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America's Best Ally Strikes Again



AIPAC Wants You to Die in Iran

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<http://kurtnimmo.com/blog/index.php?p=676>

As a primary example how AIPAC runs the foreign policy of the United States, consider Dana Milbank's AIPAC's Big, Bigger, Biggest Moment, published in the Washington Post. Milbank tells us: at the annual meeting of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, held in Washington recently, the pro-Israel "political action committee" (or rather a political bribery and intimidation, to say nothing of espionage, committee or more accurately racket) is "here to stay" (according to Howard Kohr, executive director), that is to say no niggling little investigation by the FBI will put a kink in the

pressure camarilla's operations. Getting busted stealing U.S. secrets, according to Kohr, is no big deal, although it is a "test of [AIPAC's] collective resolve" in its effort to dominate U.S. foreign policy in the name of Israel.

Condi Rice and "congressional leaders" were in attendance, according to Milbank. "AIPAC is a demanding crowd, and even Rice, introduced as a 'very special friend,' did not satisfy universally. The participants applauded heartily her reminder that Bush did not meet with Arafat, but when she said Arafat's successor, Mahmoud Abbas, 'is committed to both freedom and security,' and when she mentioned more U.S. funds for Palestinians, the room was quiet." In other words, for the AIPAC faithful, helping out the Palestinians in any way is seriously frowned upon—no doubt a lot of them feel the same way Ariel Sharon and the Likudites do: the Palestinians (or "beasts walking on two legs," as the warm and fuzzy former PM of Israel, Menachem Begin, once characterized them) should expect nothing, maybe a few more "operations" (collective punishment and mass murder), and they should most definitely think about emigrating, maybe to Antarctica. Obviously, there is nothing Mahmoud Abbas can do except convince his people to walk across the desert, maybe with a bit of prodding from the munificent IDF, and settle in western Iraq or maybe somewhere in Jordan (AIPACers and Zionists consider Jordan the "real" home of the Palestinians, although none of them have ever lived there, or very few of them did until Israel ran them out of the country at gunpoint in 1948).

Milbank tells us "the attendees overall showed an impressive ideological discipline—right down to AIPAC's multimedia show, 'Iran's Path to the Bomb,' in the convention center's basement" (in Washington, a lot of things happen in basements; ask Oliver North). AIPAC and well-placed Zionists in the Pentagon and White House have a fixation about Iran and its supposed desire to get its hands on a couple nuclear bombs, ostensibly to "push the Jews into the sea" by way of radiation.

The exhibit, worthy of a theme park, begins with a narrator condemning the International Atomic Energy Agency for being "unwilling to conclude that Iran is developing nuclear weapons" (it had similar reservations about Iraq) and the Security Council because it "has yet to take up the issue." In a succession of rooms, visitors see flashing lights and hear rumbling sounds as Dr. Seuss-like contraptions make yellowcake uranium, reprocess plutonium, and pop out nuclear warheads like so many gallons of hummus for an AIPAC conference.

Of course, the IAEA was absolutely spot on about Iraq—it did not possess nuclear weapons or, for that matter, many other weapons, or at least not weapons of a threat to Israel (remember Condi's "smoking gun" and "mushroom cloud" in response to Hans Blix's assertion that Iraq did not possess weapons of mass destruction, to

which stand-up comedian Ari Fleischer replied: “The problem with guns that are hidden is you can’t see their smoke.”). It is a nostalgic addition for AIPAC to add a yellowcake uranium processor to their circus sideshow... it reminds us of the fiction Saddam was also in pursuit of the fabled yellow cake.

Of particular interest at the AIPAC confab was a “debate” between Rep. Jane Harman (D-Calif.) and the Prince of Darkness himself, Richard Perle, former runner-up for the Jonathan Pollard “Sell Out Your Country” Award (he was investigated by the Justice Department and found to have violated US policies relating to unlawful transmission of sensitive classified US information to Israel).

