

What Is the Israeli Blackmail on Clinton?

by Edward Spannaus

To understand President Bill Clinton's capitulation to the right-wing Israeli lobby in the United States, and his abandonment of his previous commitment to forging a durable Arab-Israeli peace in the Middle East, it is essential to take into account the persistent reports of both Israeli spying and blackmail against President Clinton, and of Israeli penetration into the highest levels of the White House.

Such reports fall into two categories: indications of Mossad espionage, in the form of interception of electronic communications, and, secondly, the placement of a high-level agent within the Administration. That agent is often referred to by the code-name "Mega."

Who Is Leon Fuerth, Really?

A prime candidate for the designation as "Mega," is Leon Fuerth, Vice President Al Gore's foreign policy mentor and his National Security Adviser. In a story which received remarkably little attention, the *Washington Post* reported in mid-1998 that "some officials in the State Department believe he [Fuerth] is the conduit by which inside information is passed to Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu."

As background, one should also take note of the *New York Times* report of this last April. Going back to Gore's 1988 campaign, it reported that "Fuerth helped him formulate an uncritical pro-Israeli line," and that Gore even criticized the Reagan Administration for putting pressure on then-Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir to go along with a peace initiative calling upon Israel to withdraw from the land it occupied in 1967, in exchange for peace with its Arab neighbors.

The *Times* reported that it was Fuerth who was responsible for Gore's break with his fellow Senate Democrats in 1991, to vote in favor of President George Bush's Gulf War; Fuerth also drafted Gore's speech calling for the removal of Saddam Hussein.

'Mega' and Monica

The story of "Mega" is closely intertwined with both President Clinton's initiatives on the Middle East peace process, and the attacks on Clinton's Presidency, which culminated in the Monica Lewinsky affair and the 1998-99 impeachment.

First, the time-frame of the Lewinsky affair should be considered.

1. Lewinsky became an unpaid intern in the White House in the summer of 1995, and Clinton's first improper contact with her was in mid-November 1995.

2. President Clinton's partner in the Middle East peace process, Israeli Prime Minister Rabin, was assassinated on Nov. 4, 1995, which then allowed Netanyahu to become Prime Minister in May 1996.

3. Just as the Lewinsky affair was breaking in the news media in mid-January 1998, Netanyahu visited Washington, and publicly insulted the President by meeting with some of Clinton's worst enemies, including televangelists Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson. Netanyahu carried out this affront over the stated objections of both President Clinton and moderate Jewish leaders in the United States.

What happened between 1995 and early 1998?

According to independent counsel Kenneth Starr's report on the Lewinsky affair, President Clinton told Lewinsky, in March 1997, that he suspected a foreign embassy was tapping his telephone conversations.

This coincides with a report published in the *Washington Post* in early May 1997, that U.S. intelligence agencies had opened an investigation months earlier, to determine if a senior Clinton Administration official was passing information to the Israeli government. That investigation, according to the *Post* and other sources, was launched in January 1997, after the U.S. National Security Agency (NSA) had intercepted a phone conversation between a Mossad officer posted at the Israeli Embassy in Washington, and Danny Yatom, the Mossad chief, in Tel Aviv. The Mossad officer was seeking clarification as to whether he should attempt to obtain a copy of a private letter from then-Secretary of State Warren Christopher, to Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat. He told Yatom that "the Ambassador wants me to go to Mega to get a copy of this letter." Yatom told the officer that under no circumstances should "Mega" be approached, as he was the top Israeli penetration agent inside the Clinton inner circle. "This is not something we use Mega for."

An extensive FBI counterintelligence probe to determine the identity of the high-level Israeli mole in the U.S. government was triggered by the NSA intercept, and, according to a later affidavit of a CIA employee, a number of Jewish foreign policy and defense specialists were suspended from their jobs during this investigation.

The Real Lewinsky Tapes

What happened to the "Mega" investigation? According to a number of published accounts, and information provided to *EIR*, the spy hunt was called off as a result of Mossad blackmail of Clinton using tapes of his telephone conversations with Lewinsky.

According to these reports, as soon as the NSA intercept was discovered, an emergency meeting of top Israeli intelli-

gence officials took place, and a Mossad electronic-bugging team was dispatched to Washington. One of their targets was the home telephone of Lewinsky.

