

# The Israeli spy network that Jonathan Pollard left behind

by Joseph Brewda

When Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu demanded that President Bill Clinton release imprisoned Israeli spy Jonathan Pollard before signing an agreement with the Palestinians at the Wye Plantation summit in October, he had several objectives in mind. For one, Netanyahu wanted to pin the blame for the hoped-for summit failure on Clinton, by making an impossible demand. According to Joseph diGenova, the U.S. Attorney who prosecuted Pollard, Pollard was involved in “the largest physical compromise of United States classified information in the 20th century,” an assessment backed by then-Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, who sent a memo to the court following Pollard’s 1986 conviction, demanding that he serve life without parole. Major factions within the U.S. intelligence establishment share that assessment.

But, blowing up the summit was not Netanyahu’s only objective. He also wanted to reassure the vast number of other Pollards operating within all levels of the U.S. government’s bureaucracy, that they won’t be abandoned, as Pollard appears to have been, if they are caught. In fact, the spy ring that placed Pollard in U.S. Navy Intelligence has never been apprehended, and is one of Israel’s most precious “crown jewels.”

The continuing importance of this ring has occasionally come to light. In January 1997, for example, the National Security Agency intercepted a phone call from a Mossad officer at the Israeli Embassy in Washington to Mossad chief Danny Yatom, asking whether he should access Secretary of State Warren Christopher’s secret letters to Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat though “Mega,” identified as an Israeli mole within Clinton’s inner circle. According to a leak to the U.S. press, Yatom reprimanded the agent for even thinking of assigning the mole such a low-level task. U.S. investigators into “Mega” are also examining how the leak, which blew their top secret investigation, occurred. According to the U.S. and European media, “Mega” even succeeded in taping Clinton’s phone, including tapping several hours of his conversations with Monica Lewinsky.

The disastrous U.S. bombing raid on a civilian pharmaceutical factory in Khartoum, Sudan, on Aug. 21, 1998, provides another insight into Israel’s spy ring in action. The hu-

miliating fiasco jeopardized U.S. interests throughout the region, all to fulfill Israeli objectives of keeping its Arab neighbors enmired in war. The raid could never have occurred except for two factors: massive intelligence conduited into the U.S. government which falsely claimed that the factory was a chemical warfare manufacturing site, and high-level Israeli agents-in-place lobbying for the strike.

*EIR* has long been concerned with the serious threat to U.S. national security posed by Israeli espionage. In what follows, we review some of our investigations into the Pollard ring, notably as first reported in our 1986 *Special Report*, “Moscow’s Secret Weapon: Ariel Sharon and the Israeli Mafia.” As one aspect of that investigation, *EIR* examined what was dubbed the “X Committee,” the Israeli spy ring which got Pollard his job.

## Not a mole, but mole hills

When the FBI arrested U.S. Naval Intelligence civilian analyst Jonathan Pollard in November 1985 outside of his office in Suitland, Maryland, U.S. investigators had crucial evidence that Israel was stealing U.S. intelligence secrets. But, more importantly, they knew Pollard was not acting alone.

Among the immediate questions investigators posed, was how Pollard secured what seemed to be a specially created position in the Naval Investigative Service’s new Anti-Terrorist Alert Center, which gave him completely unnecessary access to extremely sensitive documents from all agencies of the U.S. government. Moreover, they determined that even a routine background check would have revealed that Pollard had bragged of being a Mossad agent since college, and that his father, Notre Dame microbiologist Morris Pollard, had worked closely with Israel’s scientific intelligence establishment since the 1940s. In other words, Pollard had patrons.

The cost of Pollard’s espionage was enormous. According to Federal prosecutors, Pollard forwarded tens of thousands of pages of highly sensitive, classified documents to his controllers in Lekem, the Israeli Defense Ministry’s scientific intelligence agency. At the time, that agency was run by Rafi Eytan, a longtime aide of Israeli Foreign Minister Gen. Ariel Sharon, who, among his other exploits, stole the uranium from

a Westinghouse plant in Apollo, Pennsylvania, used to make Israel's first nuclear bomb.

Worse, while Pollard and his supporters said his spying was necessary to help protect Israel from its hostile neighbors, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir forwarded many of the documents stolen by Pollard, to the Soviet Union. Shamir wanted Soviet Jews in exchange. It was also clear that Pollard was directed to steal documents with such trading purposes in mind. For example, why would Israel need the list of names of CIA agents operating in South Africa that Pollard stole? And all this, at a time when the Reagan administration had already given Israel astonishing access to U.S. classified information, supposedly necessary to combat the Soviet threat.

