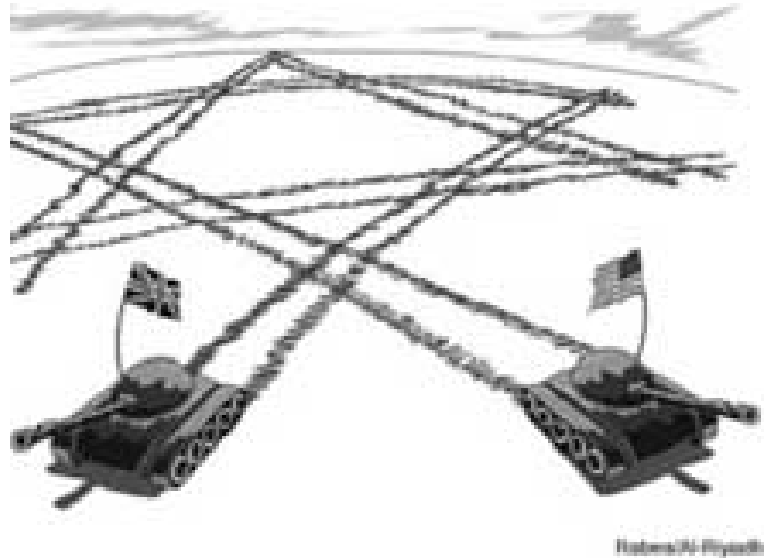


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Turkey using drones in N. Iraq with help of Israeli crews

By: Yossi Melman on: 27.12.2007 [09:36]

Personnel from Israel's Aerospace Industries are assisting the Turkish army in activating Israeli-made unmanned aircrafts for use in military operations in Kurdish northern Iraq, Turkish sources were quoted as saying in a report to be published Thursday in the Turkish Daily News.

Ten days ago, Turkish television reported that Turkey had begun using the Heron Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV), which Israel leased to the Turkish army in a 2004 deal.

The Turkish News Daily quoted a Turkish army source saying that because of a shipment delay on the part of Israeli companies, the Turkish Air Force has been prevented from acquiring crucial intelligence abilities.

Advertisement

Turkey has accused the Israeli companies of not following through with their end of the deal regarding the sale of the UAV's. According to the report, the Israeli companies have decided to supply Turkey with the UAV's as a temporary solution under a \$10 million lease.

In 2004, the Israeli Aerospace Industries and Elbit Systems won a tender to supply Turkey with the Heron UAV's, a tactical drone that is already in operational use in the Israel Defence Forces, beating out competition from the United States and France.

According to the deal, the Aerospace Industries was to supply the UAV's, while Elbit was to provide the ground stations and communications systems for the drone.

The first shipment was initially set for October 2007, but has been postponed until the spring of 2008.

A source in the Aerospace Industries said in response to the report that the delay is not the fault of the Industries, and vowed that it would fulfill all obligations to which it signed.

<http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/938721.html>

Zionist Mossad increasing presence in western Iraq, tribal leader reports.

Quds press, Translated by Muhammad Abu Nasr, member, editorial board, the Free Arab Voice.

August 26, 2007

In a dispatch posted on its website Saturday, Quds Press reported that the head of the Union of Tribes of Western Iraq in the area of the Upper Euphrates near the Syrian border had disclosed that the "Israeli" Mossad had increased its presence in those areas, beginning two months ago. He said that US forces are extending protection to the Mossad's cars and headquarters in the area.

Shaykh Ahmad al-Khanjar, the Chairman of the Union of Tribes of Western Iraq, an organization of 13 Iraqi tribes, told Quds Press that four-wheel-drive GMC cars belonging to the Mossad are present in the areas of al-Hadithah and nearby al-Haqhaniyah, 'Anah, al-Qa'im, Jubbah, and other villages. He said that the "Israelis" have been there for several months under American protection.

The Mossad men, al-Khanjar said, wear civilian clothing (some of them including yarmulkes) and travel around western Iraq under American guard. He said that the Mossad operatives stay in the headquarters that the Americans have set up in the old Customs Building near the Syrian border, in the former Iraqi Army Camp in the area of al-Baghdadi, about 200km northwest of Baghdad, and at the phosphate mining complex.

Shaykh al-Khanjar said that they have also established their own headquarters similar to the facilities used by the American occupation forces. The Mossad set up one of its headquarters in the former Hafsa Primary School in al-Qa'im on the Syrian border, and in the large building that formerly housed the headquarters of the "Projects for Roads, Bridges, and Travelers' Rest Stops." The Zionists have surrounded their facilities with large security fortifications and barbed wire, making it virtually impossible to break in. They have also set up communication towers atop those headquarters. In addition, the Shaykh said, they have recruited Iraqis willing to work for them inside the city.

Shaykh al-Khanjar said that the Mossad operatives come out of their headquarters every day, making three rounds outside the city accompanied by US escort vehicles. He said that local people were certain that the Mossad agents' mission was of a non-combat character, consisting of espionage and gathering information. Shaykh al-Khanjar said that the Iraqi Resistance attacked them on 17 July, destroying one of their vehicles and killing four of the people inside. After the attack it became clear from the papers and documents on the men that they were members of the "Israeli" Mossad.

See also: <http://www.aliraqnews.com/modules/news/article.php?storyid=30649>

THE ROVING EYE

Iraq, the new Israel

Comment by Pepe Escobar

Why do we fear words?

*Some words are secret bells, the echoes
of their tone announce the start of a magic
and abundant time
steeped in feeling and life.*

So why should we fear words?

- Nazik al-Mala'ikah, female Iraqi poet, who died on June 20 in

Cairo of Parkinson's disease, aged 85

Lame-duck US President George W Bush, last week in a speech at the US Naval War College, made it official: Israel is the model for Iraq, although Iraq is rather more like Palestine.

Anyone familiar with the Arab world knows Israel is viewed all across the Middle East as a Western-configured colonial power, illegally gobbling up Palestinian land and treating its own Arab residents as third-rate citizens. Bush's Israeli Iraq - rather Americastan in Iraq, as it is known in many quarters in Baghdad - amounts to nothing less than a public relations nightmare in terms of the US "message" for the wider Middle East.

The endless Palestinian tragedy - the cancer at the root of every problem in the Middle East - now has officially spread to Mesopotamia. The disease is man-made. Not that the White House is losing any sleep over it. Bush may even have had a Nero-like impulse to add fuel to the burning of Rome, ie Baghdad: after all, the Zio-con objective is to encourage civil war in Iraq on a divide-and-rule basis.

Iraq's Palestinians are the minority Sunni Arabs - moderates included, and certainly, at least in the thinking of Bush and his vice president, Dick Cheney, Shi'ite followers of Muqtada al-Sadr. That leaves little else than the Kurds as "Israelis"; mountainous Iraqi Kurdistan, anyway, has been infested with Israeli intelligence services for years.

Not only Bush dreams of an Israeli Iraq; evildoers identify the dream for what it is. Any self-respecting jihadist website in the Arab world and any self-respecting Salafi-jihadist cleric characterizes the occupation as an anti-Sunni, US-Shi'ite coalition. Thus Sunni Arabs are indeed widely viewed in the Arab world as Palestinians.

Gimme my benchmark

Meanwhile real life - or survival in the heart of darkness - remains bleak. Most areas in Baghdad are "red" or "dark pink" - meaning the odds of one seeing the sun rising day after day range from 10% to a maximum of 30%. The National Association of British Arabs, in a report by Dr Ismail Jalili to the House of Lords Commission on Iraq, has detailed only part of the horrendous, systematic decimation of Iraq's intelligentsia: 830 documented assassinations since 2003, including 380 academics and doctors, 210 lawyers and judges, and 243 journalists.

