



[Original](#) [Letters](#) [Blog](#) [Casualties of War](#) [Contact](#) [Donate!](#)

- Home
- Who We Are
- LAST 7 DAYS
- MON THU
- TUE FRI
- WED SAT
- SUN
- Search
- Free Newsletter
- Shop Antiwar.com
- Reprint Policy
- Submission Guidelines
- Syndication

Antiwar.com
& Member of the
RANDOLPH BOURNE
INSTITUTE



Antiwar.com
Speak
Bure
Just
Raimon
is available
speak to y
organizati

May 6, 2005

- [SAVE THIS](#)
- [EMAIL THIS](#)
- [PRINT THIS](#)
- [MOST POPULAR](#)

Larry Franklin and the Axis of Espionage

The arrest of a Pentagon analyst who spied for Israel is just the beginning

by Justin Raimondo



Archives

It was June 26, 2003, and three friends – **Naor Gilon**, chief of political affairs at the Israeli embassy in Washington; **Steve Rosen**, longtime policy director and key operative of the American Israel Political Affairs Committee (**AIPAC**); and **Keith Weissman**, AIPAC's senior Iran specialist – were meeting for lunch at the Tivoli restaurant in Arlington, Va., right outside Washington, D.C. The *Washington Post* describes the Tivoli as a place "where you can talk without clashing with your neighbor's

Larry Franklin and the Axis of Espionage
5/6/2005

The War Party's War on the Media
5/4/2005

Iraq: 'Mission Accomplished'?
5/2/2005

The Thirty Years
4/29/2005

In Defense of Mr. Ruzicka
4/27/2005

Prime Minister Chalabi?
4/25/2005

Shaking Up Israel's Spy Nest

conversation." Privacy and moderate prices are the main attractions on a menu that is "Italian – but not insistently so," as the *Post* puts it. "The pasta may be a little limp, the sauces may taste oversalted, and the desserts may look like assembly-line products, but it doesn't seem to matter much. The cooking is far from the main attraction at Tivoli."

Espionage isn't on the menu. Then again, it wouldn't be, would it? It wasn't the limp pasta, however, that brought **Larry Franklin**, a Pentagon analyst working the Iran desk in **Douglas Feith's** policy shop, to the Tivoli that day. As Michael Isikoff and Mark Hosenball **reported** in *Newsweek*: "Suddenly, and quite unexpectedly, in the description of one intelligence official," Franklin "'walked in' to the lunch out of the blue." **He had sensitive information** about the possibility of pro-Iranian groups in Iraq, such as the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (**SCIRI**) and the **Dawa Party**, launching attacks on American occupation forces. Franklin, known as a committed ideologue of the neoconservative persuasion, and passionately committed to Israel, **divulged** [.pdf] the contents of a document marked "top secret" and dated June 25.

The FBI agents who were listening in were shocked: they had the Tivoli bugged that day as part of a larger and

4/22/2005

Waco as Metaph
4/20/2005

Our Bizarro Wor
Foreign Policy
4/18/2005

Cashing in on th
Bush Doctrine
4/15/2005

An Iraqi Potemk
Village
4/13/2005

Trouble South of
Border
4/11/2005

Israel Goes
Extremist
4/8/2005

Yushchenko's
Gambit
4/6/2005

In Defense of Jo
Paul II, Peacem:
4/4/2005

'Dead Wrong'
- or Outright
Deception?
4/1/2005

Iraq: An Exit
Strategy
3/30/2005

How the East W:
Won
3/28/2005

The Lesson of
Kyrgyzstan
3/25/2005

Kyrgyzstan's
'Revolution'
3/23/2005

Dirty Tricks
Revisited
3/21/2005

The Character
Assassins
3/18/2005

Handmaiden of t
State
3/16/2005

long-standing investigation into Israeli covert operations in the U.S. When Franklin barged in unexpectedly on the assembled cabal, he stumbled into a **web of espionage** in which he was soon ensnared. The FBI put him under surveillance, and, according to Isikoff and Hosenball,

"At one point watched him allegedly attempt to pass a classified U.S. policy document on Iran to one of the surveillance targets, according to a U.S. intelligence official. But his alleged confederate was 'too smart,' the official said, and refused to take it. Instead, he asked Franklin to brief him on its contents – and Franklin allegedly obliged. Franklin also passed information gleaned from more highly classified documents, the official said."

