



Israeli Prime Minister Olmert, U.S. Speaker of the House Pelosi and Presidential contender Obama speaking to AIPAC in 2008.

# THE ISRAELIS NEXT DOOR

## HOW ISRAEL DICTATES U.S. POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

**Israel's military dominance** in the Middle East depends heavily on U.S. aid, totaling more than \$140 billion since the Jewish state's inception in 1948. Any reduction in that generous support terrifies our ally because U.S. policy is considered absolutely crucial for Israel's survival as the regional hegemon. This explains why its intelligence and political action network, unrivaled by that of any other foreign power, has penetrated deep within the U.S. government to ensure that American policy remains beneficial to Israel's national interests even if detrimental to our own.

"It's sickening how much reach the Israelis have here," a veteran CIA officer tells HUSTLER. Another former CIA officer, author Michael Scheuer, puts it more bluntly: "The relationship is criminal, both literally and figuratively. There are a lot of people in

the U.S. government in trusted positions who don't see a difference between being a U.S. citizen and a friend of Israel."

Examples of Israeli penetration abound. In 2005 the National Security Agency secretly wiretapped conversations between Representative Jane Harman (D-California) and an unnamed Israeli intelligence agent. He promised Harman the prized chairmanship of the House Intelligence Committee if she intervened on behalf of two suspected Israeli spies facing jail time in a Department of Justice (DOJ) prosecution.

How does a foreign intelligence operative have the sway to fix such appointments? Look to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), the powerhouse lobby that funnels millions of dollars into congressional elections to ensure that pro-Israel lawmakers get elected and stay in office. AIPAC, which ostensibly conducts its work as a legal lobby, has long been a suspected front for Israeli covert action—in other words, a group engaged in illegal intelligence activities against the U.S. government.

The Israeli agent's 2005 conversation with Harman, first reported by *Congressional Quarterly* magazine in April 2009, was stunning. At the time, two veteran AIPAC policy players—Steven Rosen and Keith Weiss-

man—were under indictment on charges of funnel campaign contributions to Harman's fellow California Democrat Nancy Pelosi, today the Speaker of the House. The source of the campaign cash? Media billionaire Haim Saban, the chief moneymen behind the Brookings Institution's Saban Center for Middle East Policy.

It's unknown whether Harman—who concluded her phone call with the Israeli agent by saying "This conversation doesn't exist"—did in fact intervene in the case. But on May 3, 2009, the DOJ dropped the charges against the two AIPAC staffers, who went free, presumably to continue spying in the United States. Harman, who should have been investigated, remains an elected representative of the American people. It's as if the incident never happened.

Big money infused into the political system, secrets stolen from the Pentagon, quasi-criminal collusion with a congresswoman—all in a day's work for the Israeli intelligence-and-influence machine.

How would the United States react if some other country's intelligence apparatus behaved this way? Would there be total silence if England, France or Germany did this? Most likely our elected officials would be screaming, and journalists would spread it through every news source, just as they should.

### COVERT OPERATIONS

In his explosive 1974 book *The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence*, Victor Marchetti—arguably one of the most authoritative whistleblowers in CIA history—details how a spy service works to pursue its "national interest" via covert action.

Marchetti writes that the efficient way to conduct covert action is not through violent intervention—mounting bloody coups or bankrolling insurgents—but through the soft touch of "penetrations." This involves using sympathetic journalists to build propaganda outlets in the media, as well as financing political parties to make sure the "right" people get into office. It also requires placing "agents of influence" as intellectuals and scholars, often

gathered in think tanks, and tapping into the telecommunications system to establish electronic surveillance.

Some CIA officers will admit a grudging respect for the success Israel has achieved. "They're running a terrific campaign in the U.S., both covert and overt," says ex-CIA analyst Larry C. Johnson.

Let's run through the checklist and see how Israel fares.

**Finding Friends in the Media:** Pro-Israel pundits are salted throughout the U.S. media. Just look at the kowtowing to right-wing Israeli interests on the editorial pages of the *Wall Street Journal* and *Washington Post*. Israel also seems to have a voice on "America's most trusted source for news," CNN.

Before rising as CNN's star anchor, Wolf Blitzer worked for AIPAC and the *Jerusalem Post*. He wrote a book-length apologia about Jonathan Pollard, who in the 1980s compromised U.S. security more than perhaps any other spy in the past 30 years. Blitzer, who once traveled the American TV talk show circuit as the "voice of Israel," has an American passport. From a covert-action standpoint, that makes him a more effective asset.

**Pumping Cash Into Political Parties:** During the 2008 election cycle, pro-Israel PACs (political action committees) contributed some \$3.6 million to various Democratic and Republican congressional candidates. In fact, pro-Israel campaign contributions were eclipsed only by the \$4 million in PAC money from the National Association of Realtors. *Fortune* magazine rates Israel as having the number one foreign-policy lobby, while the lobby's chief arm of operations, AIPAC, regularly attracts as billed speakers the most powerful people in Washington. Just about every 2008 Presidential candidate addressed an AIPAC gathering.

Watchdog Grant Smith, director of the Institute for Research: Middle Eastern Policy, suggests that AIPAC is no run-of-the-mill political action committee. "I am most troubled by AIPAC's history of subverting the rule of law in America," he tells HUSTLER.