Washington's Holy Grail - or Benchmark Supreme - remains the Oil Law. Only 24 of 37 Iraqi cabinet ministers have approved the made-in-Washington draft of the law - which should have been presented for discussion in Parliament this Wednesday. The Kurds have already leaked that they are against it - the terms, not the law in itself. The Sadrists, virtually all Sunni parties and the overwhelming majority of Iraq's population - if they had access to the text - are against handing over the nation's wealth to Anglo-American Big Oil.

For security reasons - the Israeli-as-Iraq government cannot secure even a side street in Baghdad, not to mention provincial highways - Muqtada al-Sadr canceled his new Million Man March, which would have taken place this Thursday in Sunni-majority Samarra. He was forced to issue a communique discrediting rumors - black ops? - relayed by Sunni sheikhs according to which the Mahdi Army would conduct ethnic cleansing in Samarra and turn it into a 100% Shi'ite city.

Disregarding the occasional shriek by Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki as ambient noise, the US military continues to invade Sadr City practically on a daily, pre-dawn basis in search of Iranian "terrorists", bombing houses and killing poor Shi'ite Iraqi civilians instead. This is the face of Bush's "surge" that doesn't feature in the Western press - but it does on Arab satellite channels.

Iraqis have every reason to fear words, as in the poem by Nazik al-Mala'ikah. Many remember the apocalyptic expressions "axis of evil" or "weapons of mass destruction". They've now been told - by the Mission Accomplisher-in-Chief - their country is the new Israel. An exiled history professor in Damascus may have come up with the only possible way out of the heart of darkness: "Maybe we should abandon Islam, convert to Judaism, and start doing business with Texas."

Pepe Escobar is the author of [Globalistan: How the Globalized World is Dissolving into Liquid War](#) (Nimble Books, 2007). He may be reached at pepeasia@yahoo.com.

http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Middle_East/IG06Ako3.html

Israel-U.S. plans for the Middle East

30/06/2007 07:04:00 AM GMT

**“The broad mass of a nation ... will more easily fall victim to a big lie than to a small one”
Adolf Hitler, Mein Kampf.**

By: Soraya Sepahpour-Ulrich

Forty years ago, when Israeli air and naval forces attacked and bombed the U.S. Navy intelligence ship Liberty, the thirty-four Americans who died while patriotically serving their country were buried in the cold graveyard of treachery dug by their leaders. The 172 injured



(Reuters) U.S. President George W. Bush and Israel's Prime Minister Ehud Olmert (L)

survivors lived to mourn not only their loss, but to forever be shackled by the weight of a reality not shared by other Americans - Ward Boston Jr. who served as chief counsel to the Navy's Court of Inquiry into the attack on the U.S. Navy intelligence ship Liberty stated: “The evidence was clear. We [Adm. Isaac C. Kidd] both believed with certainty that this attack was a deliberate effort to sink an American ship and murder its entire crew.”

President Lyndon Johnson and Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara ordered a cover-up of the incident sending a clear signal that American lives would be sacrificed to inconspicuous agendas[i].

The bodies of the brave Americans have been buried under a rubble of lies; the deception that buried them, an uncontrollable weed, has claimed the bodies of so many more soldiers ever since. Who knows of the untold number of innocent ‘others’ in parts unknown or unreported since this attack? It would seem that the weeds entangling our leaders have their roots in such think tanks as the Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies (IASPS).

Noteworthy among IASPS strategists, for the purpose of this article, are names such as Elie Krakowsky, David Wurmser, and Richard Perle. They would seem to have a gift of prophecy for the focus of their research is countries that have been or since become involved in destabilization, genocide, and war.

Afghanistan - Krakowsky's distinction is owed to a strategy paper called "The Afghan Vortex" (May 2000). The main thrust of the paper is the importance of Afghanistan. It owes its importance to its location at the confluence of major routes. A boundary between land power and sea power, it is the meeting point between opposing forces larger than itself. The paper also stresses the opportunities Afghanistan presents for the West which can be arrived at only with "external intervention". The paper also argues that "interested states" that have a stake in Afghanistan must see that active participation in stabilizing it is the only solution.

"Only the United States has this capability", according to Krakowsky[ii].

Then September 11 happened.

"Interested states", including Russia, China, Pakistan, and even Iran cooperated with the United States. Two months after the tragedy of 9/11, a confident Krakowsky appeared on CNN informing the listeners that if the United States took a forceful role, the people would unite and calm would ensue, especially if the king were more than just symbolic.[iii] Krakowsky had assurances from the Afghan people after having spoken to them in undisclosed circumstances. One has to wonder when this conversation took place - during the pounding of Afghan villages or before?

Iraq, Syria & Palestine - Richard Perle authored "A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm". Among his recommendations was that "Israel can shape its strategic environment, in cooperation with Turkey and Jordan, by weakening, containing, and even rolling back Syria. This effort can focus on removing Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq" [iv].

In this strategy paper, Perle also recommended: "First and foremost, Israel's efforts to secure its streets may require hot pursuit into Palestinian-controlled areas, a justifiable practice with which Americans can sympathize." The Americans did indeed sympathize by starving the Palestinians for electing a government of their choice; an event that the world would otherwise recognize as "free elections", a necessary step towards democracy. However, Israel and the United States had other plans and they are overtly and shamelessly cementing the scaffolding of a coup against Hamas.

Given that on February 27, 1994, Rabbi Yaacov Perrin said "One million Arabs are not worth a Jewish fingernail", like brothers in a cage, the Arabs are being pitted against each other, Palestinian against Palestinian.

Mr. Bush, at the behest of Israel, having led the starvation efforts of the Palestinians to the point where he would be certain they would turn on each other, and having armed the Fatah party[v], is watching them kill each other. Likewise, having armed militias in Lebanon and inside refugee camps to oppose Hezbollah, the neo-cons are now content that Lebanon is once again sliding towards a civil war with Lebanese killing each other.[vi]

In Iraq , having first armed the Shias, the neo-cons arm the Sunnis to fight “al-Qaeda”[vii], and the world is witnessing in horror as the civil war is delivering more dead Iraqis.

However, with Prussian methodology, nothing will be left to chance. If the neo-cons cannot bring the long-suffering population of the Middle East to their knees or be rid of them, they will ‘zap’ or ‘fry’ them with a state of the art microwave like a machine developed by Raytheon, with invisible beams which penetrate just a 64th of inch beneath the skin to heat up the water inside a person – enough to cause excruciating pain if nothing else [viii].

That done, Dick Cheney with David Wurmser at his side, can freely implement their long simmering plans for Iran. Perhaps if Rumsfeld had shook hands on this instead of chemical weapons and conventional arms, Saddam would not have felt obliged to kill his opponents by the thousands – he would have used the same torture mechanism the Americans are using today.

Iran - U.S. and Israeli officials opened talks March 1 on a new multi-year plan for U.S. aid to the Jewish state, which could seek additional funds to “meet evolving threats from Iran and Syria.” Under the 1998 plan which expires in 2008, military aid to Israel rose from \$1.8 billion to \$2.4 billion per year. According to the new plan, the U.S. is considering new Navy warships based on the U.S. Navy’s Littoral Combat Ship, up to 100 F-35 Joint Strike Fighters, primary aircraft trainers, troop transports and the Patriot Advanced Capability-3 missile defense system.[ix]

According to a U.S. official, the additional funds for Tel Aviv being considered by the Bush White House and Congress is for the “development and procurement of systems needed to defend against the growing terror threat and the specter of an Iranian nuclear attack”.