As a result of this operation, the Mossad obtained wiretap tapes of about 30 hours of “X-rated conversations between the President and Lewinsky. These tap”es, according to the sources, were hand-carried back to Tel Aviv, and were then used to blackmail the Clinton Administration into calling off the search for “Mega”; the threat was that, if the investigation were not shut down, the Israelis would begin leaking material from the tapes.

Curiously, the reporter who first started investigating the Lewinsky story, Michael Isikoff, says that he first learned about a story involving the President and “an intern” in March-April 1997.

Gordon Thomas, the author of a book which describes these events, told the *New York Post* in March 1999 that “Mega” was probably still active, deep within the White House. “So far as anyone knows,” Thomas said, “the Israeli agent MEGA—a much more important spy than the imprisoned CIA traitor Jonathan Pollard, and probably his controller—is still in place at the White House.”

A tantalizing sidelight to this affair, is the fact that Kenneth Starr’s controller and a prime orchestrator of the assault on Clinton from 1993 on, Washington lawyer Theodore Olson, was also the lawyer for Jonathan Pollard during Pollard’s appeals, running through at least late 1993.

A Footnote

On May 5 of this year, a sequel to this story began circulating in a few media outlets in the United States, Britain, and Israel. This was that the White House internal telephone system had been penetrated by Israeli intelligence in 1997, when an Israeli-owned telecommunications company helped install new telephone lines in the White House.

The story was published by the *Washington Times*-affiliated *Insight* magazine, which reported that more than two dozen U.S. intelligence and law-enforcement officials told the magazine that the FBI believes that Israel has intercepted telephone and modem communications of the U.S. government on an on-going basis.

The story was picked up by the Rupert Murdoch-owned Fox News and the London *Sunday Times*. The *Sunday Times*, in a May 21 story filed from Tel Aviv, elaborated by reporting that Israeli agents had obtained access to the White House computer system, and that information was transferred to Tel Aviv two or three times a week.

As with “Mega” and other such stories, a flurry of denials were quickly issued, and the story died down. But, it may shed additional light on some of the factors responsible for President Clinton’s strange capitulation to hard-line forces in Israel and to their lobbyists in his own circles, including Al Gore and Leon Fuerth.

Nigeria Rolls Back IMF Fuel Price Hike

by Lawrence K. Freeman

After five days of a general strike, led by the Nigerian Labor Congress (NLC), which brought the country to a standstill, Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo agreed to roll back 80% of a 10 naira (roughly 10¢) per liter fuel price increase which he had imposed just days before. In the wee hours of the morning on June 13, after hours of negotiations with NLC leaders, the government capitulated, realizing that the people of Nigeria were in full support of the NLC’s general strike, which had begun on June 8. The rollback lowered the price of fuel to 22 naira.

It is an open secret both in Nigeria and abroad, that the Obasanjo government had caved in under extreme pressure from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), when, on June 1, the government imposed a 50% increase in the price of Premium Motor Spirit fuel, raising it from 20 naira per liter to 30 naira per liter. NLC President Adams Oshiomole immediately told the government, that such a price hike was completely unacceptable to the Nigerian population, who a month earlier had finally their minimum monthly wage raised from 3,000 naira to 5,500 naira. On June 6, Oshiomole called for a national general strike, to commence on June 8. All of the unions, and the non-unionized senior staff civil servant association SESCO, supported the NLC’s call. The strike also received full support of Nigerians, who made their feelings about the IMF dictating their nation’s policy known, by shutting down all domestic production and trade, forcing the government to bring the military in to replace the air-traffic controllers, after airport traffic had been brought to a standstill for two days.

The nationwide strike was considered the most “disruptive” action taken since the elected government of Obasanjo took office just over one year ago, on May 29, 1999. Not only did both the Nigerian Senate and the House of Representatives adopt resolutions calling on the government to suspend the price hike, but Obasanjo’s own party, the People’s Democratic Party, dissociated itself from his actions.

Acting on Whose Advice?

The day before the strike action ended, with the government reducing the price increase to 10%, or 2 naira, one of Nigeria’s leading dailies, the *Vanguard*, editorialized: “President Obasanjo [was] acting on the advice of the World Bank,