As the investigation proceeded, more details emerged showing the far-reaching extent of the network, including its ties to leading U.S. Zionist organizations.

For one, investigations revealed that at least one of the persons who recommended Pollard for his job was his former professor at the Fletcher School of Diplomacy at Tufts University, the Oxford-trained Sovietologist, Uri Ra'an. Professor Ra'an was not just any academic. Since the 1960s, when he first arrived in the United States as an Israeli consular official in New York, Ra'an has played a crucial intermediary role between U.S. and Israeli intelligence relating to allegedly shared anti-Soviet concerns. Ra'an's first major assignment was to revamp the B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League's (ADL) intelligence department, to better serve Israeli needs. He also established an anti-Soviet intelligence cell at Edgar Bronfman's American Jewish Congress.

Ra'an's actions at the ADL and American Jewish Congress were so egregious that they helped provoke Sen. William Fulbright (D-Ark.) into convening public hearings into Israeli espionage in 1963, and led to a 1967 civil lawsuit by a disenchanted ADL official, Saul Jofes, who charged Ra'an and the group with spying for Israel. But Ra'an emerged unscathed, and he later nominally left Israeli government service to teach Russian history at several U.S. universities.

As a result of Ra'an's groundwork, Israel had no problem in placing Ruth Sella, the wife of Pollard's Lekem controller, Air Force Gen. Aviem Sella, in the ADL's Legal Department, during the period that the couple supervised Pollard's spying. Mrs. Sella worked particularly closely with the head of the ADL Legal Department, Arnold Forster, who had worked with Ra'an, and Lekem chief Eytan, since the 1960s. The Sellas are now back in Israel, where Sella runs one of Israel's largest airbases, despite an outstanding U.S. warrant for his arrest.

## The 'X Committee'

*EIR* investigations into the Pollard ring also determined, based in part on discussions with U.S. government investiga-

tors, that the so-called "X Committee" which planted Pollard, had its base of operations within a fiercely "anti-Communist" civilian network within the Defense Department. Members of that network had been posted there despite their known ties to Israeli intelligence. While many members of this network quietly left government in the aftermath of Pollard's 1985 arrest and the 1986 Iran-Contra affair, overall, the network has remained in place, although not necessarily based at the Defense Department.

According to several *EIR* sources, Israel's spy ring has been massively expanded more recently by other agents who do not display the "anti-Communist" fervor that was such a useful cover during the Reagan years, but instead profess the "liberal" and "globalist" views considered more attractive today. Without such liberal camouflage, these sources say, the Israeli spy ring would never have been able to penetrate the highest level of the Clinton administration, and there would never have been a "Mega."

Meanwhile, the "anti-Communist" division within the old Pollard network, which has largely moved out of the Executive branch, has taken over the "Conservative Revolution" network of Congressmen and evangelical Protestants running the anti-Clinton witch-hunt today; for example, Pollard's former attorney, Ted Olson, who has openly justified Pollard's spying in the U.S. press. Olson is a former law partner of independent counsel Kenneth Starr, and personally organized and sponsored at his own Washington area home, the media and prosecutors "salon" running the anti-Clinton campaign. One of Olson's top collaborators in that venture is *American Spectator* foreign editor Michael Ledeen, who was implicated in both the Iran-Contra and Pollard affairs.

Below, we focus on just two of the most important operatives that investigators consulted by *EIR* have cited as top members of the Reagan administration "X Committee" who continue to push Israeli interests over those of the United States: Stephen Bryen and Richard Perle. As important as both operatives are, they are merely indicative of the deeper problem: a vast Israeli spy ring penetrating all layers of the U.S. government bureaucracy, active within both the administration and its Republican-centered opposition.

## Richard Perle

Currently at the Washington office of the Jerusalem-based Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies (IASPS), Richard Perle is the acknowledged top U.S. strategist of the Netanyahu regime. He wrote the 1996 IASPS "White Paper" laying out the strategy for destroying the Oslo peace accords, and undermining the Clinton administration within the Mideast.

From 1981 through 1987, Perle was Assistant Secretary of Defense for Security Policy, where he oversaw a U.S.-Israeli team allegedly dedicated to bringing down the Soviet Union through economic and other forms of warfare. The same team was the center of the "X Committee."

Perle did not conceal his relations with the Israeli government. In 1970, U.S. wiretaps of the Israeli Embassy revealed that Perle was feeding classified information that he had obtained as the top aide to Sen. Henry “Scoop” Jackson, a leading member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, to the Israeli government. Despite the protests, Perle retained his security clearance, and job as Jackson’s aide.

