
The Bronfmans: Part I

A crime family turned respectable

Carol White recounts the criminal history and political-intelligence links of the family of the man some call Armand Hammer's political heir.

Recent years have seen Edgar Bronfman, of the Bronfman liquor dynasty, propelled into a position of greater and greater political power as part of the "invisible government" which has never been elected, and yet decides the key questions of foreign and economic policy for the West. The rise to power of the Bronfman family has been paralleled by the decline of the United States. From overtly criminal beginnings, they have engineered for themselves an accepted position among the elite. Their power reflects the criminalization of American justice, which has substituted police-state abuses against honest republican tendencies, for the prosecution of crime.

The Bronfmans represent a less well-known facet of the phenomenon associated with Henry Kissinger and Armand Hammer. While the Anglo-American elite is run by families who cherish their pedigrees, it is quick to assimilate useful agents such as Kissinger, Hammer, and Bronfman—men whose zeal to line their own pockets is only thinly masked by their political facade. Such Soviet agents of influence are working to draw the United States into accepting a new "Yalta" agreement with the Soviets which would transform the world into a malthusian, police-state nightmare.

There is a section of the Anglo-American *elite* which agrees to this because they wish to repeat the Hitler experiment in the West—with the new twist, of first destroying nations as such, and introducing universal fascism instead of national versions. To carry these policies out, these traitors need to assimilate criminal elements into their ranks.

Who are the Bronfmans?

The aggregate assets held by the various branches of the Bronfman family were estimated to be \$7 billion in 1978, by Peter C. Newman in his book *King of the Castle*. Today, with their stock in the DuPont Corporation, the Bronfmans are ready to reap windfall profits from the environmental hoax that chlorofluorocarbons must be banned in order to protect the ozone layer. DuPont has cornered the patents on the only replacement refrigerants in sight.

The family got its economic start during Prohibition when they were given the franchise on British liquor entering the United States through Canada. They were also involved in drug trafficking, but this aspect of their operation is less easily

documented. The major public assets of the Bronfmans are still located in the liquor business which they dominate under 61 whiskey labels, such as Calvert, Seagram's, Chivas, and popular brands of gin, vodka, rum, and over 250 different wines and champagnes.

One way that drug and other hot money is typically laundered is through real estate speculation, gambling casinos, and sports events. The Bronfmans have major speculative real estate holdings throughout the United States, in stadiums, shopping centers, and other developments. They own Cadillac Fairview and Trizec, both major holding companies, and they own the fifth-largest U.S. oil independent, Texas Pacific Oil Company, which has holdings in Dubai, Thailand, Spain, Kenya, the Philippines, the North Sea, and Mexico. The Bronfmans are the largest private landowners in Canada and have the largest Canadian interest in British American Oil Company and major holdings in Bell Telephone of Canada.

They are part of the British Eagle Star insurance conglomerate, which functions with Kissinger Associates in international operations to control offshore banking, either directly or through the agency of the many banks with which they are associated, such as the Bank of Nova Scotia and the Bank of Montreal—and through their connections by marriage to the financial empires of the powerful Rothschild and Gunzberg families.

They are also an important factor in the entertainment world. They own stock in Curtis Publishing Company and Paramount Pictures and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.

Because they are a Jewish family, they have cynically bought their way into control of North American Zionism by their generous contributions to Israel. This has given them a significant measure of political clout as a lobbying force in the United States, Israel, and Canada, which they have deployed to support economic measures to their own benefit, not least a liberal policy toward drug enforcement. Politically they have thrown their weight behind "Red billionaire" Armand Hammer, and the pro-Soviet lobby.

The Bronfman family emigrated to western Canada from the Russian empire in the late 1880s. At first they farmed and worked in construction, but as the children grew up they

moved into the hotel-prostitution business, after the construction of the Canadian Northern Railway line.