Perle drew cheers for denouncing Palestinian anti-Semitism and the French. Harman mentioned that an aide once worked for AIPAC, called her audience “very sophisticated” and celebrated Yasser Arafat’s death as “a blessing.” Debating a hard-liner in front of a pro-administration crowd, Harman heaped praise on President Bush, calling the Iraqi elections “sensationally impressive” and moving to “applaud” or “commend” Perle and the administration a dozen times. “Richard is right, and so is President Bush,” she said at one point.

But after half an hour of this, Harman could not keep up. Perle provoked cheers from the crowd when he favored a military raid on Iran, saying that “if Iran is on the verge of a nuclear weapon, I think we will have no choice but to take decisive action.” When Harman said the “best short-term option” is the U.N. Security Council, the crowd reacted with boos.

In other words, when it comes to Israel and bombing Muslim and Arab nations (and forcing so-called “elections” on them), there is little difference between Democrats and Strausscons such as Richard Perle. It would seem the only difference between the two camps is in regard to Iran—Democrats such as Harman want a check for mass murder written by the United Nations while Perle believes no such check or permission is required and wants the United States to go it alone and bomb Iran in the name of AIPAC and Israel.

Iran will be attacked, maybe next month, possibly down the road a stretch (see Scott Ritter’s analysis). Naturally, this will be an unmitigated disaster since Iran will not stand still and do nothing during and after the bombs fall. “The entire Zionist territory, including its nuclear facilities and atomic arsenal, are currently within range of Iran’s advanced missiles,” a senior Iranian official said last August. An attack on Iran “could only be carried out by angry or stupid people. For that reason, officials of the Islamic Republic must always be prepared to counter possible military threats,” declared Yadollah Javani, head of the Revolutionary Guards political bureau. “Iran would respond within 15 minutes to any attack by the United States or any other country,” an anonymous Iranian official linked to the ruling mullahs told Borzou Daragahi of the San Francisco Chronicle in

February. “Iranian authorities,” Daragahi continues, “say they have been getting ready for a possible attack. Newspapers have announced efforts to increase the number of the country’s 7 million-strong ‘Basiji’ volunteer militia, which was deployed in human-wave attacks during the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s. Iranian military authorities have paraded long-range North Korean-designed Shahab missiles before television cameras.” But the Iranians, paying heed to the lessons on guerilla warfare against the United States in Iraq, are not limiting their potential response to conventional military readiness. “Over the last year, they’ve developed their tactics of ‘asymmetrical’ war, which would aim not at resisting a penetration of foreign forces, but to then use them on the ground to all kinds of harmful effect,” a military expert based in Tehran added. It is also a sure bet the Iranians would stir up trouble in neighboring Iraq if the United States or Israel invaded.

So here’s what Richard Perle and AIPAC are not telling you: if Iran is invaded (or simply bombed) it will respond in kind and this will necessitate a more robust military response by the United States, i.e., more bullet-stoppers will need to be thrown into the mix. Since the Pentagon is having big problems recruiting soldiers (even the cell phone generation, more or less lost in oblivious consumerism, realizes joining the military may translate into serious bodily harm or even death), if all hell breaks loose in Iran and Iraq, as the Iranians warn, the only option will be to kick start conscription, otherwise known as involuntary servitude, or less politely slavery.

In essence, Richard Perle and AIPAC want you to donate your kids (or yourself) to the plan for Greater Israel and the long-envisioned Pax Israelica empire. Perle and the Strausscons realize they cannot attack Iran without a large influx of troops (a fact mentioned by the Strausscon William Kristol, who more or less, between the lines, asked for military conscription since brow-beating military recruiters bearing fistfuls of sign-up cash at the local mall or high school are not working out).

