

# In wake of spy flap, Israel takes hard look at intelligence agency

First of two articles

By Bill Kritzberg  
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The Pollard spy case, which has raised troubling questions about the intelligence operations of two close allies, the United States and Israel, has sparked a profound re-examination in Israel of the role of politics in the nation's intelligence community.

Israeli intelligence and military observers are currently engaged in a serious debate about the value of American-Israeli intelligence cooperation, and more important, about the lessons to be learned from the case.

The name of Mossad, the Israeli intelligence agency, immediately conjures up an image of a fearless, competent Israeli operative donning the garb of a Bedouin and sneaking across the border into enemy Arab territory with only his wits, his unaccented Arabic and his mission — the collection of secrets designed to give the state of Israel the intelligence advantage in dealing with its foes. The human resources at its disposal have given Mossad a reputation as the free world's finest intelligence service.

But the world of Israeli intelligence is rather larger, more politically complicated internally and abroad, and currently under fire because of the arrest of Jonathan Jay Pollard, a Navy analyst accused of selling U.S. secrets to Israel. When the news of Mr. Pollard's arrest reached Israel last month, the reaction of former Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Arens typified the Israeli response.

Mr. Arens, who was on a visit to Washington when the story broke, was described as "pale and agitated" by an aide.

Israeli shock and dismay was due not only to the revelation that their government was spying on its closest ally, but also because Israeli intelligence had proved so disastrously sloppy. The image of the incomparably competent Mossad agent was tarnished, and the respected Israeli daily *Ma'ariv*, for one, was reminded of an earlier Mossad catastrophe. It ran a headline saying, "The Arrest of Jonathan

Jay Pollard for Spying for Israel: A Second 'Fiasco.'"

The fiasco was a scandal that occurred 30 years ago, and in the end caused the downfall of Israel's founding political father, David Ben-Gurion. In 1955, a network of Israeli agents was arrested in Cairo. As the story unfolded, it became clear that their mission had been to attack Western, and particularly American, interests in Egypt with an eye to provoking hostility in the United States and Europe toward the new regime of Gen. Gamal Abdel Nasser in Egypt. The person accused of ordering the mission was then-Defense Minister Pinchas Lavon.

In both cases, the United States was a key factor. In the most recent episode, the arrest of an American spy for Israel threatened to disrupt relations with America's closest ally in the Middle East, just as the Lavon affair had put a severe strain on American-Israeli relations in the mid-1950s.

The question raised in Israel in the wake of both fiascos was: Who gave the order? Was the intelligence community acting as a rogue elephant? Or did the political leadership authorize such questionable operations? And if so, at what level?

Unlike the Lavon affair, which ushered in a period of stonewalling, political intrigues and power struggles that sometimes resembled a civil war and culminated eight years later in the deposition of Mr. Ben-Gurion and installation of Levi Eshkol as prime minister, the Pollard affair was greeted with a level of political maturity and professionalism heretofore unknown in Israeli political history.

While Israel's often unbridled press demanded to know who was responsible, Israel's leadership failed to indulge in the expected political finger-pointing. In record time, Israel's leadership launched an investigation, and within a week an official apology was issued by Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres. After some initial pique, American officials and Israeli authorities, working closely together, managed to head off a crisis in their relations.

Knowledgeable observers attribute the mild response to several

factors. Says retired Gen. George Keegan, former head of U.S. Air Force intelligence, "Israel's basic strength as a nation is due to the fact that they are a nation besieged on all sides and are threatened with extinction."

This threat, however, has not been enough to stave off heavy bloodletting in the past. Another, more likely explanation is that the Israeli-American relationship has become too critical to become the source of political bickering.

Since the ascension to power of the Reagan administration, according to knowledgeable sources, intelligence ties have been as close as ever.

The conclusion of the memorandum of understanding on strategic cooperation between Israel and the United States in 1981 has formalized this relationship.

In 1984, CIA Director William Casey directed that satellite photographs and data previously denied to Israel be supplied as part of the strategic cooperation, the policy pursued by the Reagan administration. Jerusalem Post Washington correspondent Wolf Blitzer says in his new book, "Between Washington and Jerusalem," that Israeli defense ministers visiting Washington regularly meet with CIA officials to discuss mutual interests.

Still, the State Department has announced that certain American intelligence is being withheld from Israel pending the outcome of an investigation into the Pollard affair. Despite that, and despite the fact that U.S. customs officials have been watching closely for any signs of illegal technology being transferred to Israel, the needs of the intelligence community will probably militate against any long-term diminution of cooperation between the two countries.

Close cooperation between the CIA and Israeli intelligence was promoted in the late 1960s and early 1970s by former CIA chief of counterintelligence James Angleton. One reason Mr. Angleton is reputed to have been asked to leave his post in 1974 was differences with then-director William Colby, partly over the connection with Israel.

Differences over the extent of

Israeli-American intelligence cooperation have been responsible for the various ups and downs in the relationship.