With Prohibition in the United States, they were able to connect with U.S. criminal networks. One device they used was to establish a pharmaceutical wholesale house, the Canada Pure Drug Company at Yorkton, as a cover for the sale of liquor and narcotics—in the guise of tonics. They received the patronage of the Hudson's Bay Company and they were given the contract to sell Dewar's whiskey.

Their practice was to buy British brands and then dilute these, selling them to a U.S. market under similar sounding names. They ultimately entered an arrangement with the Distillers Company of Edinburgh and London—an 1877 amalgam of British distilleries which controlled over half of the world's Scotch market—giving the Distillers a 50% share of their bootlegging business in return for the steady flow of British supplies. In 1922 a Bronfman brother-in-law, Paul Matoff, was executed gangland-style by the Chicago mob. Although frequently threatened with prosecution, the family escaped jail due to the tacit complicity of the Canadian government in the illicit but profitable trade across the border.

When Prohibition ended, the Bronfmans wished to enter the U.S. market as legitimate distributors, but the Distillers gave their franchise to Joseph Kennedy instead. Nonetheless the Bronfmans prospered, due to support from the Lansky-Rothstein mob in the United States, and they were able to establish their own brands of liquor.

Not coincidentally, other political influentials, namely Armand Hammer and the Kennedy family, also got their start through illegal trafficking in drugs and liquor. According to John H. Davis, in his book *The Kennedys*, Joseph Kennedy was described by several major underworld figures as one of the most ruthless competitors in the bootlegging business throughout the 1920s and early 1930s. Armand Hammer and his father also entered the liquor business during Prohibition, forming the Allied Drug and Chemical Company, which like the Bronfman operation, supplied narcotics as well as liquor to customers.

Historically, the opium trade was run through the British East India Company, and was central to imperial policy. This tradition continued when U.S. Prohibition became the pretext for the criminalization of society in the United States, Canada, and Great Britain. Not only was cafe society the meeting ground for criminals, the Hollywood crowd, and degenerate socialites—what became the jet set—but it gave the occasion for integrating the mob into Hollywood on a grand scale.

It is well known that sections of the mafia were used by the U.S. intelligence services during World War II. The links between organized crime, misadventures in Cuba in the Kennedy era, and the plot to assassinate the President are too well-worked over to bear repeating here. They should be borne in mind in connection with the more recent Iran-Contra scandal, which has revealed that U.S. intelligence services



*Edgar Bronfman,
liquor magnate and
Soviet agent of
influence*

engage in narcotics trafficking as a means of off-budget financing for their enterprises as well as for the purpose of recruiting criminal elements, willing to carry out dangerous intelligence missions.

When Minda Bronfman married the Baron Alain de Gunzberg in 1953, the family became a part of the most aristocratic circles of Jewish families. The Odessa Gunzburg family had been bankers to the Tsar, although their family title was granted by the Hapsburgs of the Austrian empire. Alain de Gunzberg is managing director of the Banque Louis-Dreyfus, France's third-largest merchant bank, and is closely tied to the Rothschilds in the Club Méditerranée. The Gunzburgs have opened European liquor and wine markets to the Bronfmans. And more important, they have consolidated a pro-Soviet political faction within world Jewry.

The British major

For a small-time immigrant family to achieve the prominence of the Bronfmans, they must have been acting as frontmen for other forces. The obvious hypothesis is that they were set up in business by the Hudson's Bay Company, which has historically been connected into the opium trade. As the family prospered, they were given a limited franchise by the Distillers Corporation, only to be cut down to size when Prohibition ended.

The Bronfmans were sufficiently well-connected, however, to maintain and extend their position despite the British. Thus they carved out a certain independent role. They were helped along by the law firm of Phillips, Bloomfield, Vineberg, and Goodman, which organized financing for the expansion of Seagrams into the United States. The firm was founded by Maj. Louis Bloomfield, a lawyer for the Bronfmans until the late 1960s and an adviser to them from the 1930s, until his death in the mid-1980s.