The Feds had a live one on the end of the line, and they slowly but surely reeled him in, gathering plenty of evidence before they confronted him. They were after much bigger fish. After all, as Warren Strobel of Knight Ridder reported **last year** and **again** on the occasion of Franklin's arrest, FBI counterintelligence had been watching the Israelis and their American **fifth column** for "more than two years." "According to officials with direct knowledge," writes Strobel,

"The investigation has been under way since at least 2002, and it has involved FBI interviews with officials in Defense

Realists Rout Neocons
3/14/2005

The Wonderful Wizard of Washington
3/11/2005

The Specter of Fascism
3/9/2005

Who Killed Rafik Hariri?
3/7/2005

A Fascist America
3/4/2005

Lebanon's Hollow 'Cedar Revolution'
3/2/2005

'Politically Incorrupt History Has Neo-Steamed'
2/28/2005

A Pattern of Deception
2/25/2005

They've Only Just Begun...
2/23/2005

Iraq: Bush Must Negotiate
2/21/2005

Sex, Lies, and Je Gannon
2/18/2005

Syria in the Crosshairs
2/16/2005

The Sharansky Fallacy
2/14/2005

Iraq's Dodgy Election
2/11/2005

Americans Die for Sharia in Iraq
2/9/2005

The Myth of Iraq 'Liberation'
2/7/2005

We've Been War The state of our

Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld's office and elsewhere in the executive branch."

Nabbing Franklin was the breakthrough they had been waiting for. When the FBI finally went in and searched his office and home, they found a treasure trove of evidence: a total of 83 classified documents. According to **the affidavit** accompanying the prosecutor's complaint, "approximately 38 were classified 'Top Secret.' 37 were classified 'Secret,'" and "approximately eight" were marked "Confidential." There is no mention of AIPAC, nor even the names of Rosen and Weissman, in the affidavit. All reference to Israel has been scrubbed out of the functional, legalistic, unrevealing prose, but there is one real stunner: "The dates of these documents spanned three decades."

What Franklin was maintaining, in effect, was his own private historical repository of classified and in many cases highly sensitive documents. Israeli officials and their American gofers apparently had unlimited privileges at Franklin's little lending library, and this kind of setup was precisely what the FBI had suspected all along. As the *Washington Post* **reported** last year, when the story first broke,

"The counterintelligence probe, which is different from a criminal investigation, focuses on a possible transfer of intelligence more extensive than whether Franklin passed on a draft

union:
perpetual war
2/3/2005

Liberal Wimps fo
War
2/2/2005

Iraq Election:
Sistani's Triumph
1/31/2005

Payola Pundits f
War?
1/28/2005

The Shadow War
1/26/2005

This Plastic Morn
1/24/2005

W and Dostoevs
1/21/2005

Exporting
Democracy
— or Terrorism?
1/19/2005

The Scapegoat
1/17/2005

Iraq and the El
Salvador 'Option'
1/14/2005

Heading for the
1/12/2005

America's Death
Squads
1/10/2005

Gonzales and the
Torture Cult
1/7/2005

Are We Safer No
1/5/2005

Today's
Conservatives
Are Fascists
1/3/2005

The Great Crime
Spree of 2004
12/31/2004

We Must Leave I
12/29/2004

The Fallacy of '3
12/27/2004

presidential directive on U.S. policy toward Iran, the sources said. The FBI is examining whether highly classified material from the National Security Agency, which conducts electronic intercepts of communications, was also forwarded to Israel."

The Franklin affair branches off into **so many** different separate-but-related investigations – **Chalabi's follies**, the **Niger uranium mystery**, the "outing" of CIA agent **Valerie Plame** – that, as I wrote last year, we might as well merge the scandals breaking out all over into one big **Neocon-gate**. Franklin's arrest is the first act of that unfolding drama. "It's *not legal* to **out CIA agents**," as I wrote last summer, and "feed **forgeries** to U.S. intelligence" – but even in an administration where every allowance is made for Israel, and **such shenanigans** are routinely overlooked, one has to draw the line at espionage.