Gen. Keegan is one of those who has advocated close intelligence ties with Israel. "Without the intelligence that Israel provides on terrorism," he said, "there is no way we could achieve the levels of security we now have in that area."

Gen. Keegan cited instances in which Israeli intelligence has been instrumental in heading off coups against the Saudi ruling house and twice against former Egyptian President Anwar Sadat.

"This cannot be assessed in dollars and cents," he says. Moreover, the capture of Soviet war materiel during the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, as well as the capture of a Soviet MiG-21 from Iraq in 1966 have provided the United States with intelligence that has enhanced American security and saved billions of dollars.

The intelligence information provided after the 1982 war in Lebanon when Israel destroyed 80 Syrian MiG aircraft with no loss of their own aircraft "helps play a significant role in defending NATO against air attack," he says. And he says he believes that Israeli-supplied intelligence on Soviet submarines has been indispensable in defending the U.S. 6th Fleet in the Mediterranean.

Joseph Churba, a former civilian defense analyst for the Defense Department, said, "I don't think [the Pollard affair] will have serious ef-

fects on the practical level — both sides have common interests. It is a matter of national security. The damage is to political perceptions."

Israeli sources confirm that intelligence cooperation continues unhindered in the wake of the Pollard affair. Intelligence groups continue to meet and exchange information daily.

The Pollard case was reportedly handled by the Israeli Intelligence Targeting Board, an organization established following the 1973 Arab-Israeli war. Composed of officials from the Israeli Embassy in Washington and the Israeli consulate in New York, as well as an Israeli troubleshooter and an unnamed U.S. attorney, the board is responsible for deciding what kinds of information are to be gathered by Israel in the United States.

This arrangement is not dissimilar to others. Britain, France and even Brazil have sophisticated intelligence apparatuses in place in the United States. And the United States, says one State Department official, "has spies all over the place" in Israel and other allied countries.

The fact that this group exists, however, does not explain very

much. Israeli intelligence is a labyrinthine system, comprising three separate agencies with differing political problems and affiliations. The Mossad is the foreign intelligence-gathering agency known for its professionalism developed after years of struggle and political intrigue.

**Tomorrow: Operations and intrigues**

## MOSSAD'S SCORECARD

Here are some of the known achievements and failures of Israeli intelligence:

### SUCCESSSES

- 1956** — Mossad obtains first copy of Khrushchev Kremlin speech.
- 1960** — Arrest of Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann.
- 1961** — Eli Cohen infiltrates Syria and provides wealth of information while rising to become confidant of Syria's elite. Nominated to become Syria's deputy minister of defense before capture.
- 1960** — Wolfgang Lotz provides key information on Egyptian military and on Egyptian elite.
- 1966** — Israeli intelligence obtains a MiG-21 aircraft from Iraq which is flown to a CIA base.
- 1967** — Israeli intelligence plays pre-eminent role in helping to destroy Arab forces during Six Day War.
- 1968** — Israel obtains the blueprints of the French Mirage jet fighter later used in the construction of the Israeli Kfir jet fighter.
- 1969** — Israel removes an entire Russian radar station intact from Egypt.
- 1972** — Mossad agents hunt down the men responsible for the Munich Olympic massacre, including its mastermind, Ali Hassan Salameh.
- 1978** — Mossad predicts the fall of the Shah of Iran a year in advance giving Israel time to stockpile oil.
- 1981** — Precision bombing of Osirak nuclear reactor in Baghdad made possible by precise Israeli intelligence.

### FAILURES

- 1955** — Israeli agents arrested in Egypt in attempt to disrupt American and European relations with the new Nasser government in Egypt. The affair became the centerpiece in a 10-year political struggle for power in Israel.
- 1961** — Israel Beer, a military aide to Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion, is arrested for spying for the Russians.
- 1965** — Mossad is implicated in the murder of an exile Moroccan politician, Ben Barka, which severely disrupts French-Israeli ties.
- 1967** — In an otherwise flawless intelligence performance, Israel misread Egyptian leader Gamal Abdel Nasser and failed to predict that he would close the Straits of Tiran, leading to the Six Day War.
- 1973** — Israeli intelligence fails to heed operational level data, and Arab armies surprise Israel on the Jewish high holiday of Yom Kippur. Israel is unprepared for new Soviet weapons and barely hangs on while suffering heavy casualties.
- 1977** — Israeli intelligence fails to predict Sadat peace initiative and the risks inherent in the "battle for peace."
- 1982** — Israeli intelligence community splits over the risks of invading Lebanon and fails to warn of Lebanese quagmire or the potential for Shi'ite opposition to lengthy stay in Lebanon.

Chart by Dolores Motchka The Washington Times

UN PAGE 1-A

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# Terrorism threatens Mideast equilibrium

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THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Terrorism, specifically state-supported terrorism, is rapidly becoming an important strategic weapon in the Middle East, affecting the local, regional and international balance of power.

While experts disagree about the measures that will work to combat terrorism, there is a consensus among students of the problem that terrorism is now a low-level form of warfare used by states to advance their interests.

