway between all the decks, but I saw the three captured Israeli commandos being brought inside to be detained and I watched the numerous dead and wounded aid workers being dragged in for medical attention. Then I was arrested and taken to Israel where we were all charged with "Entering Israel illegally" and jailed for two days and then deported to Turkey. The Israelis tried to confiscate the camera films and chips on the Mavi by strip searching anyone suspected of having a camera (including body cavity searches).

However, Korean/Brazilian filmmaker Lara Lee smuggled a film chip with a one hour video of the attack (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vwsMJmvSOAY> <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vwsMJmvSOAY>) by hiding it in her underwear.

After the "surrender" I threw away my camera and accessories and hid the camera chip in my mouth, clothes, shoes and finally my underwear and luckily got it out. I was one of the last of 600 people on the Mavi processed by the Israelis (12 hours after docking) and, lucky for me, I suspect they were just sick and tired of strip searching people.

I left my photos with the Turkish aid organisation IHH (who owned the Mavi). I did this because I had numerous photos of their injured and dead aid workers and photos of their aid workers capturing the Israeli commandos so I thought it was appropriate to let IHH decide what to do with the photos.

They returned them to me when I returned to Turkey in January. Some of my photos of the captured commandos have been published but not with the authority of IHH or myself. Apparently someone hacked into their computer or gained access illegally. However, most of them have not been published, legally or otherwise.



Moments before the captain asks the defenders to stop resisting, two aid workers defend the famous Deck 4 port side hatch/door. An Israeli commando is on the other side of the door with a machine gun. You can see the bullet holes in the door and wall and the shot out porthole.





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ABOVE: Anelderly aid worker with a very serious leg wound. RIGHT: an Indonesian IHH aid worker who was shot in the right shoulder.



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TOP:an IHH aid worker shot in the back – I believe he died). LEFT: The Mavi's "medical area" in the stairway lobby on Deck 2. This was taken at the end of the resistance when the whole lobby was full of dead and wounded. ABOVE: This is me on the 4th deck stairs holding up a "hit list" of flotilla passengers which I found in an Israeli commando's backpack (this photo is a still taken from Lara Lee's video of the attack whcih can be seen at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vwsMJmvSOAY>)