One has to wonder if this arsenal will be used to defend against a non-existent bomb or used to attack Iran and any other country that dares to demand self rule given that the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter has the following attributes:

- Four times more effective than legacy fighters in air-to-air engagements
- Eight times more effective than legacy fighters in prosecuting missions against fixed and mobile targets
- Three times more effective than legacy fighters in non-traditional Intelligence Surveillance Reconnaissance (ISR) and Suppression of Enemy Air Defenses and Destruction of Enemy Air Defenses (SEAD/DEAD) missions
- About the same in procurement cost as legacy fighters, but requires significantly less tanker/transport and less infrastructure with a smaller basing footprint

The offenders, in preparing evil for a nation, first damage its reputation. In line with Adolf Hitler, the neo-cons are delivering bigger lies for a more violent conflict. They are accusing Iran of a nuclear threat in spite of the IAEA inspections to the contrary, further destabilizing Iraq by arming and feeding the frenzy on all sides, and stoking the flames by such incendiary accusations as: Iran is now arming the Taliban too.

Born equal under law, humanity wanes as it gives way to greed and deception. With hearts turned to stone, we decline compassion on our soil and witness life extinguish in our own hospitals. Will there be compassion left in us when more dead and dismembered bodies get buried under the heavy weight of treachery, or are we the monsters who by remaining deaf to the wailing of the mourners create the Hitlers of this world?

[i] Ward Boston Jr. 'Time for the Truth About the Liberty', San Diego Union-Tribune, June 8, 2007

[ii] <http://www.iasps.org/strategic9/strat9.htm>

[iii] <http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0111/20/lt.01.html>

[iv] <http://www.iasps.org/strat1.htm>

[v] <http://www.counterpunch.org/brauchli01252007.html>

[vi] <http://www.guardian.co.uk/israel/Story/0..2054274.00.html>

[vii] http://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/11/world/middleeast/11iraq.html?_r=1&oref=slogin

[viii] <http://www.defensetech.org/archives/002035.html>

<http://www.globalresearch.ca:80/index.php?context=va&aid=5797>

[ix] http://www.ntimc.org:80/newswire.php?story_id=5493&print_page=true

<http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?F=2590391&C=mideast>

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/newsfull.php?newid=15808>

Marines to train at new Israeli combat center

By Barbara Opall-Rome - Staff writer

Posted : Monday Jun 25, 2007 19:46:09 EDT

BALADIA CITY, Israel — In a new, elaborate training center in the Negev desert, Israeli troops — and someday, U.S. Marines and soldiers — are preparing for the wide range of urban scenarios they may confront.

Here, at Israel's new National Urban Training Center, the Israeli Defense Force's Ground Forces Command is preparing forces to fight in four theaters: Gaza, Lebanon, the West Bank and Syria.

Built by the Army Corps of Engineers and funded largely from U.S. military aid, the 7.4-square-mile generic city — balad, in Arabic, means village — consists of 1,100 basic modules that can be reconfigured by mission planners to represent specific towns.

It's a much smaller, IDF-tailored version of the Army's Joint Readiness Training Center, the sprawling 100,000-acre simulated microcosm of the Middle East used to train infantry brigade task forces deployed in the region. And while Baladia City won't feature all the pyrotechnic bells and whistles of the Fort Polk, La., facility, it will offer the same high-fidelity simulated battlefield technologies, force identification and location systems, and debriefing capabilities, officers here said.

"Combat units from platoon up to brigade level will train in an environment that simulates the real urban battle," said Brig. Gen. Uzi Moskovich, commander of the NUTC and its adjacent National Ground Training Center, Israel's downsized version of the Army's force-on-force training facility at Fort Irwin, Calif. "Enemy forces will fight according to their respective combat doctrines, and the civilian population will behave in ways typical of their particular community, religion and culture."

Moskovich said Baladia City would eventually host Army and Marine Corps units for training before they head to Iraq.

"This is something developed by us in cooperation with the U.S. Army; we intend for it to become a valuable center of knowledge that will also benefit our American allies and other friends," he said.

An Israeli budget official said total Baladia City program costs came in at less than \$45 million, a small fraction of Washington's investment in the JRTC. As a frame of reference, he estimated each weeklong brigade-size exercise at a few thousand dollars, while major drills at JRTC could run into the millions.

"In terms of cost versus effectiveness, this is the best investment we've made in the army in the past 10 years," said Moskovich, who also commands the IDF's Gaza division. "This facility will be unique in the world, even with regard to the U.S. Army. It's not the size, but the added value of the different terrains, the fine-tuning of the cultural environments and the debriefing capabilities."

LESSONS FROM LEBANON

Located at the Tze'elim training base less than nine miles east of Rafah, a terrorist-ridden smugglers' haven that straddles the Gaza-Egyptian border, Baladia naturally resembles the sandy, arid terrain of the Palestinian coastal strip. At the moment, however, Lebanon and Syria are the highest-priority threat theaters, and creative engineering is required to transform the area into what IDF officers here call "Hezbollahland."

"We have the capabilities to create a realistic representation of where we're most likely to fight," Moskovich said. "Give me 70 or 80 tractors for a month, and I'll re-create the hills and topography of a Lebanese village. It won't be identical, but it will be enough to provide the type of realistic training our forces require. It might not be politically correct, but we're not pretending here. What looks like a mosque is a mosque. And our people will impersonate Arabs, not the Swiss. We need them to act the way our enemies are likely to fight on their own home turf."

During a late-May visit, IDF planners were busy transforming large portions of Baladia City into Bint Jbeil, a Hezbollah stronghold from which extremist Shiite forces extracted a heavy price on IDF ground troops in last summer's Lebanon War.

The area now features a city center, complete with shops, a grand mosque, hospital and an old casbah quarter built with 5-foot-thick walls. It even has a cemetery that doubles as a soccer field, depending on operational scenario.

Hundreds of soldiers, most of them 19- and 20-year-old women, graduates of Arabic language and cultural programs, are play-acting civilians and enemy fighters. Others serve as representatives of the Red Cross, other humanitarian aid organizations and the international media.

Designed according to lessons from the recent Lebanon War, side streets and main passageways will bristle with improvised explosive devices, while snipers will man the rooftops of multistory apartment buildings positioned throughout the town. Of course, IDF soldiers will have to contend with underground bunkers and the so-called nature reserves, those foliage-camouflaged, often remotely activated Katyusha rocket launching sites that confounded Israeli airpower and ground forces up until the last day of the war.

"The threat can come from anywhere," said the director of the tactical training center's urban warfare branch, a lieutenant colonel, who asked that his name not be used. "We learned from Lebanon that anti-tank missiles and rockets can be launched from windows of residential buildings or from public places, like schools and community centers."

THE MALI

Known by its Hebrew acronym MALI, the Baladia City NUTC features 472 structures, 1,200 doorways, 2,500 windows, multiple elevator shafts, and four miles of paved streets and semi-paved roads. For added realism, charred automobiles and burned tires litter the roadways. In the near future, planners will add donkeys, sheep, dogs and other live animals that often provide early warning of approaching Israeli troops.

Besides conquering and controlling a city, infantry will practice rescue operations, logistics crews will train in weapon storage, and entire battalions and brigades will drill combined air-land precision operations with the Israeli air force.

“In urban warfare, the first lesson is that things take time,” the lieutenant colonel said. “If the troops need half a day to advance five to 10 meters, so be it. The key is to conquer the city in a methodically selective and surgical manner so that harm to uninvolved civilians is kept to a minimum.”

Aside from meticulous mission planning, troops and especially commanders must maintain a continuously high level of situational awareness. To this end, significant attention will focus on selecting homes on the outskirts of town best suited to serve as forward command posts.

Ideally, the urban warfare director said, such homes should be located on an elevation that is clear of vegetation and not completely isolated, but with very few neighbors. Moreover, family members must not play any type of prominent role in the local community.

“Determining a forward command location ... can often make or break the entire battle,” the officer said. “The battalion commander must always be in the front; he has to have the benefit of being close to the fight. As for brigade commanders, it’s a matter of judgment. At times, he may need to remain further in the rear. But here, we urge them to be as forward deployed as possible. Remember, what you see here during the day doesn’t even resemble what it looks like at night.”