Bloomfield was the successor to Sir William Stephenson as head of the British Special Operations Executive (SOE) in North America. He has also been implicated in the assassination of President Kennedy. He was recruited into the (SOE) in 1938, the year that British intelligence was allowed to set up shop in the United States. Under this agreement, Bloomfield was given an officer's rank in the U.S. Army and sec-

oned to the wartime intelligence service, the OSS. He also worked with J. Edgar Hoover on counterespionage.

After the war, Bloomfield returned to Montreal to resume his relationship with the Bronfmans; however, he continued his intelligence activities, and in 1958 formed a private intelligence operation known as Permindex (Permanent Industrial Expositions), which was incorporated in Switzerland and housed in Montreal. Permindex is rumored to have operated as a high-level Murder, Inc. and this is substantiated by the action of French President Charles de Gaulle, who exposed their role as a conduit for secret funds into the Secret Army Organization (OAS), which was implicated in the 1962 attempt on his life. As a result of this, Major Bloomfield's name was removed from the letterhead of his law firm in 1968, although he was in an active role as a consultant to the Bronfmans.

Documentation exists that the Bronfmans themselves have been directly involved with intelligence operations. A firm called Space Research was formed in 1968 as a partnership between the Allan Bronfman wing of the family—now represented by Allan's sons Edward and Peter, and A.D. Little, Inc. That firm was ostensibly formed to build howitzers capable of firing warheads into space. It operated, however, as a cover for the smuggling of arms under the sanction of U.S. and British intelligence. Prominent members of Space Research's board included Lt. Gen. Arthur Trudeau, the former

head of U.S. Army R&D; Richard Bissell, the former director of operations for the CIA; and various other retired U.S. army officers.

During the pre-1979 period, Space Research sold to Iran howitzers capable of firing shortrange tactical nuclear warheads. When the Iranian revolution began, the Bronfmans sold their shares in Space Research to Saad Gabr.

Israel, a pawn in the Bronfman game

Peter Bronfman has recently bought a share of the *Jerusalem Post*, along with Henry Kissinger and former NATO secretary general Peter Carrington, through the Hollinger Corporation. But it is Edgar, as head of the World Jewish Congress, who wields the most clout in Israel.

The Bronfmans have huge political leverage in Israel, because they have the flow of Jewish philanthropy. Newman describes how this works. In 1978, the family on average would contribute about \$2 million annually to the state of Israel through the various Jewish charities. In 1962 they contributed an additional \$1 million directly for construction of a new wing for the Israeli Museum in Jerusalem. In Canada alone, Sam Bronfman would typically pledge 10% of whatever fundraising goal he was setting for the Jewish community as a whole.

The role being played today by Edgar Bronfman parallels that recounted by author Ben Hecht in his tragic book *Perfidy*,

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the story of how the eastern European Jews were betrayed by Jewish traitors during World War II. The majority of Jews were held hostage to what was perceived as higher questions of policy by certain factions of world Jewry who were willing to cover up the true extent of Nazi atrocities. Bronfman has attempted to achieve a bargain with the Soviets which would only allow emigration by Soviet Jews directly to the state of Israel, preventing them from seeking asylum in the United States or Western Europe, which many would otherwise choose.

A feature of this deal has been Israeli intelligence complicity in passing on U.S. secrets to the Soviets. This was revealed in the famous Jonathan Pollard spy case and is probably also the reality behind the current Felix Bloch espionage affair. Edgar Bronfman is a member of the U.S./U.S.S.R. Trade and Economic Council, which is not only a pro-Soviet lobby, but a conduit for passing technology to the Soviets.