Maybe by this time next year, while AIPAC is chewing through “26,000 kosher meals, 32,640 hors d’oeuvres, 2,500 pounds of salmon, 1,200 pounds of turkey, 900 pounds of chicken, 700 pounds of beef and 125 gallons of hummus,” as Milbank notates, your 20-something son and daughter will be slumped over MREs (Meals Ready to Eat) in a foxhole somewhere in the Persian desert with deadly depleted uranium blowing around. Since there are 66,622,704 (as of 2002) Iranians, and many of them are young males, and 24,001,816 Iraqis (minus a hundred or more thousand, killed over the last couple years by “our troops” under the vicious guidance of the likes of Donald Rumsfeld), we can expect the (unphotographed) flag-draped caskets to arrive at Dover AFB in record numbers.

The Franklin Affair: A Spreading Treason

There's more to the AIPAC spy scandal than 'mishandling'

May 25, 2005
by Justin Raimondo

The vagaries of U.S. involvement in the Middle East were surely brought home to First Lady Laura Bush on her recent trip to Israel, on a tour of Jerusalem's holiest sites. At the Wailing Wall, where she placed a note in the Western Wall – as is the custom – she faced surly throngs of protesters shouting "Free Pollard Now!" The Pollardites also showed up earlier that morning, as Mrs. Bush paid a visit to the home of Israel President Moshe Katsav: "Pollard, the people are with you!" they chanted.

Jonathan Pollard, the jailed spy who sold U.S. secrets to Israel, is a national hero in Israel, and Tel Aviv has never stopped importuning Washington for his release. Prime Minister Ariel Sharon reportedly brought up the issue again on his recent visit to America, where he bargained with American officials on Pollard's behalf in return for the promise of continued cooperation with Bush's peace plan. He probably got nowhere: when Bill Clinton reportedly gave in to the Israelis' blandishments in return for a promise of cooperation on his Middle East peace plan, whole battalions of top government officials threatened to resign. Perhaps, though, Sharon also intervened on behalf of another more recent practitioner of Israeli spycraft on American soil: Larry Franklin, a Jonathan Pollard for our times.

We have our Pollardites in America, too, and they are much in evidence these days as another major Israeli spy ring is on the verge of being busted and hauled into court. The recent arrest of Franklin, a 58-year-old Pentagon analyst who – until recently – headed up the policy department's Iran desk, has conjured the specter of Pollard's heinous crime – and promises to be just as injurious to American national security, if not more so.

Franklin, a longtime Defense Intelligence Agency analyst and fervent neoconservative, was observed by FBI agents in the summer of 2003 imparting top secret information to two employees of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), the spearhead of Israel's amen corner in the U.S. What is striking about this story is that Franklin's perfidy was discovered only because these two top officials – Steve Rosen, AIPAC's longtime policy director, and Keith Weissman, their Iran specialist – were already under surveillance by law enforcement agencies. As the Jewish Telegraphic Agency put it in a recent report:

"Information garnered during the investigation into alleged leaks from a Pentagon analyst to the two former AIPAC staffers suggests the FBI began probing AIPAC officials just before the Sept.

11, 2001, terrorist attacks."

I've been covering this investigation since it surfaced last year, when CBS leaked the news that Franklin's treachery had been unearthed. That initial report – which originated, it is clear in retrospect, as an attempt to derail the investigation, and warn Franklin's co-conspirators that the feds were on their trail – was the occasion for a cacophony of catcalls, all coming from Israel's intrepid defenders in the neoconservative media and the various pro-Israel lobbying groups. The party line was to downplay the charges – "People exchange information in Washington all the time!" – and imply, not so subtly, that anyone who lends credence to the accusations against Franklin, Rosen, and Weissman, let alone makes them, is an anti-Semite.

When Franklin was finally arrested, however, reflexively pro-Israel neocons like Joel Mowbray and Kate O'Beirne sneered that the charges didn't rise to the level of espionage, and averred that the whole thing was merely a matter of "mishandling" classified information: a tempest in a teapot. And on the left, an otherwise excellent piece by Laura Rozen in *The Nation* downplayed the charges in a less obvious way.