This goes back to the founding of AIPAC in 1951, when the Justice Department sought to register the group formally as a propagandist for a foreign power. But due mostly, some say, to the influence and money it pumps into the American political system, AIPAC was never forced to comply.

"In 1984 AIPAC obtained a classified government report it used to negotiate a highly damaging trade agreement with the U.S.," Smith adds. "In the late 1980s, AIPAC was



"I'll just come out with it: Your father and I are getting a divorce. But it's important that you kids realize it is absolutely all your fault!"



"So when you're not bending over backwards trying to get Republicans to like you, what do you do to relax?"

found to have 'probably' violated federal election laws in forming and directing PAC expenditures to favored candidates." What's more, according to Smith, AIPAC has helped Israeli arms manufacturers traffic stolen military systems intelligence to third countries.

In his 2007 book *Foreign Agents*, Smith charges that AIPAC has effectively laundered money to disguise the financial support given by U.S. groups, both Jewish and Christian, to the construction of illegal settlements in the West Bank. "AIPAC has corrupted U.S. governance to advance the interests of a foreign state," Smith points out.

**Getting the "Right" People Into Office:** When, in the spring of 2009, the Obama Administration named veteran diplomat and Middle East expert Charles Freeman to chair the National Intelligence Council—a key position in formulating U.S. foreign policy—the Israeli lobby went on the attack. Freeman's "crime" was offering a damning assessment of Israel's controversial behavior in the Occupied Territories and its negative impact on U.S. standing in the Arab world. Steven Rosen, one of the accused spies employed by AIPAC, had the chutzpah to spearhead the attack on Freeman, who, in March 2009, resigned from the post, with Barack Obama saying nothing in his defense.

Freeman later issued a blistering public statement: "The tactics of the Israel lobby plumb the depths of dishonor and indecency and include character assassination, selective misquotation, the willful distortion of the record, the fabrication of falsehoods and an utter disregard for the truth. The aim of this lobby is control of the policy process through the exercise of a veto over the appointment of people who dispute the wisdom of its views."

Nevertheless, the Obama Administration boasts an assortment of pro-Israel players. White House Chief of Staff Rahm Emanuel was a staunch supporter of Israel during his stint in Congress, and when the first Gulf War broke out in 1991, he signed up with the Israeli Defense Forces. Meanwhile, Obama's special envoy to Iran, Dennis Ross—whose consistent pro-Israel bias was evident during the Israeli-Palestinian peace talks—has sided with AIPAC in pushing for aggressive U.S. action against Iran.

**Building Think Tanks:** The American Enterprise Institute, the Project for a New American Century and the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs seek to advance Israel's interests by influencing Congress and the executive branch. Top players in these powerful think tanks have included Douglas Feith, Paul Wolfowitz and Richard Perle, who pushed the George W. Bush Administration to invade and occupy Iraq. This arguably benefited Israel's hard-right Likudniks while ensnaring our nation in what one decorated Army general called "the greatest strategic disaster in U.S. history." It comes as no surprise that Feith, Wolfowitz and Perle were each at one time investigated for passing U.S. secrets to Israel. None (continued on page 89)

(continued from page 74) were indicted. (See *The Traitors Among Us*, HUSTLER February '09.)

**Tapping the Telecom Network:** Israeli wiretapping companies with close connections to Israel's intelligence services, particularly Mossad, provide their hardware and software to the U.S. National Security Agency for the electronic surveillance of American citizens. Journalist James Bamford reports that these firms can access all kinds of data gathered by the NSA. The upshot: If the U.S. government is vacuuming up your phone calls and e-mails in flagrant violation of Constitutional protections, so are the Israelis.

The implications are huge and troubling, says a onetime high-level Bush Administration counterintelligence official who spoke with HUSTLER on condition of anonymity. "American citizens," he warns, "could be losing confidential business and proprietary information that could cause loss of jobs, patents, intellectual property and the disclosure of politically sensitive information."

**Why doesn't the United States** government take action to stamp out Israeli interference on American soil? The counterintelligence official suggests an answer: money. Congress has the oversight power to take on Israel's covert and overt activities. But as Senator J. William Fulbright once famously said, Congress is "Israeli-occupied territory."

"They own it lock, stock and barrel," says the former counterintelligence official. "You have all these people on Capitol Hill whose campaigns are funded by groups representing a foreign power. Well, the only purpose of AIPAC is to promote the welfare and the security of that foreign power."

He continues, "It's the money that's so corrupting. Where the system is being abused—where it starts to break down and fail to work the way the Framers intended—is when the two or three percent of the country, the pro-Israel people, outspends by a thousand-to-one any other lobby. When AIPAC says we want something, Congress salutes and says, 'How much and what color?' The American people need to know the truth about this."

The Bush Administration counterintelligence official even suggests, although the allegation has never been fully investigated, that Israel has illegally used U.S. foreign aid by laundering it back into this country as campaign contributions. If true, this would mean American interests are being subverted with its own money.

As former CIA officer Michael Scheuer writes: "Bravo, Israel!"

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"You have no idea how excited everyone is around here to actually be executing a lawyer."