In the coming months, Baladia City will be integrated into the army’s Tzayad, or Hunter, secure digital network. The facility also will be enveloped by cameras, illuminator locators, a public address system, controlled street lights and an elaborate audio system that simulates helicopters, mortar rounds, muezzin prayer calls and 20 other distinct sounds.

Maj. Miki Winkler, director of the tactical training center that manages all Baladia City communications and debriefings, said commanders will view all activity in hyper-speed, where one minute of battle translates into one second of after-action review: “Everything is recorded. Every person is a stand-alone sensor and every floor of every building is an illuminator.”

Principal contractors include Israel’s state-owned Rafael and San Diego-based Cubic Defense Applications, provider of the Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System, a lightweight, wireless vest that contains laser detectors to track and record soldier performance. Cubic also will provide,

under a Pentagon Foreign Military Sales contract, PC-based range instrumentation and an infrared system for indoor/outdoor tracking, said Jan Stevens, the company's corporate communications manager.

OUT-OF-THE-BOX THINKING

Moskovich hopes to declare Baladia City initially operational by the end of July or early August, with full capability scheduled for Jan. 1 — not bad, he said, for a complex, bilateral program that began with “out-of-the-box” thinking by a midlevel officer just five years ago.

“We broke ground in March 2005, but it all started with one of our battalion commanders, who made us realize we had to provide a better answer to the unique challenges of urban warfare,” Moskovich said.

IDF officers credit Amir Baram, then a lieutenant colonel commanding the 890 Battalion, with changing the nature of the nation's ground force tactical training program. At the time, in March 2002, Baram was assigned a key role in taking over Nablus, a hotbed of Palestinian terrorism behind a string of suicide bombings that triggered Defensive Shield, Israel's largest military operation in the West Bank since the 1967 Six-Day War.

With nowhere to train his forces in the type of house-to-house warfare needed for the mission, Baram turned to a prominent Israeli real estate developer, who allowed the battalion to drill at night at an unfinished residential complex.

“They drilled on real structures, with entryways, windows and elevator shafts,” said Uri Dori, a retired IDF brigade commander. “It must have helped, because the battle in Nablus is now considered practically a textbook example of successful urban warfare.”

Two combat battalions and one supporting battalion took part in that 17-day siege, first controlling the city's Balata refugee camp and then systematically pushing the terrorists into the casbah, where they were simultaneously attacked from multiple directions.

Fighting in the casbah took an entire weekend, with troops circumventing explosives-rigged alleyways and “breaking the geometry by literally bursting through walls, penetrating in zigzag, wormlike fashion,” noted Brig. Gen. Aviv Kochavi, Nablus division commander at the time.

The result, Kochavi said, was 74 armed terrorists killed, 155 civilians injured and 480 taken prisoner, as opposed to two Israelis killed and 19 injured. Palestinian officials and humanitarian organizations dispute these statistics, maintaining that several hundred civilians were injured or killed in the Nablus siege.

Since last summer, Baladia City has hosted 85 drills using what Moskovich calls “stupid buildings.” But after everything comes online in January, the commander says he'll fix his sights on two new

growth areas: developing a home-based Red Team and developing the city's environs for ingressive training.

“Most of the casualties we suffered in Lebanon were at the contours of built-up areas,” he said. “When our units entered villages, most of them knew what to do. But what we learned is that urban warfare actually begins two to three kilometers from the outskirts of the city itself.”

As for Baladia City's dedicated opposing force, Moskovich said the role-playing force already constitutes the beginnings of a home-based Red Team.

“There's almost a weekly struggle to provide the opposing forces,” he said. “Right now, we have two blue sides, which puts the training conductor in a bind, since he's obligated to both sides and has to satisfy their respective drill requirements.”

Moskovich estimates it would cost \$100,000 a year to maintain a professional opposing force, with its own uniforms, vehicles, weapons and pyrotechnics: “I'm not talking about a brigade or even a battalion. I'll be more than happy with a reinforced company.”

Recent developments in Syria may make it necessary to give Moskovich more than that. Syria is developing specialized infantry battalions trained in the type of guerrilla warfare waged so successfully by Hezbollah in last summer's war, a military intelligence source said.

And with the “reasonable likelihood” of another war on Israel's northern front — perhaps by summer's end, according to some intelligence estimates here — that Red Team force may not come soon enough.

http://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/2007/06/marine_israel_combattraining_070624/

Israeli companies providing & maintaining equipment for US military in Iraq

Posted By Friedrich Braun On May 19, 2007

NOTE: These military contracts with Israel are costing Americans jobs...like the Bush junta cares.

JERUSALEM (AP) — An Israeli state-owned corporation has won a contract to supply the U.S. Marine Corps with state-of-the-art armored vehicles for use in Iraq, the latest in a long line of Israeli defense sales for use in the war.

Amit Tzimer, spokesman for weapons maker Rafael, said Sunday that, in partnership with U.S. manufacturer PVI, Rafael has signed up to deliver 60 of its new Golan vehicles at a total price of \$37 million.

Delivery will be made to the Marines in the United States in May, he said.

Rafael's sales catalog describes the Golan as a multipurpose vehicle, capable of withstanding armor-piercing machine-gun rounds, rocket fire and bomb blasts. It can carry up to 10 troops up to 360 miles on a tank of gas and can be outfitted as a fighting vehicle, mobile command post or ambulance.

Tzimer said that the initial deal was part of the first phase of a U.S. program to procure a total of 40,000 armored vehicles, and Rafael hoped for more orders in the future.

He said the firm previously supplied armor for the Bradley fighting vehicle.

A Pentagon survey released earlier this year said that hundreds of U.S. troops in Iraq and Afghanistan have experienced shortages of key protective equipment including armored vehicles.

Tel Aviv-based defense analyst Zeev Schiff said Rafael was only one of several Israeli companies that had long been providing and maintaining equipment for American forces in Iraq.

"Israel prefers to keep a low profile, but it's been doing that for years, not just for the (U.S.) Army but for the Navy, too," he said.

The Israeli Defense Ministry declined to comment on the sales of Israeli equipment destined for use in Iraq. The U.S. Defense Department did not respond to requests for a comment.

Robin Hughes, a Mideast military analyst at London-based Jane's Defense Information Group, said the issue of Israeli equipment in service in Iraq was a sensitive one, and both suppliers and customers generally preferred to avoid publicity.

"There are systems that are deployed, and I wouldn't just say U.S. vehicles, maybe other coalition vehicles. I think that if you were to look carefully, you might spot other Israeli stuff," he said, without elaborating.

Israeli media have reported that Israeli businessmen are active within Iraq itself, and last month the Israeli National Security Council issued a cryptic travel warning, citing the danger to Israelis traveling there and reminding them that such visits are a criminal offense under Israeli law.

Israeli citizens are forbidden by law to visit Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia or Yemen, all of which are technically at war with the Jewish state. Egypt and Jordan are the only Arab states to have signed peace treaties with Israel.

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'Israelis' with Ahmed Chalabi are building the walls in Iraq/ Chalabi Speaks

By: Imad Khadduri + PATRICK COCKBURN on: 16.05.2007



Israelis with Ahmed Chalabi are building the walls in Iraq

Imad Khadduri, Free Iraq

Gift to the Iraqis in Baghdad, via Palestinian Pundit

April 23, 2007

نم رشكاً قيوطنتل يبلجل دمحا امسئري يتلاو يب عشلا دشحلا ةنجل عم لمك قيسنتب لمعي يليئارسا لمع قيرف
لزع جاي سب قارعل ايف مني دم نيسمخ

لصوملا - مالعل او تاس اردلل لباب راد

2007 ناسين 24-

Dar Babel for Studies & Information (Mosul) has issued a report (above, in Arabic, April 24, 2007) indicating that work on the "walls" that are now being put up in Iraq have been in preparation for over three months. This project is being headed by Ahmad Al-Chalabi in conjunction with the Israeli company of **Zeef Belinsky** who has a long track record in ghetto construction, and with Al-Mahdi Army's financing and labor. The document provides sufficient details on the six work locations producing these concrete blocks, for easier targeting.

