

1988, he says he went to see Gerald Bull again, and delivered another threat. In March 1990, Bull was assassinated; Ben-Menashe says this was carried out by the Israelis.

Remember the incident with the poisoned Chilean grapes in 1989? Here's Ben-Menashe's account of that incident: Gates had called Mossad head Nachum Admoni in February 1989, to complain about the problems that Israel was causing in Chile, and to complain that Ben-Menashe had arranged for the London *Financial Times* to publish an exposure of Cardoen on Nov. 11, 1988.

Gates told Admoni that the Chileans were listening too much to Israel, and that they would have to be taught a lesson. Shortly after this, *three* Chilean grapes were found by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to have been laced with cyanide poison, and the United States banned all Chilean food imports. When Chile began to cooperate with the CIA, the ban was quickly lifted.

In October 1989, Ben-Menashe was set up and arrested by the U.S. Customs Service. The case went to trial in October 1991. The federal prosecutors contended that Ben-Menashe was just a low-level translator, but he was able to produce official letters from Israeli military and intelligence officials which showed otherwise. The jury apparently believed him, and he was acquitted in November, after a six-week trial.

The 'Great Game'

There is much more in this book, some of it questionable. Of particular interest are his descriptions of the Israeli nuclear program, his account of the Promis computer software spy system which forms the basis of the Inslaw scandal in the U.S., and his allegations about Israel's dealing with the terrorist Shining Path terrorists in Peru. Ben-Menashe claims that he was sent to Peru in 1988 to make a deal with Shining Path, which would allow Israel to obtain rare minerals and chemicals for its nuclear program. He says that Shining Path was paid at least \$28 million by Israel to permit it to obtain the needed materials.

Ben-Menashe says that he was set up and abandoned because he knew too much. It might be more accurate to say he knew too little. Ben-Menashe was a player in a larger game, the so-called Great Game of British geopolitical strategy. The recent assertion in a London court by Sir Alan Clark, former minister of industry and trade, succinctly summarizes that British-orchestrated strategy: "The interests of the West were well served by Iran and Iraq fighting each other." Never mentioned in the book, for example, is one of the masters of this British balance-of-power strategy, Henry A. Kissinger.

As much as Ben-Menashe, or the reader, may believe that Israel was calling the shots, the truth is that Israel itself has been a pawn—although a willing one—in a larger geopolitical game choreographed from the West. So long as that is taken into account, then *Profits of War* can be profitably studied.

Insurers propose universal health care

by Linda Everett

In a radical departure from previous policy, the health insurance industry has launched an initiative calling for universal health care coverage. In a statement on Dec. 3, the board of directors of the Health Insurance Association of America (HIAA), which represents 270 commercial carriers, endorsed comprehensive health care reform and called for federal legislation that requires all individuals to carry, and all employers to offer, an essential package of health care coverage.

The preliminary set of proposals is still "evolving," HIAA told *EIR*, but it includes: 1) universal coverage: Everyone would be covered, either through their employer or their own means, and the government would pay private insurers to provide managed care to those below the poverty line; 2) a basic package of benefits: Everyone would have the same basic package of care, with primary and preventive services and catastrophic coverage; 3) an equitable tax policy: Premiums paid for the essential package would be excluded from employee or individual taxable incomes, but employees would be taxed on premiums paid by the employer for benefits in excess of that package and the tax revenue generated would finance health care coverage for the poor; 4) cost controls: HIAA says its cost control plan will eliminate Medicare and Medicaid underpayments and cost-shifting, and will discourage "excessive" doctor visits and unnecessary use of technology, hospitals, and specialist care.

Cutting the "excesses" is standard dogma for all "managed care" plans and health maintenance organizations (HMOs) and their hybrids. HMOs and/or physicians are at financial risk to keep the costs of a patient's care under a flat per patient payment rate. To eliminate "unnecessary" care, HMO doctors act as gate-keepers, refusing or delaying patient referrals to specialists for tests—and the patient suffers.

In HIAA's plan, the "private sector is empowered by government which removes barriers to growth of pluralistic, competitive systems." That means that evolving generations of managed care, with ever more stringent cost-cutting mechanisms, will be thrown into an unholy competition for patients. For each "body" signed up, a flat fee is paid, covering *all* physician and hospital care. HIAA's own Responsible Health Systems integrates financing, delivery of services, financial incentives, and treatment protocols. A "self-regulatory group" will establish ground rules for everyone involved.