Rozen, a perceptive reporter who has been following this story from the start, gives us the essential context of the Franklin affair by showing that he was very much a part of a small, tightly-knit network inside the Pentagon dedicated to provoking war not only with Iraq but also igniting a regional conflict including Iran, Syria, Lebanon, and beyond. She does a very good job, in her piece, of showing how Franklin was at the center of this group's covert machinations: he had a penchant, as she puts it, for "showing up at critical and murky junctures of recent history":

"He was part of the Pentagon's Office of Special Plans, which provided much-disputed intelligence on Iraq; he courted controversial Iraqi exile politician Ahmad Chalabi, who contributed much of that hyped and misleading Iraq intelligence; and he participated with a Pentagon colleague and former Iran/contra arms dealer Manucher Ghorbanifar in a controversial December 2001 meeting in Rome – which, in a clear violation of US government protocol, was kept secret from the CIA and the State Department."

"In all these endeavors," Rozen writes, "Franklin ... was hardly acting as a lone wolf." These rogue operations were projects of the neoconservative matrix in Washington, which reaches not only into the bowels of the Pentagon but also seems to have gained access to the higher echelons of this administration, and virtually taken over the Vice President's office lock, stock, and barrel.

Douglas Feith, Franklin's boss, is close to Israel's Likud party, and in 1996, he and Richard Perle, James Colbert, Charles Fairbanks,

Jr, Robert Loewenberg, David Wurmser, and Meyrav Wurmser prepared a position paper for then-Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, "A Clean Break," that outlined a strategy for extracting Israel from its strategic dilemma: the invasion of Iraq, followed by the elimination of Syria, and the neutralization of Iran, topped their agenda. What they didn't say in the policy paper was that the United States would be doing their dirty work for them, but in retrospect we can see plainly enough that utilizing American military power figured prominently in their plan.

By 2001, when George Bush came to Washington, they were in a position to implement their "Clean Break" scenario, as nearly all of them were ensconced in top policymaking positions, including Feith as Assistant Secretary of Defense for policy. There Franklin and like-minded neocons toiled in the vineyards of the Office of Special Plans (OSP) and other makeshift bureaucratic constructs, where they massaged raw intelligence garnered from convicted embezzler and liar Ahmed Chalabi and manufactured the case for war with Iraq. Rozen, who has written at length on the neocons, knows her subject well, and does an excellent job of summarizing the essential points. However, she fumbles the ball when she tries to tie this in with the specifics of the Franklin affair. She writes:

"It's the AIPAC part of the case that is more troubling. While it's no secret that some people in town, particularly those who think Washington Middle East policy shows undue favoritism to Israel, have long thought the lobbying group to be too powerful and wouldn't mind seeing it taken down a peg, it's hard to see why the government would pursue charges in this case, which doesn't appear to be particularly strong or clear-cut, at least in terms of showing anything like a pattern of AIPAC officials serving as a vehicle for passing classified US information to the Israelis. "

Rosen's prominence as a leader – *the de facto* leader and central figure of AIPAC – and sparkplug of a phenomenally successful lobbying operation is enough to make AIPAC's role as a transmission belt of treason all too clear. Let's say that the principal figure in organization lobbying on behalf of, say, Russia, or Saudi Arabia, had been accused of activities similar to those Rosen is accused of engaging in. Would anybody hesitate to detect a "pattern" of espionage on the part of its officials? I think not.

Rozen continues:

"Assuming the government does not have more evidence against the officials than the interaction with Franklin, it's hard to see why the FBI would risk cries of anti-Israel bias in a case with so many mitigating circumstances. Those include the fact that, so far, there's no evidence the AIPAC officials ever actively solicited the information from Franklin, nor that they ever received actual classified documents from him. A second mitigating factor for the

defense could be that, according to reports in the JTA and the Jerusalem Post, the substance of the planted information concerned what the AIPAC officials thought to be an immediate threat to Israeli and American lives in northern Iraq – in other words, an exceptional case, in which they might have felt morally obliged to notify the embassy of the citizens of an allied country they thought to be in imminent danger. Finally, it appears the AIPAC officials first went not to the Israelis with the information but to a senior US official who would appear to be authorized to see it: the National Security Council's senior Middle East adviser, Elliott Abrams. It's hard to argue that it's the normal practice of spies to take the classified information they receive to a senior US official."