<http://www.uruknet.de/?s1=1&p=32367&2=25>

Chalabi Speaks

By PATRICK COCKBURN

Baghdad.

Ahmed Chalabi stands on the bank of the Tigris river within easy sniper range of the opposite side and

surveys the twisted steel girders of the al-Sarafiyyah bridge in Baghdad, its central spans torn apart by a massive truck bomb last month. The force of the blast impresses him. "I am surprised that the explosion managed to bring down three spans," he says as he looks at the wreckage.

It is a placid enough scene but nothing in Baghdad is truly safe. I supposed that Mr Chalabi's numerous and heavily armed police and army guards knew their business but I was hoping that we would not dawdle too long. The al-Sarafiyyah bridge, once one of the sights of Baghdad, connected the Shia district where we were standing with Wazzariyah, where there had been clashes with Sunni insurgents. I selected a reassuringly vast concrete plinth of the bridge to dodge behind if there was any shooting.

Conspicuous in a dark business suit, Mr Chalabi seemed uncaring about our possible vulnerability to hostile fire and was talking with some of the men in charge of rebuilding the bridge. There were no signs of reconstruction. He stepped into a small, dark, river police patrol boat which circled below the bridge for a few moments. Returning to the bank he remarked that one of the policemen on the boat had told him that "five out of 16 river policemen in his unit had been killed". "Snipers at Taji," one of his aides commented. As for the bridge, Mr Chalabi said reconstruction was "very slow - they should be working now".

The broken remains of the al-Safariyyah bridge was a strange place to meet the man whom opponents of the invasion of Iraq regard as a hate figure who gulled the US into a bloody and unnecessary war by concocting evidence that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction. He has always had an impressive array of enemies. Demonised by Saddam as a creature of the Americans, he was simultaneously loathed by the CIA and the US State Department mainly because he would not obey American orders.

Whatever his political future, Mr Chalabi is one of the great survivors of Iraqi politics. "Never ever write him off," Hoshiyar Zebari, the Iraqi Foreign Minister, said to me last year. For a start he is still alive despite numerous assassination attempts. Aged 62 he has seen extraordinary reversals of fortune. He comes from a wealthy Shia family that flourished in Baghdad until the overthrow of the monarchy in 1958. Always an opponent of Saddam Hussein, he became a banker in Jordan only to see his bank collapse in controversial circumstances in the late 1980s. In the 1990s he was in Iraqi Kurdistan vainly seeking to use it as a platform to overthrow Saddam. Forced to flee again in 1996 he seemed to have failed, but 10 years later Saddam is in his grave and Mr Chalabi sits in his heavily fortified house in Baghdad.

Meeting political leaders in Baghdad is different than in other countries, where the difficulty is generally in securing the interview in the first place. Getting to it is just a matter of calling a taxi.

In Baghdad the main problem may be covering the last 500 yards to see the person to be interviewed without undue danger. It is quite evident meeting Iraqis and foreigners in the Green Zone in Baghdad that few have the slightest idea of the risk involved in coming to see them. One ambassador happily gave a party starting at 9pm and invited people from outside the zone when not a cat is stirring in the streets of Baghdad.

I had called Mr Chalabi's office in the morning. I was in fact in the Green Zone seeing Kurdish friends when the reply came that he could see me almost immediately. He does not live in the Green Zone but in a fortress-like villa not far away. Two vehicles filled with armed men were sent to pick me up. We drove through the desolate streets of west Baghdad, which these days look like a war zone, at great speed, zig-zagging around concrete blast walls and rolls of razor wire.

Mr Chalabi was waiting at the house in the al-Mansur district, once known as the embassy quarter of Baghdad but now a lethally dangerous place.

There were few cars about and by early evening those shops that had opened were closing. There were nervous-looking soldiers and police everywhere. We were to go on to another house, known as The Farm, that had once belonged to his father. For a man who is not officially a member of the government his police and army escort boasted significant firepower.

I had met Mr Chalabi in the early 1990s and had always been impressed by his skill as an operator and his ability to bounce back from defeat. He also had an ability to irritate his friends and attract the loathing of his enemies to a degree which seemed beyond reason. A few days before I met him in al-Mansur an official in the Green Zone had told me with feeling that he considered Mr Chalabi to be "evil".

Yet much of what he had done during the 1990s was what all exiled oppositions do when trying to overthrow an authoritarian regime. They try to foment unrest, coups or mutinies inside their country and look for the backing of neighbouring states and the great powers. Mr Chalabi did what others in the Iraqi opposition did but with greater success. The US had failed to go on to Baghdad to overthrow Saddam Hussein in 1991. The opposition always wanted to lure it to try again. Attempted coups and mutinies had all failed by 1996. This was probably inevitable. Mr Chalabi once said to me that people "outside Iraq did not realise how difficult it was to try to overthrow a government with a violent and pro-active security service."

Did he invent evidence of weapons of mass destruction or prompt witnesses to do so? In fact all the opposition, particularly the Kurdish security services, were doing this. But it was absurd for the CIA and assorted American services and newspapers along with MI6 to later claim that they were misled. They knew what President George Bush and Tony Blair wanted and gave it to them.

Mr Chalabi's own justification for encouraging the US to invade is simple. He says he favoured the overthrow of Saddam Hussein by the US but not the subsequent occupation of Iraq to which he attributes all the disasters that followed. It is not an argument that goes down well in Washington or London. In April 2004 a meeting in the White House discussed a memo drawn up by the National Security Council entitled "Marginalising Chalabi".

Action swiftly followed. Mr Chalabi was accused of being too close to the Iranians and of telling their intelligence station chief in Baghdad that the USA had broken Iranian codes. The FBI was told to investigate. A few days later, on 20 May, US-led forces raided his headquarters in Baghdad. His fortunes waned. After the parliamentary elections in December 2005 he was part of the Shia alliance that triumphed. He became deputy prime minister. At the election at the end of the year he stood outside the Shia alliance and did not win a single seat.

Sitting in his garden, Mr Chalabi is sceptical about the success of the security plan for Baghdad. He says that "there are less sectarian killings and places that were expected to be difficult like Sadr City the Shia slum that houses two million people were not." But he says the latter success was only possible because of successful negotiations that led to the Mehdi Army, the main Shia militia body, being stood down, through the influence of its leader, Muqtada al-Sadr, the Iranians and the Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani. He does not think that US-Iraqi army plan to seal off areas, the so-called gated communities, is going to work. He points out that in a Sunni commercial area such as al-Adhamiyah, most people who work there live outside the enclave. "In any case it is consecrating division in the city. There is nothing so permanent as a temporary solution."

At the same time he says firmly that "the Sunnis have lost the battle for Baghdad. They were encouraged to go on the offensive by Arab states that did nothing for them." He identifies one factor in the weakness of the Sunni that is confirmed by election results. They are far less numerous in Baghdad than they had supposed. Some had spoken of Baghdad being equally divided but Mr Chalabi thinks that the proportions in the capital are 80 per cent Shia and 20 per cent Sunni.

He sees the most immediate problem in Baghdad as being the return of people driven from their homes and detainees. "Efforts must be made to bring them back otherwise security is reversible. The displaced people are very angry and want to go home." Through popular committees he is trying to get mosques returned to their original community.

