

The hidden spy scandal

Recent revelations of Israeli spying against the United States are producing some severe aftershocks across the nation, and releasing a burst of pent-up anti-Israeli and anti-Semitic feeling in middle America.

A lot of people were surprised to learn that America's much-indulged ward was spying against its benefactor. Israel has tried to pass off the incident as an unauthorized aberration. Not so. Israel has been spying on the U.S. for decades and illegally obtaining secret U.S. defence data. In fact, Israeli covert activities against the U.S., from the theft of nuclear materials to defence technology, have been one of the great hidden scandals of recent years.

Last July 9, months before the Pollard case broke, I wrote that Israel's spying in the U.S. "has gone far beyond normal information gathering and seems recklessly arrogant or downright hostile." And, please note Bill Stevenson, the Israelis caught spying against the U.S. were supposed "anti-terrorism experts."

What makes this business so upsetting is that the loyalty of American Jews is now being questioned. Jonathan Pollard, one of the spies, was an American Jew. There have been frequent allegations in past years that other highly placed American Jews have passed U.S. secrets to Israel. I myself saw one case where ceramic armor technology may have been leaked to Israel. Suspicion of such illicit activities has reached as high as the office of the assistant secretary of defence.

Many American Jewish leaders are outraged that Israeli spying may have placed American Jews under a cloud of suspicion over divided loyalties. Memories go back to the still-secret Lavon affair of the 1950s when Israeli intelligence got Egyptian Jews to plant bombs in movie theatres and at the U.S. Information Agency. The plan was to sour U.S.-Egyptian relations by making Americans think that Egyptians had caused the terrorist bombings. The agents were caught and a massive wave of repression fell on all Egyptian Jews, most of whom were loyal citizens of Egypt.



**ERIC
MARGOLIS**



Anti-Zionist Jewish leaders have warned for decades that the day would come when American Jews would be placed in the unfortunate dilemma of having to choose between Israel and the U.S. The Pollard affair, for some, underlines these fears. There is also the equally worrisome upsurge of anti-Semitism and anti-Israeli feeling in the western United States, particularly in California's huge aerospace industry.

For years, Israel's immensely powerful lobby in Washington has been able to get the Senate and Congress to block most arms sales by U.S. defence contractors to the Arab allies of the U.S., notably Saudi Arabia and Jordan. Recently, the Saudis wanted to buy \$6 billion in weapons from the U.S. Israeli pressure on Congress blocked this mammoth sale.

The angry Saudis turned to Britain, which secured the entire order. Jordan, also turned down by the U.S., will soon order \$1.5 billion from England and even some arms from the USSR. Six billion dollars in business from Saudi Arabia represents 150,000 jobs to the U.S. aerospace industry, much of it in California. These jobs have now gone to a delighted England. American aerospace executives and union leaders are furious. From the West are coming rumblings about undue pressure over Congress.

These strains, building up for years, have now broken into the open, thanks, in large part, to the Pollard case. While the actual spy scandal will likely soon fade into obscurity, the damage done may be long-lasting, both to American Jews and to Israel.

All American Jews dealing with the Middle East will now fall under suspicion, thanks to the Pollard case; the leaking to Israel of secret U.S. defence data may be severely curtailed. Israel has many foes in the U.S. government and industry. Until recently, they have been kept in check and forced to remain silent by unceasing vigilance of pro-Israeli groups. The Pollard case has given anti-Israel forces a powerful issue around which to rally. They will be ardently supported by a very angry U.S. aerospace industry that has seen billions of sales lost and some of its most precious technology given to its Israeli competitors.

All nations spy on each other; and so do the U.S. and Israel. But North American Jews should make it most clear to Israel that any further such activities must not involve their community, and must be done with requisite discretion. Israel cannot, as the American Jewish Congress has lately warned, always expect to have its way.

(Margolis discusses the LCBO at 9 tonight on Channel 19's Speaking Out)