Franklin faces a maximum of 10 years in prison and a hefty fine for violating **Title 18, Section 793(d)** of the Espionage Act, making it a crime to transmit

"Any document, writing, code book, signal book, sketch, photograph, photographic negative, blueprint, plan, map, model, instrument, appliance, or note relating to the national defense, or information relating to the national defense which information the possessor has reason to believe could be used to the injury of the United States or to the

The Devil's
Christmas
12/24/2004

Now They're Aft
Rummy
12/22/2004

Israel's Fifth Col
in Washington
12/17/2004

The Yushchenko
'Poison Plot' Fra
12/15/2004

The Ukrainian
Template
12/13/2004

Rebellion in the
Ranks
12/10/2004

The 'Stop Loss' S
12/8/2004

The New Cold W
12/6/2004

More Arc

Justin Raimondo is the editorial director of Antiwar.com. He is the author of *An Enemy of the State: The Life of Murray N. Rothbard* (Prometheus Books, 2000). He is also the author of *Reclaiming American Right: The Legacy of the Conservative Mover* (with an Introduction by Patrick J. Buchanan (Center for Libertarian Studies, 1993), and *The Bosnian Quagmire: The Case Against U.S. Intervention in the Balkans* (1996).

He is a contributing editor for *The American Conservative*, a Senior Fellow at the Rand Institute, an Adjunct Scholar with the Ludwig von Mises Institute, and writes frequently for *Chronicle of American Culture*.

advantage of any foreign nation."

The "**special relationship**" between Israel and the United States is about to get a thorough examination as the murky doings of the Mossad in the U.S. are exposed to the light of day. That relationship has so far consisted of the U.S. not only paying a good many of Israel's bills, but also of us **fighting their wars for them**. As Professor Paul W. Schroeder **pointed out** in a footnote to a piece in *The American Conservative*, the U.S. going to war with Iraq:

"Would represent something to my knowledge unique in history. It is common for great powers to try to fight wars by proxy, getting smaller powers to fight for their interests. This would be the first instance I know where a great power (in fact, a superpower) would do the fighting as the proxy of a small client state."

That isn't enough for the Israelis, however: they want the U.S. to keep going. **On to Damascus! On to Tehran!** The war whoops of their amen corner rend the air. As **Michael Ledeen**, a leading neocon who has called the charges against Franklin "**nonsensical**," puts it: "**Faster, please.**"

Now there's a slogan I'd like the FBI, and prosecutor **Paul McNulty** of the eastern district of Virginia, to take to heart as regards this investigation. A

preliminary hearing is scheduled for May 27, but there are several other shoes waiting to drop, including the status of Rosen and Weissman. As **Laura Rozen and Jason Vest** pointed out in a piece for *The American Prospect*:

"The FBI is looking into the possibility there's been communication between Israeli elements and U.S. officials, including several who work for Feith and have access to sensitive intelligence on Iran and its nuclear program."

Faster, *please!*

The trial of Larry Franklin, if it comes to that, will in effect put neoconservatism in the dock. The Franklin affair will go down in history as **the neocons' comeuppance**, in which the War Party finally paid the price of their **hubris**. Because they really thought they would get away with it. They could **lie us into war, purge their enemies** from the government, and commit espionage in the process. They even had a name for their little group, as Seymour Hersh **reports**:

"They call themselves, self-mockingly, the Cabal – a small cluster of policy advisers and analysts now based in the Pentagon's Office of Special Plans. In the past year, according to former and present Bush administration officials, their operation, which was conceived by Paul Wolfowitz, the deputy secretary of defense, has brought about a crucial

change of direction in the American intelligence community. These advisers and analysts, who began their work in the days after Sept. 11, 2001, have produced a skein of intelligence reviews that have helped to shape public opinion and American policy toward Iraq. They relied on data gathered by other intelligence agencies and also on information provided by the Iraqi National Congress, or INC, the exile group headed by Ahmed Chalabi. By last fall, the operation rivaled both the CIA and the Pentagon's own Defense Intelligence Agency, the DIA, as President Bush's main source of intelligence regarding Iraq's possible possession of weapons of mass destruction and connection with al-Qaeda. As of last week, no such weapons had been found. And although many people, within the administration and outside it, profess confidence that something will turn up, the integrity of much of that intelligence is now in question."

The Pentagon department in which Franklin worked was the **operational epicenter** of the neoconservative faction in the administration, with the high command over at the office of the vice president. It was in Feith's shop that the **Office of Special Plans** – the **locus** of so much of the phony "intelligence" that fueled the drive to war with Iraq – was conceived and staffed. Led by one **Abram Shulsky**, a scholarly authority on

the works of the philosopher **Leo Strauss** – and longtime protégé of uber-neocon **Richard Perle**, the operation was presided over by **William Luti**, a disciple of neoconservative arms guru **Albert Wohlstetter** and a former aide to Newt Gingrich.

The Israeli connection to the Special Plans group was reported by **Julian Borger** in the *Guardian*, and former Pentagon analyst **Karen Kwiatkowski** (ret.), who worked in the same policy shop as Franklin. Colonel Kwiatkowski reports that Israeli military and other officials had the run of the place and were exempted from signing in as required of all other guests.

