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Aug. 9, 2006 5:21 | Updated Aug. 9, 2006 9:36

Report: US sailor spied for Israel

By DAVID KEYES



A US Navy sailor, Ariel J. Weinmann, is suspected of spying for Israel and has been held in prison for four months, according to an article published Monday in the Saudi daily *Al-Watan*. It reported that Weinmann is being held at a military base in Virginia on suspicion of espionage and desertion.

According to the navy, Weinmann was apprehended on March 26 "after it was learned that he had been listed as a deserter by his command." Though initial information released by the navy makes no mention of it, *Al-Watan* reported that he was returning from an undisclosed "foreign country." American sources close to the Defense Department told *Al-Watan* that Israel was the country in question.

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investigation] in the case of Fire Control Technician Third Class Ariel J. Weinmann on July 26, 2006," Ted Brown, a media relations officer at the US Fleet Forces Command, told The Jerusalem Post on Tuesday. The US Fleet Forces Command is the "convening authority of the case... and will make the decision with respect to what charges, if any, will be referred to a general court-martial."

The veracity of *Al-Watan's* claim that Weinmann is suspected of spying for Israel remains in question, and military and Pentagon spokesmen are remaining tightlipped. A public affairs officer at the Office of Naval Intelligence told the Post that he was unaware of the allegations against Weinmann.

Al-Watan speculated that if Weinmann spied on behalf of the Mossad, it would be the biggest espionage case since Jonathan Pollard's arrest. Pollard, who worked as a civilian intelligence analyst for the US Navy, was caught in 1985 and convicted of spying for Israel. He is currently serving a life sentence in the US.

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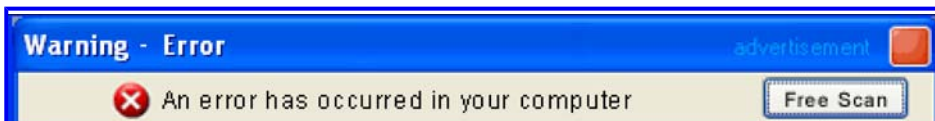
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