His judgement is different from that of many Iraqi and American officials in the Green Zone. He does not think that the Sadrists, the movement of Muqtada al-Sadr, is disintegrating: "A lot of it is wishful thinking. Their local leaders will all comply with what Muqtada al-Sadr says." A key element in ending the war is bringing in the Iranians: "An understanding through the Iraqi government between the US

and Iran."

He does not think that Washington's famous "benchmarks" are more than slogans in Iraq. Giving Saddam Hussein's security services back their old jobs is just not acceptable. He does not add that the Shia and Kurds will veto such an idea but they certainly will. On US threats to withdraw he says "many Iraqis are asking if this is a promise or a threat" but he wants an agreement on the limits of the authority of the multinational forces, essentially the Americans and the British.

At this stage Mr Chalabi sees a US withdrawal as something that will be a function of US politics and not what is happening in Iraq. Essentially he sees the US and Britain as having unwittingly committed a revolutionary act in the Middle East by overthrowing Saddam Hussein. "The US found that it had dismantled the cornerstone of the Arab security order."

The US and Britain have been trying ever since to fill the vacuum left by the fall of the Baath party. They wanted "to prevent Shia control and limit Iranian influence in Iraq and in this they have not succeeded." And that is why they will leave.

His influence on Bush

Ahmed Chalabi was one of the key figures in the build-up to the invasion of Iraq as a leading Iraqi exile in Washington, where he lobbied the US government to overthrow Saddam Hussein. He supplied intelligence from Iraqi exiles and defectors to his backers in the Pentagon and the White House - and to The New York Times - on Saddam Hussein's alleged arsenal of WMDs which was later proved to be unreliable. He was also accused of working for Iranian intelligence. Backed by the Pentagon as a future leader of Iraq, he returned home after the 2003 invasion at the head of a small fighting force in hopes of building political legitimacy.

In the early 1990s, his Iraqi National Congress was funded by the CIA which subsequently distanced itself from him after a failed uprising in Kurdish Iraq. Chalabi was also convicted in absentia by a Jordanian court of embezzlement, theft, forgery and currency speculation over the collapse of the private Petra Bank, and sentenced to 22 years in prison. He has always maintained his innocence.

<http://www.counterpunch.org/>

<http://www.iraq-war.ru/article/128358>

Soldiers building wall separating Sunnis, Shiites

Three-mile structure in Baghdad is a disputed part of security plan

By [Joseph Giordano](#), and [Monte Morin](#), Stars and Stripes

Mideast edition, Thursday, April 19, 2007

BAGHDAD — U.S. soldiers with the 82nd Airborne Division in a Baghdad district are “building a three-mile protective wall on the dividing line between a Sunni enclave and the surrounding Shiite neighborhood,” according to a U.S. military press release issued Wednesday.

Troops with the 407th Brigade Support Battalion began constructing the wall on April 10 and will continue work “almost nightly until the wall is complete,” the release read.

“The area the wall will protect is the largest predominately Sunni neighborhood in East Baghdad. Majority-Shiite neighborhoods surround it on three sides. Like other religiously divided regions in the city, the area has been trapped in a spiral of sectarian violence and retaliation,” according to the release.

In January, when the new Baghdad security plan and troop “surge” were announced, the “gated community” concept was reported by several news agencies as one tactic to be used.

But after a regularly scheduled news briefing in Baghdad on Wednesday, Maj. Gen. William B. Caldwell IV, the top spokesman for coalition forces in Iraq, said he was unaware of efforts to build a wall dividing Shiite and Sunni enclaves in Baghdad and said that such a tactic was not a policy of the Baghdad security plan.

“We have no intent to build gated communities in Baghdad,” Caldwell said Wednesday.

“Our goal is to unify Baghdad, not subdivide it into separate [enclaves].”

The subject of walling-off city districts has been a popular one among some ground troops now manning small combat outposts within city neighborhoods. Recently, commanders attached to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, said they were investigating the possibility of constructing a security wall around a once-bustling industrial zone in New Baghdad, on the city’s east side. The wall, they said, would help them secure the area and aid in the revitalization of factories and industrial plants there.

However, Caldwell said that the Baghdad plan never envisioned large scale divisions of city districts. At most, he said, barriers would be used to protect city markets that might otherwise fall prey to suicide

bombers, or to block off streets during specific operations. In this latter case, Caldwell said the barriers were removed after the completion of each mission.

“We have been going into neighborhoods and sealing off certain exit and entrance points during initial sweeps,” Caldwell said. “Those were temporary measures.”

Caldwell, however, said that U.S. and Iraqi forces would continue to erect permanent barriers around city marketplaces. So far, he said, coalition forces had erected more than 3,000 individual sections of concrete blast walls throughout the city since the plan went into effect two months ago. These barriers included both Jersey barriers — short concrete dividers commonly seen on roadways in the United States — and larger 20-foot blast walls that commonly surround bases and living areas.

According to Wednesday’s news release from Multi-National Corps-Iraq, “the wall [in Adhamiyah] is one of the centerpieces of a new strategy by coalition and Iraqi forces to break the cycle of sectarian violence. Planners hope the creation of the wall will help restore law and order by providing a way to screen people entering and exiting the neighborhood — allowing residents and people with legitimate business in, while keeping death squads and militia groups out.”

A similar effort by U.S. troops in south Baghdad was reported earlier this month by the Wall Street Journal.

“That community [in Adhamiyah] will be completely gated and protected,” Lt. Col. Thomas Rogers, 407th Brigade Support Battalion, was quoted as saying in the release. “It’s really for the security of all the people of Adhamiyah, not just one side or the other.”

According to military officials, the Adhamiyah wall should be completed in the next month.

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<http://www.stripes.com/articleprint.asp?section=104&article=52775&archive=true>

Israeli officer sells weapons to terrorists in Iraq

Wed, 07 Mar 2007 22:44:47

Ma'ariv Daily has reported that an Israeli retired officer sells weapons to terrorist groups in Iraq.

Shmoel Avivi, an Israeli retired officer, had established a firm in Iraq 2 years ago, which secretly sold arms to terrorist groups in Iraq, Ma'ariv reported.

Amnesty International reported that Avivi was one of the biggest weapon dealers in the Middle East.



Iraqi sources earlier announced that terrorist attacks in Iraq were backed by the intelligent agencies of CIA and Mossad and the secret agents of Iraqi former regime.

Earlier, Iraqi parliament security commission chairman Hadi Ameri had accused the occupying soldiers of secretly directing the terrorist attacks and forming terror squads in Iraq.

MB/KB

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail.aspx?id=1854§ionid=3510202>

Maker: Israeli 'Drones' Fly Over Iraq



Mar 19 02:23 PM US/Eastern

By STEVE WEIZMAN

Associated Press Writer

JERUSALEM (AP) - Pilotless planes small enough for a single soldier to carry and operate are gathering intelligence for U.S.-led forces in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Israeli manufacturer said Monday.

Elbit Systems, one of Israel's leading defense electronics companies, said its little "Skylark" can cover an area within a range of 6 miles day or night. It is about 7 feet long with a wingspan of nearly 8 feet, the company said.

"Skylark is operational and currently deployed in the global war on terror in Israel, Iraq and Afghanistan," the statement said. It described the Skylark as suited for "close range, beyond-the-next hill, counter-terror missions."

Lt. Col. Matthew McLaughlin of CENTCOM, the American command that handles Iraq and Afghanistan, said the military "would not confirm the use of the drone," but is always looking for aircraft with such capabilities.

The U.S. relies heavily on pilotless planes of all shapes and sizes for surveillance, launching missiles and other missions in the region.

Elbit said the Skylark, one of several items of Israeli defense hardware deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan, would be unveiled to the public at the March 20-25 Australian International Airshow.