The traitor Franklin was a small cog in a very extensive underground machinery, one that pumped top-secret documents and other intelligence out of the U.S. government apparatus while it pumped a continuous stream of propaganda and fabricated "intelligence" in. This circuit of deception, we are beginning to learn, was not just the domestic achievement of a group of American ideologues: its success, to date, would not have been possible without covert aid from Israel. That this aid violated the laws of the United States – and was repaid by the neocons with vital U.S. secrets – would not have stopped the "Cabal" from pursuing its course. Like all ideologues who wind up committing treason against the Republic, they believe that their

supposedly noble ends justify their decidedly ignoble means. That's what **Abu Ghraib** was all about.

Israel's fifth column is ready and waiting with a barrage of excuses, alternative stories, tales of "entrapment," and a list of red herrings too long to go into here. There will be plenty of time for that at the trial. Until then, however, I have a few questions, by way of preliminaries.

The writer Edwin Black has been energetically pursuing the angle that Rosen, Weissman, and whomever else winds up being involved were all ensnared in a huge "sting" operation designed by anti-Semites in the FBI's counterintelligence unit. The whole investigation is characterized by him as a reenactment of *Kristallnacht*, and his pieces are invariably sympathetic to Franklin and AIPAC. Black **writes**:

"The bureau arranged for Franklin to be placed on administrative leave without pay, and then threatened him with years of imprisonment unless Franklin engaged in a series of stings against a list of prominent Washington targets, according to multiple sources with direct knowledge of the FBI's actions in the case.

"Terrified, needing to provide for a wheelchair-bound wife and five children, and without the benefit of legal representation, Franklin agreed to

ensnare the individuals on the FBI sting list, the sources said. The list may include as many as six names, according to sources."

In Black's account, Franklin comes across not only as a victim, but as an *impoverished* victim. Well, then, will someone please explain how a broke mid-level Pentagon analyst managed to post \$100,000 to stay out of jail?

How is the pauper Franklin paying for his high-class lawyer, John Thorpe Richards, of the firm **Trout Cacheris** – as in **Plato Cacheris**? It was Cacheris, you remember, who defended CIA turncoat **Aldrich Ames**, double agent **Robert Hanssen**, and **Ana Belen Montes**, Castro's top spy in the United States. **As Ronald Radosh pointed out** so perceptively on David Horowitz's Frontpage Web site, Cacheris' firm "seems to be the chosen counsel for most of the recent American spies for foreign powers."

Until a few months ago, Franklin was utilizing the services of a court-appointed lawyer. That ended when his cooperation with the authorities abruptly halted and he hired Cacheris. But that kind of legal counsel doesn't come cheap. Who is paying the bill?

Another question: why no mention of Israel, or AIPAC, in the affidavit showing probable cause? One correspondent put it to me this way:

"Had AIPAC and Israel appeared in the affidavit, that might be grounds to make AIPAC register as a lobbyist for a foreign government, and otherwise affect its legal status. This also prevents people from waving the affidavit, which is a public record, in the face of Congress and others about what AIPAC is up to. Had Franklin been disclosing information to a Muslim charity, what is the probability that its name would be in the supporting affidavit?"

That sounds about right. On May 22-24, a number of political luminaries **are slated** to show up at a conference sponsored by AIPAC, including Condoleezza Rice, Nancy Pelosi, and other leaders and luminaries of both parties. They don't want to have to explain to their constituents – and their consciences – how they can honor an organization that has allowed itself to become an engine of espionage against this country. By not mentioning the name of the country that Franklin handed over U.S. secrets to, the Justice Department is granting them some cover, albeit scanty, to hide the nakedness of their treason.

How long is this charade supposed to go on? It is high time that AIPAC does what all foreign agents must do according to federal law – register with the Department of Justice as agents of a foreign power. That way, when the American people hear their message, they can see plainly who and what they

are dealing with. The trial of Larry Franklin, God willing, will bring that point home to them as never before.

– Justin Raimondo

 [SAVE THIS](#)  [EMAIL THIS](#)  [PRINT THIS](#)  [MOST POPULAR](#)



comments on this article?

send them to backtalk!
[visit backtalk!]

[Back to the Antiwar.com Home Page](#)

Reproduction of material from any original Antiwar.com pages
without written permission is strictly prohibited.
Copyright 2005 [Antiwar.com](#)