

ADL mafia caught in 'contract hit'

by Jeffrey Steinberg

Syndicated columnist Patrick Buchanan was right on the mark when he identified the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith and ADL national director Abe Foxman as the instigators of a month-long smear campaign against him because of his opposition to the U.S. deployment in the Persian Gulf.

Buchanan's initial blast at the ADL by name came in an early September syndicated column in which he responded to a vile attack on him as an "anti-Semite" by former *New York Times* editor A.M. Rosenthal. Buchanan labeled the Rosenthal piece a "contract hit" ordered by Abe Foxman, and launched into an all-out attack against the ADL's use of the tar brush of anti-Semitism to stifle debate about U.S. policy toward Israel and to destroy the careers of many honest critics of Israel and the Zionist lobby.

Buchanan's counterattack marks the first time in this writer's memory that any prominent journalist or publication—with the shining exception of Lyndon LaRouche and *EIR*—has taken the ADL head-on.

The immediate provocation for Buchanan's salvo was a series of attacks against him by the ADL, beginning with a press release issued on ADL letterhead dated Aug. 28, in which Foxman described a Buchanan televised warning about Israel wanting a Mideast war as "reminiscent of scurrilous charges made during World War II that Jews were the only ones who sought American entry in the war against Nazi Germany." The press release charged that Buchanan had a "venomous attitude toward Israel and its supporters." The latter smear was based on a televised quip by Buchanan that Capitol Hill was "Israeli-occupied territory."

Following Buchanan's response to the Rosenthal-ADL libel, the ADL published and widely circulated a second press release which referenced Buchanan's public defense of several victims of frameups by the Justice Department's Office of Special Investigations (OSI), as further "proof" of the columnist's "pro-Nazi proclivities." Perhaps not coincidentally, only days after Buchanan's eloquent defense of OSI victim John Demjanjuk on a nationwide television show, the *Washington Times* reported that the Justice Department has launched an internal probe into widespread allegations that the OSI broke the law by hiding evidence showing the innocence of targets of OSI "anti-Nazi" hunts.

The contents of the ADL crib-sheet targeting the conservative Catholic columnist Buchanan were instantly regurgitated through the mouths of several columnists, including

Morton Kondracke and Fred Barnes, both of the *New Republic*. The pair ganged up on Buchanan during the Sept. 22 broadcast of NBC's McLaughlin Group show. Buchanan responded by charging that the *New Republic* was preparing the next printed blast at him and that the libel campaign was "as spontaneous as the von Schlieffen Plan"—a reference to the war plan painstakingly developed by the chief of the German General Staff during the late 19th century which formed the basis of Germany's invasion of the Low Countries at the outbreak of World War I.

The dogs of war

Meanwhile, the ADL has been publishing a steady stream of propaganda from the Ariel Sharon-dominated war cabinet currently in power in Israel, going beyond its attack on Buchanan. Back in June, the ADL widely circulated a memorandum evaluating the new Israeli government as a "moderate" coalition deserving of full backing from the Bush administration.

More recently, on Aug. 15, Kenneth Jacobson, the director of the ADL's International Affairs Division, sent out a memorandum to all League regional offices, ordering a propaganda assault against local news outlets and politicians indicating any signs of "sympathy" for the Arab position. "Since Iraq's invasion of Kuwait," Jacobson wrote, "a number of myths about the Middle East that had gained currency in recent years have now been exposed. At the same time, however, a number of new myths emanating from the Arab world and being given a hearing, and sometimes sympathy, by the media are emerging. It is important early on to counter these myths so that they do not gain a foothold in public opinion. . . . For now we thought it most important to respond to the dangerous myth that Israel's 'occupation' of the West Bank and Gaza is like Iraq's occupation of Kuwait." Appended to Jacobson's memo was a two-page "fact sheet" stating the Israeli government's position justifying its intransigence on the Palestinian question.

Sections of that ADL propaganda sheet appeared nearly verbatim in a nationally syndicated column by Jeane Kirkpatrick on Sept. 24.

As a reformed choir boy in the Israeli Defense Ministry's "amen corner" in Washington, Buchanan knows a great deal about the ADL's methods. Reminding the League that he was a one-time recipient of ADL propaganda against presidential candidate Jesse Jackson, Buchanan delivered a warning shot across the bow that threatened the ADL where it would hurt the most: its dubious tax exempt status.

For the moment, what have been called the "Buchanan-Rosenthal wars" have retreated from the public spotlight. However, as long as the vile bullying tactics of the ADL are not thoroughly repudiated and crushed by a massive outpouring of public exposure, the idea of a free press in America will remain a cruel hoax.

Buchanan picked up the ball. Who else will run with it?