The now aged Armand Hammer, upon whom Edgar models himself, has been the most important single agent representing Soviet interests in the West. Although born in the United States, he was the child of socialist Russian immigrants, and from the time of the Bolshevik Revolution on, he worked as a part of the Soviet foreign-intelligence capability known as "The Trust." The Trust was an interface between the Soviets and those in the West who were willing to give them financial and other assistance. While the Bronfmans are also Russian emigrés, their Soviet interests would seem to be a subsumed feature of their efforts to place themselves in a position of economic and political power, and they maintain close ties with British intelligence.

Landscam and fundamentalism

The idea behind the modern-day Trust—since the 1950s, when the Soviets got the bomb and could attempt to dictate a partnership with the West—was the kind of New Yalta condominium arrangement which is now increasingly dictating world politics.

To create such a political shift, massive cultural engineering was necessary. One way was to spark small local wars which could be contained, and which would provide the pretext for renegotiating national boundaries, creating the conditions for supranational agencies to seize control of regional blocs. To further this end, the Soviets and their Western allies in The Trust have fomented fundamentalist movements, with terrorism, including the seizure of hostages, as a by-product.

In Israel, extremists sponsored by Ariel Sharon have been in the forefront of the settlement of the occupied West Bank by Jews. At the same time, Muslim fundamentalism is being sponsored by the Soviets and by left-wingers and the social democracy. Intelligence services on both sides of the Iron Curtain have played a large part in spawning these fanatical movements. While the Bronfmans, as representatives of the European and North American Jewish communities, are os-

tensibly "liberal" opponents of the kind of fundamentalist politics presented by Sharon, nonetheless they are secretly involved in economic deals on the West Bank which are only made possible because of the fundamentalist movement Sharon has encouraged.

While liberal Western Jewry is opposed to such extremist factions in Israel, the role of Edgar and his brother Charles Bronfman, has been duplicitous. They were willing to collaborate with the crazies in order to turn Israel into a major center for organized crime, including gun and dope running and money laundering. Max Fisher and Meyer Lansky (both collaborators of the Bronfman family during their earlier openly criminal days) were key in these plans.

Indeed, the mutual interest in this nefarious scheme was shown in the spring of 1982, when a meeting was held at the ranch of Ariel Sharon, at which Kissinger and the Bronfman lawyer, Maj. Louis Bloomfield, were present to hammer out policy issues which included the Israeli invasion of the Lebanon. A later meeting, on Nov. 15, 1982, included Lord Harlech, Prince Johannes von Thurn und Taxis, former Secretary of State Alexander Haig, Lord Carrington and other notables. Plans for massive investment in the West Bank were discussed, but were postponed due to opposition from Israel's Begin government.

Israel's future could well be sacrificed to these greedy schemes. The present bloodbath in the Lebanon is a harbinger of the destruction which will befall the whole region, unless the present insanity is curbed. Religious fundamentalism is only the detonator; peace in the Middle East depends upon economic solutions for the area. Shimon Peres's call for a Marshall Plan for the Middle East, which has been ignored, is the only path to peace. It would require assistance from the United States to create the kind of economic infrastructure which could transform the Middle East, and allow Israel with its advanced technology, to play a key role in developing the region.

The Bronfmans, Henry Kissinger, and Lord Harlech (Kissinger's collaborator in the West Bank land-grab) think otherwise. They were willing to cynically betray the national aspirations of Israel, and hand over the Lebanon to the Soviet client state, Syria. They chose to play a geopolitical game in service of The Trust with obvious implications, as well, for the supply and price of oil in a declining world economy.

While stabbing Israel in the back, Edgar Bronfman has cynically waved the bloody shirt of the Holocaust to justify abuses against German and Eastern European naturalized Americans who were accused of having Nazi pasts. KGB files were used by the Justice Department Office of Special Investigations, without corroboration and in some instances in contradiction to other evidence, and these citizens have been summarily deported—in the case of Karl Linnas, to his death on arrival in the Soviet Union. Bronfman's World Jewish Congress officially supports the OSI's actions in denying these naturalized Americans their constitutional right to a fair hearing for their alleged war crimes in a court of law.