Earlier this month, state-owned arms-maker Rafael said it had won a contract to supply the U.S. Marine Corps with state-of-the-art armored vehicles, and military analysts said Israeli firms had long been supplying and maintaining equipment for American ground and naval forces in Iraq, although both buyers and sellers

http://www.breitbart.com/print.php?id=D8NVDAOGO&show_article=1

Thursday, March 01, 2007

[Israel to provide armored vehicles to U.S. Marines in Iraq](#)



The good jihadis at the London daily Al-Sharq Al-Awsat are all lit up about this one...Israel is going to supply the U.S. Marines in Iraq with specially equipped armored "Golan" vehicles which are specifically designed for urban warfare and can sustain attacks by RPGs and road mines.

This is nothing new, by the way. IDF trainers, utilizing hard lessons they learned in places like Jenin have been training US marines for some time in how to wage urban warfare in Arab cities while sustaining the minimum in casualties, as well as giving US forces access to surveillance devices and technology used in urban warfare developed by Israeli high tech.

It's how a real ally behaves. And perhaps, food for thought to those people who think the solution to Middle East peace involves pressuring that ally into indefensible borders and unreasonable concessions.

<http://joshuapundit.blogspot.com/2007/03/israel-to-provide-armored-vehicles-to.html>

Israel supplying armored vehicles to U.S. forces in Iraq

The Associated Press

Published: March 5, 2007

JERUSALEM: An Israeli corporation has won a contract to supply the United States Marine Corps with state-of-the-art armored vehicles for use in Iraq, the latest in a long line of Israeli defense sales destined for the Iraqi theater.

Amit Tzimer, spokesman for Israel's state-owned weapons maker Rafael, said that in partnership with U.S. manufacturer PVI, Rafael has signed up to deliver 60 of its new Golan vehicles at a total price of US\$37 million (€28 million).

Delivery will be made in the United States in May to the Marines, he said.

Rafael's sales catalog describes the Golan as a multipurpose vehicle, capable of withstanding armor-piercing machine-gun rounds, rocket fire and bomb blasts. It can carry up to 10 troops up to 600 kilometers (360 miles) on a tank of gas and can be outfitted as a fighting vehicle, mobile command post or ambulance.

Tzimer said that the initial deal was part of the first phase of a U.S. program to procure a total of 40,000 armored vehicles, and Rafael hoped for more orders in the future.

He added said that the firm previously supplied armor for the Bradley fighting vehicle. Tel Aviv-based defense analyst Zeev Schiff said it was only one of several Israeli companies that had long been providing and maintaining equipment for American forces in Iraq.

"Israel prefers to keep a low profile, but it's been doing that for years, not just for the (U.S.) Army but for the Navy, too," he said.

The Israeli Defense Ministry declined to comment on the sales of Israeli equipment destined for use in Iraq. The U.S. Defense Department did not respond to requests for a comment.

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"There are systems that are deployed, and I wouldn't just say U.S. vehicles, maybe other coalition vehicles. I think that if you were to look carefully, you might spot other Israeli stuff," he said, without elaborating.

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<http://www.iht.com/articles/ap/2007/03/05/africa/ME-GEN-Israel-US-Iraq.php>

Iraq IED's: Mossad/ Zapata Engineering Conspiracy?

by *CLOAK & DAGGER*

Washington, D.C. - Zapata Engineering, an offshoot of Zapata Oil with offices in North Carolina, Hawaii and Tel Aviv, have now been linked to the hiring of private Mossad contractors aka alleged Israeli Engineers in Iraq. Of course that is not the real story.

It can now be reported that Zapata Engineering has hired these Israeli Mossad-types into Iraq for the purposes of alleged counter-insurgency.

However, the alleged Israeli engineers have now been fingered for sniping at U.S. Soldiers and the murder of two female American Marines who had their throats slit and then placed in garbage dumps.

These female Marines had been investigating the origins of the I.E.D. (Improvised Explosives Devices). And of course it gets worse. It can now be reported that the origin of the I.E.D.'s, come not from Iran, but come from Zapata Engineering of North Carolina, Hawaii and Tel Aviv.

And now of course, it really gets worse. The projectiles discovered by American Special Forces have depleted uranium tips which connects directly to the Israeli company Rafael, which of course is owned by Zapata Engineering of North Carolina, Hawaii and Tel Aviv.

The first subpoena issued by Senator Levin, Democrat of Michigan, should be for a General Richard Natonski who is the liaison for the alleged Israeli engineers brought into Iraq.

It is clear now that the deaths of various American soldiers and the murder of the female Marines was done by the Israeli Mossad in order to cover up their involvement in I.E.D. sales to alleged Al Qaeda in Iraq.

Reference: Rafael Company, Tel Aviv.

P.S. Zapata Engineering, of course, is an offshoot of Zapata Oil. The same Zapata linked to Daddy Bush, British Permindex and the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy on Nov. 22. 1963.

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED

http://www.cloakanddagger.de/CLOAKANDDAGGER.DE_TOM%20HENEGHAN/cloak_BB_nov14.htm

Why isn't the dog barking in Israeli Northern Iraq?

Terry Thurber, Al-Jazeera.info

December 18, 2006

See what they're doing? Do you see what they're not doing?

They're not telling us anything about Israeli (err) Kurdish northern Iraq.

What is going on there? Any "sectarian violence" (wink wink - nod nod!)? Any ministry policemen costumed "vendettas" happening there?

Kurds and Israelis are all fat - healthy and living the life in full serviced (electricity, water, medical) comfort on top of their stores of accumulated killing commodities protected under the 15 year "no-fly" zone. They probably got cable TV and their homes are warm.

Southern Iraq is not so chosen.

The Iraqis in southern Iraq are living in lakes of blood-puss and half rotted family members - they're starved - they're sick - drinking blood puss contaminated piss water and subject to all sorts of masked vendettas from the usual suspects of "opposing sects" perennially costumed as masked ministry police.

It may be as bad as the concentration camps in Palestine.

Why would anyone executing a vendetta wear a mask? It don't make sense! And why ain't it happening in Israeli northern Iraq?

A sure bet there are a whole bunch of ministry uniforms (and masks - maybe even a OJ "watch" cap or two!) in Israeli Northern Iraq. Could the masked ministry police murders be CIA Mossad IDF and Kurd operations to achieve a separate Israeli northern Iraq? Could they be creating a theatrical ruse of sectarian violence for CNN's southern Iraq blood festival?

Never forget, as an ex-CIA chief bragged a few weeks back, "the job of the CIA is to buy treason". Aside from being unconstitutional - it's a sick position.

Two years ago we thought Israel was acquiring bunker busters for Iran. Instead, Lebanon got bunker busted! Now Israel is harassing, of all people, the Holocaust and Settlement industries for a few extra shekels to cover their 1.6 Billion dollar purchase of the US DU incineration devices that fried so many Lebanese.

A little slice of southeast Lebanon would have been perfect for a pipeline from Israeli Northern Iraq though a new Lebanese "blue" zone Israel hoped to burn in it's August 2006 crime to the meters and cash registers of occupied Haifa.

There is no news ever out of Kurd North Iraq.

The gatekeepers screaming for immediate troop withdrawal (the troops should stay at the discretion of an as yet to be formed Iraqi Provisional Coalition organization created [only] by "natural" Iraqis) know that the healthy, well fed, well sleeping -well armed Kurds and Israelis - once the US is gone - can "impose" a separate Kurdish Iraq.

Until we see what this troop "re-deployment" is really about - we need as much information about the Israelis and Kurds as we can get. What's going on in that sector? What's life like in Israeli Northern Iraq?

Why isn't the dog barking in Kurd Northern Iraq? Something's up - nobody is saying a thing - except get the troops out! The troops leave - the Israelis own what used to be northern Iraq and they will earn their commissions through continued provocations and sabotage and we will indeed go bankrupt and starve in a hundred year war.