"The largest internal threat in the Middle East is the threat of the Islamic fundamentalists" using terror, a

senior Defense Department official told The Washington Times.

He said U.S. officials were concerned about the activities of Iran in Lebanon and the Gulf states. Islamic fundamentalism, he said, was also a threat to the political and social order in Egypt.

A recent report by the Senate Subcommittee on Security and Terror said that "400 international terrorist attacks took place against U.S. diplomatic and military facilities and U.S. personnel between 1973 and

the end of 1983." Eighty-three percent of these incidents were in the Middle East.

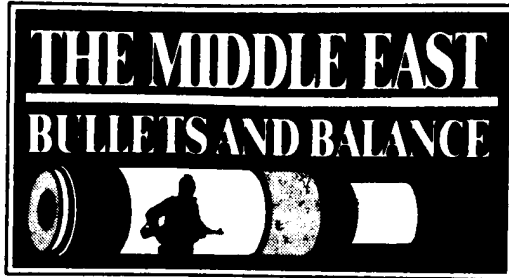
A study by Brian Jenkins of the Rand Corporation predicted that the world is entering a new era characterized by an increase in state-supported terror. The Middle East, the study said, would continue to be a major target area.

Most important, in the view of American policymakers, is that pro-Western states in the area are increasingly becoming targets of state-supported terror.

State-supported terror could subvert the strategic balance in the area through subversion and the assassination of pro-Western leaders, according to Robert Kupperman of the Georgetown Institute for Strategic and International Studies.

Governments in the area have been intimidated, he said, because "heads of state are in danger. They can be murdered by [Libyan leader Col. Muammar] Qaddafi," and other anti-Western regimes.

Mr. Kupperman listed Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Egypt as countries in imminent danger. He said that the Soviets "don't want massive destabilization, but want to weaken the fabric of relations between the U.S. and moderate Arab states."



terror goes back decades, according to Yonah Alexander of the State University of New York. "The Soviets have a conscious philosophy to utilize terror to further their strategic interests," he said.

"The first camp was established in Tashkent in 1920. They brought Third World recruits to be trained in 'wars of national liberation.' During the 1930s they set up an infrastructure in Lebanon among the Armenians in the ASALA movement (Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia)," he said.

Current Soviet efforts include training Shi'ite terrorists in the Soviet Union, according to Mr. Alexander.

"Through proxies — Syria, Libya and even the Iranians — the Soviets have set up a terror network," in the Middle East, he added. Terrorists are trained at 20 bases in Libya, in Syria and in Syrian-controlled areas of Lebanon, as well as in Iran and South Yemen.

The Senate report, prepared by Ray Cline, former deputy director of the CIA, and Mr. Alexander said that Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's regime in Iran "organizes, plans and assigns the missions of terrorists, mainly Shi'ite Moslems, operating in the Mideast and beyond. Qaddafi contributes monetary aid and arms, at least to a limited extent. [Syrian leader Hafez] Assad gives local ap-

proval to proposed operations . . . All three coordinate their efforts."

Mr. Alexander confirmed other reports that at a meeting last January the foreign ministers of these states "agreed on escalation of terror against U.S. and Western interests."

Middle East terrorists long have cooperated with terrorist organizations worldwide. Mr. Alexander cited recent examples, including the recent visit of Iranian Prime Minister Hossein Mossavi to Cuba "to discuss cooperation in anti-American activities. Another example, is the fact that Iranians and Palestinians are in training in Nicaragua."

State-supported terror is the latest tactic radical states use to further their interests.

Libya is involved in subversion in Ghana, Gabon, Chad and Senegal, as well as the Middle East, in an effort to spread Islam into sub-Saharan Africa. Col. Qaddafi also has declared interest in destabilizing pro-Western governments and destroying Israel.

Syria continues to pursue a divide-and-rule policy in Lebanon,

Continued

aiding various sectarian factions and terrorist groups. Mr. Assad also has an interest in undermining King Hussein of Jordan and supporting the rejectionist factions in the Palestinian terrorist movement.

Iran has sponsored various terrorist Shi'ite groups in Lebanon in

the hope that an Islamic government would be formed in the wake of terror-created chaos there and as a base against Israel. In addition, Iran is interested in spreading its radical Shi'ite version of Islam to neighboring Gulf states.

Recently, Lebanon has been the scene of increased terror, with growing numbers of car bombings, hijackings and church desecrations aimed at the Christian community there.

While observers have noted the increasingly random character of the violence in Lebanon, Mr. Alexander said that the "dramatic activities are state-sponsored such as the bombing of the Marine barracks." The Syrians, however, may have set in motion a process that "could turn against them."

Israel, a main target of state-supported terror, ironically is the most stable government in the Middle East. But even Israel shows signs of weariness as a result of terrorist actions provoking political extremism on the right in the form of demands for harsher responses to terrorism.

Terrorism must now be taken into account in calculating the strategic balance, according to most experts. The number and intensity of terror incidents in the Middle East are expected to grow along with the accompanying danger to American interests and friends.