In 1976, Perle left government to form the Abingdon Corp. with John Lehman, who was later Navy Secretary during the period that Pollard was placed in Naval Intelligence. Perle’s top client at the firm was Israel’s leading manufacturer of mortars, the Soltam corporation. The chairman of Soltam’s holding company was Gen. Meir Amit, the former head of the Mossad.

In 1981, Perle was again caught, this time receiving more than \$100,000 from Soltam after he had joined the Reagan Defense Department. Perle said it was for “past services due.” The firm later played a major role in Iran-Contra.

Simultaneous with forming Abingdon, Perle also founded the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs (JINSA) in conjunction with: Stephen Bryen, another individual cited as a member of the “X Committee” who went to work at Defense as Perle’s aide; Michael Ledeen, who served as a go-between for U.S. and Israeli intelligence in Iran-Contra; and Yossef Bodansky, the reported Israeli intelligence handler of Jonathan Pollard, who also got a job at the Defense Department.

When Perle entered the Defense Department, he brought others beside this JINSA crew with him. Among them were Frank Gaffney, Jr., the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear Forces, and Douglas Feith, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Negotiations Policy. Both now run the Center for Security Policy, one of the Conservative Revolution’s mouthpieces which routinely charges Clinton with selling out to Russia and China.

### **Stephen D. Bryen**

Currently the director of JINSA, along with his wife, Shoshana, Bryen frequently co-authors articles with Ledeen attacking Clinton trade policies as compromising U.S. national security. They say U.S. national security is best served by having what they call a “strong relationship” with Israel.

Bryen was Perle’s sidekick at the Reagan Defense Department, as Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Trade Security Policy. He first hooked up with Perle in 1971, when he was an aide to Sen. Clifford Case, and he quickly became Perle’s closest associate in the Senate. In 1978, the duo co-founded JINSA.

Like Perle, Bryen’s relations with Israeli intelligence were well-known prior to entering the Reagan administration. In 1978, for example, Bryen was caught red-handed at a Washington restaurant with Mossad station chief Zvi Rafiah, discussing giving classified information to Israel. Bryen was then staff director of the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs.

Like Perle, Bryen escaped prosecution, despite the fact that Department of Justice investigators believed he was involved in “efforts to obtain sensitive information for which he had no apparent legitimate need but which would have been of inestimable value to the Israelis,” according to Department of Justice documents released to the public. The documents also reported that the FBI had a good case that “Mr. Rafiah had given Mr. Bryen ‘orders’ which he had carried out.”

While serving at the Defense Department, Bryen also formed the Technology Transfer Center, which was given centralized Defense Department oversight over investigating the smuggling of strategic technology—a very convenient job for the “X Committee.” To that end, Bryen went out and hired Pollard’s reported handler, Israeli Air Force officer Yossef Bodansky, as the center’s consultant, as well as Michael Ledeen’s wife, Barbara Ledeen—who herself had long served as a patron of Netanyahu and Sharon’s “Jewish settlers movement.”

### **Yossef Bodansky**

Currently the staff director of the House Republican Task Force on Terrorism, Yossef Bodansky plays an important role for Israel in depicting Muslim countries as being among the top enemies of the United States. On behalf of this Israeli objective, Bodansky wrote a Feb. 10, 1998 task force report, “The Iraqi WMD Challenge: Myths and Realities,” which claimed that Iraq had transplanted its chemical warfare capability to Sudan. This was precisely the disinformation used to sucker the U.S. government into bombing the Al-Sifa pharmaceutical plant in Khartoum on Aug. 21. According to one well-placed source, one of Israel’s purposes in this setup was to make it appear that the United States can be expected to “act capriciously and arbitrarily against an Islamic target.”

A former editor of the Israeli Air Force’s official magazine, Bodansky came to the United States in the late 1970s as a top agent of Lekem, according to the Israeli Labor Federation’s newspaper, *Davar*, where he soon served as Pollard’s handler together with the Sellas. But while the Sellas had to flee the country, Bodansky escaped legal action. According to one Israeli account, Bodansky was especially keen on obtaining aerospace technology needed to upgrade Israel’s capabilities, and also useful to sell to third parties.

Bodansky’s first job in the United States was as “technical editor” of JINSA’s newsletter. When JINSA founders Perle and Bryen joined the Reagan Defense Department, they brought the former Israeli officer with them. In 1985, Bodansky left government after evidence came to light of his frequent meetings with Pollard. After working for a *Washington Times* think-tank, and for *Jane’s Defence Weekly*, Bodansky obtained his current position at the Republican Party task force in 1989, where he regularly denounces Clinton for being soft on Islamic terrorism, and influences policy.