Rozen takes a line similar to that of Edwin Black, and various spokespersons for pro-Israel lobbying organizations, that the case against Steve Rosen and Keith Weissman is entirely the result of a "sting" operation. As the story goes, the FBI "turned" Franklin, after confronting him with evidence of his treason, and got him to agree to help them reel in the two hapless AIPAC officials. This is the crux of Rozen's piece: that the major evidence backing up the FBI's case was obtained by means of deliberate entrapment: How does she know this?

The answer is: she doesn't, and her error is underscored by the unfortunate timing of her piece. Shortly after *The Nation* published Rozen's article, the *New York Sun* came out with the rather stunning news that the charges against the AIPAC duo are far graver than passing on information about possible Iranian attacks against Israeli spies stationed in Iraq's Kurdish region, as Rozen – repeating assertions by Black – appears to believe.

According to a report by Eli Lake, while AIPAC is still paying the legal fees of Rosen and Weissman, they fired them on the advice of AIPAC's legal counsel, Nathan Lewin, when he discovered what the FBI had on their two erstwhile employees:

"The charges against Messrs. Rosen and Weissman, which have yet to be made publicly, were so secret that Mr. Lewin needed security clearance just to hear them."

That doesn't sound as if Rosen and Weissman were merely trying to sound the alarm that Israeli lives were in imminent danger. Apparently Paul McNulty of the Eastern district of Virginia and his fellow prosecutors do indeed have more evidence in this case than the sharing of a few policy papers and the passing on of a few tidbits of lifesaving intelligence to the Israelis. The crime of the AIPAC spies involves stealing secrets so highly classified that to even describe what they did involves a major breach of our national security. What more do we need to know?

I am absolutely floored, however, that Rozen, with her detailed

knowledge of this case, would so lightly pass over its mysterious origins. How is it that the FBI was keeping tabs on the well-known AIPAC lobbyist and his policy aide to begin with? Rozen cites reporting by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency:

"The FBI investigation of AIPAC began at least as early as 2001, perhaps in response to complaints from then-National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice about leaks concerning Administration deliberations over whether to meet Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat."

This seems a mighty weak reed on which to hang such a portentous and politically charged investigation. Yet there are other, more credible reports that contradict this rather lame scenario, such as Knight Ridder's Warren Strobel, who cites law enforcement and government officials as saying that the probe goes well beyond the Franklin affair. According to them, the investigation touches on all those "critical and murky junctures of recent history" in which Franklin and his pals played such a pivotal role:

"They include how the Iraqi National Congress, a former exile group backed by the Pentagon, allegedly received highly classified U.S. intelligence on Iran; the leaking of the name of CIA officer Valerie Plame to reporters; and the production of bogus documents suggesting that Iraq tried to buy uranium for nuclear weapons from the African country of Niger. Bush repeated the Niger claim in making the case for war against Iraq."

"The whole ball of wax" was how one U.S. official privy to the briefings described the inquiry."

Last year, I wrote that the burgeoning scandals besetting this administration over the pattern of misreported intelligence and deliberate deception that marked our path to war with Iraq should all be consolidated into a single super-scandal, "Neocon-gate." These various scandals – Chalabi-gate, Plame-gate, Niger uranium-gate – all involve the same group of people: the neoconservative cabal embedded in the civilian leadership of the Pentagon. I even opined that some of them might one day be "wearing one of those cute little orange jumpsuits and making some tattooed bruiser named Butch very happy." Little did I know at the time that the charge would be espionage, but I can't say that I'm all that surprised.

If we observe how we were lied into war with Iraq, and by whom, the whole affair looks more like an Israeli covert operation by the day. U.S. soldiers in Iraq are taking bullets, RPG attacks, and plenty of casualties, while Ariel Sharon ensures the stillbirth of a Palestinian state and takes a good part of the West Bank.

The neocon network inside our government, of which Franklin was a loyal foot-soldier, is being pulled up by its roots: and there is some evidence that those roots go even deeper than practically anyone now imagines. As UPI's Richard Sale reports, a senior U.S.

government official says the FBI began watching Gilon in 2001, when law enforcement became aware of "massive Israeli spying operations in the East Coast, including New York and New Jersey." One wonders, does he mean this, or this – or maybe even this?

It's pathetic, really, to watch our own Pollardites twist and turn as they desperately try to spin the Franklin affair as much ado about nothing. And it's disgusting to see every important politician in the country trek to the AIPAC conference this past weekend, and take the podium pledging eternal loyalty to Israel, parroting back the party line on Iran and Syria to dutiful applause – and not mentioning that the heart and soul of AIPAC's Washington operation is deeply implicated in a burgeoning espionage investigation.

One was particularly struck by the remarks of Condi Rice, who blithered that AIPAC will doubtless enjoy "a bright future." (Tell me again how it was Rice who set the AIPAC investigation in motion.) The conference was as staged and propagandistic as a Soviet party congress, and just as predictable, especially the unintentionally comic speech by AIPAC President Howard Kohr, who pledged:

"I will take any steps necessary to ensure that every employee of AIPAC, now and in the future, conducts himself in a manner that you will be proud of, using policies and procedures that provide transparency, accountability and effectiveness."

What's transparent about AIPAC is its brazen policy of acting as the agent of a foreign power without making hardly any bones about it – and without having to register as such. That brazenness may have come to an end, however, and it is painful to watch as Kohr performs some pretty strenuous logical gymnastics in order to somehow twist the damning reality into a palatable untruth: Kohr said:

"It was of the utmost importance that the official document submitted by the FBI to the courts in the matter of former Pentagon employee Larry Franklin proves 'we now know directly from the government that neither AIPAC nor any of its current employees isn't and never was a target of this investigation.'"

Yeah, sure: that's why the FBI has been tracking top AIPAC officials for at least four years. The truth is, the affidavit [.pdf] says no such thing, and if Kohr means that because they didn't state it directly that AIPAC is off the hook, he is really plumbing the depths to make his not very point.

The theme of this conference was American patriotism, and the graphic representations of intertwined American and Israeli flags adorning the stage was meant to convey the complete absence of duality or conflict, and yet the whole slickly choreographed charade –

including a speech by Ariel Sharon, justifying the "disengagement" plan and chuckling over his role as one of Israel's foremost farmers – conveyed just the opposite. All the super-patriotic graphics in the world won't cover up the treachery that lived at the very heart of their organization – and that is now about to be exposed to the light of day.

Franklin is due to be arraigned in federal court on May 27 for a preliminary hearing, and once again this important story will be in the news. Let them cite Condi Rice and cry "anti-Semitism" all they want. Let the Joel Mowbrays and the Michael Ledeen spin and weave a web of evasions: no doubt they'll come up with some pretty novel excuses for treason. The rest of us, however, will be watching with great interest as the story of Israel's fifth column in America is told in court

The protesters who greeted the First Lady at the Wailing Wall had every reason to call for Pollard's freedom: as Israeli nationalists, who put the interests of their own country first, it doesn't matter to them that Pollard, an American citizen, handed over reams of vitally important U.S. secrets that wound up in the hands of the Soviet Union and resulted in the deaths of many American agents behind the Iron Curtain. What matters is that Pollard was acting to ensure Israel's survival – and to hell with everyone else.

The actions of the Pollardites at the West Wall were rude, but perfectly understandable. They are, after all, Israelis, not Americans. But what about our own Pollardites, who are busy making the case for the defense of Rosen, Weiss, and Franklin even before the indictments are in and the prosecution has a chance to present the facts? What's *their* excuse?