Iraq's future does not include Israeli or Kurd separatist oil companies. The oil in northern Iraq belongs to Iraq. If peace and resolution is the goal - the criminals hiding behind the Jews and working out of Israel can not be allowed one more drop of stolen Iraqi oil.

Peace

:: *Article nr. 29109 sent on 18-dec-2006 19:15 ECT*

www.uruknet.info?p=29109

Link: www.aljazeera.com/Opinion%20editorials/2006%20Opinion%20Editorials/December/18%200/Why%20isn%27t%20the%20dog%20barking%20in%20Israeli%20Northern%20Iraq%20By%20Terry%20Thurber.htm

Israel field-tests effective anti-RPG weapon

So why isn't the U.S. Army doing the same? NBC News investigates

By Adam Ciralsky, Lisa Myers & the NBC News Investigative Unit

Updated: 7:16 p.m. ET Jan 9, 2007

WASHINGTON - In September, NBC News first reported on a fierce debate within the Pentagon over an Israeli-made system that shoots rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) out of the sky. The Army seems intent on killing the system, but officials in the Office of the Secretary of Defense believe it can save American lives.

Over the last three years, U.S. commanders in Iraq have issued a series of urgent pleas for a system to counter RPGs — a favorite weapon of insurgents in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Pentagon's Office of Force Transformation (OFT) scoured the world for a solution and thought it found one in "Trophy," which was developed over the last decade in Israel.

Trophy works by scanning all directions and automatically detecting when an RPG is launched. The system then fires an interceptor — traveling hundreds of miles a minute — that destroys the RPG safely away from the vehicle.

OFT subjected Trophy to 30 tests and found it is "more than 98 percent" effective at killing RPGs. Officials then made plans to battle-test the system on some Stryker fighting vehicles headed to Iraq this year.

But the U.S. Army blocked that testing. Why? Pentagon sources tell NBC News — and internal Army documents seem to confirm — that Army officials consider Trophy a threat to their crown jewel, the \$160 billion Future Combat System (FCS). Under FCS, the Army is paying Raytheon Co. \$70 million to build an RPG-defense system from scratch.

In an interview with NBC News on June 26, 2006, an Army official said Trophy simply is not ready.

"The Army is opposed to deploying a system before we assure that it's safe, effective, suitable and supportable," said Col. Donald Kotchman. "Trophy is not there yet."

In letters to Congress since our first reports, the Army says that the best proof Trophy is not ready is that the "Israeli Defense Forces have yet to integrate and field Trophy."

To check out the Army's claims, we went back to Israel. We found that the Israeli military has indeed begun to integrate and field Trophy on tanks, buying at least 100 systems.

Brig. Gen. Amir Nir leads that effort. We asked him about claims that Trophy has not been sufficiently tested and that it's not ready to be deployed.

"It's the most mature, and it can do the job," he said. "We cannot afford waiting for the next generation."

This fall, after our first reports aired, Maj. Gen. Jeffrey Sorenson gave Congress a laundry list of reasons the U.S. Army opposes Trophy.

Can Trophy handle attacks from every direction?

"From the standpoint of providing 360-degree coverage, we have issues," Sorenson told the Tactical Air and Land Forces subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee on Sept. 21, 2006.

What does Nir say? Will Trophy be able to engage targets from all directions?

"Yeah, 360 degrees," he says.

Can Trophy reload automatically?

"From the standpoint of an autoloader that's not yet developed, we have issues," said Sorenson before Congress.

Sorenson suggested that in the absence of an autoloader, soldiers would have to climb out of the vehicle and manually reload the system, perhaps under hostile fire?

We went to Trophy's manufacturer, Rafael, to see if there is an autoloader.

Col. Didi Ben Yoash, a reservist in the Israeli Defense Forces who works for Rafael, showed us one.

"Absolutely, this is an autoloader," he said.

How does he respond to U.S. Army claims that Trophy doesn't have an autoloader?

"Well, this is an autoloader," he said.

Gen. Nir also confirmed to NBC that "the full system provides you the ability to reload automatically."

What's the risk to troops when Trophy intercepts an RPG?

After our first report on Sept. 5, 2006, the Army told Congress it has "serious concerns over soldier safety."

What is the Israeli army's view of how much additional risk there is to the troops?

"As far as we tested, it added at most 1 percent," says Nir. "Not a significant risk."

In fact, the Israelis argue that Trophy, while not perfect, will provide much-needed protection for troops and save lives — the same conclusion reached by Trophy's backers in the Pentagon. They argue that Trophy should be fielded as an interim solution in response to U.S. commanders requests for help against RPGs. These officials believe that the troops cannot afford to wait while the U.S. Army and Raytheon perfect a longer-term solution.

We wanted to ask the U.S. Army about all this. Sorensen first agreed to an interview, then canceled it. The Army also refused to answer 29 specific questions we submitted.

The Army did give us two statements, one saying, in part: "The U.S. Army is dedicated to ensuring our soldiers deploy with the best force protection capability" and is working on a system to counter RPGs.

When will that system, being built by Raytheon, be ready?

The Army previously told us it could get it to the troops in four years, by 2011, but now declines to say whether it still is on course to meet that deadline.

Later this week on "NBC Nightly News with Brian Williams," Lisa Myers will continue her reporting on the Trophy weapons system. She'll reveal new internal Army documents that suggest the Army went even further than she previously reported to block Pentagon efforts to test Trophy.

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/16545885/>

BBC Says That Israel is in Northern Iraq

Source: Melek DURBAKAN (JTW) and News Agency

- According to BBC, Kurdish soldiers were secretly trained by former Israeli commandos in northern Iraq to protect a new international airport and in counter-terrorism operations.
- Avivi, Israel's Ambassador to Ankara, told the Turkish academicians in USAK that Israel has done nothing in Iraq without informing Turkey. Avivi says Israel supports Iraq's unity and against a possible Kurdish state in the region.
- A number of Israeli companies have won contracts with the Kurdish government in northern Iraq to train and equip Kurdish security forces and build an international airport, Yedioth Ahronoth, Israeli newspaper, had reported in 2005
- Foreign Ministry spokesman Mark Regev told Newsnight Israel had not authorized any firms to do defense work in Iraq. Firms would be prosecuted if police found they had broken export laws, he said.

Melek DURBAKAN (JTW) and News Agencies

The BBC reports on Tuesday that former Israel Defense Forces commandos secretly trained Kurdish soldiers in Northern Iraq to protect a new international airport and in counter-terrorism operations.

Former Israeli special-forces soldiers crossed into Iraq from Turkey in 2004 to train two sets of Iraqi Kurdish troops, one of the former Israeli trainers told the BBC's Newsnight program. The former trainer, whose name was not disclosed, said IDF soldiers trained Kurds to act as a security force for the new airport in the northern Iraqi city of Erbil (Irbil), mostly populated Kurdish.

They also trained more than 100 Peshmerga (Pesmerge) or Kurdish fighters for "special assignments" that included how to use rifles and how to shoot militants in a crowd, he said.

The former soldier said he believed Kurdish officials knew the trainers were Israelis although the troops did not.

"My part of the contract was to train the Kurdish security people for a big airport project and for training, as well as the Peshmerga, and the actual soldiers, the army," the former IDF soldier told Newsnight.

"You know, day by day it's a bit tense because you know where you are and you know who you are. And

there's always a chance that you'll get revealed," he added.

Iraqi newspapers have reported that Israeli soldiers have trained Kurdish troops but the Kurdish authorities deny allowing any Israelis into Iraq.

The Kurds' political enemies have long accused them of an alliance with Israel while Israel's critics suspect it wants to use the Kurdish region as a strategic base to get closer to its arch-enemy Iran.

Iraqi Kurdistan sits between Iran to the east and Turkey to the north-west. Both countries have significant Kurd minorities and are worried about a Kurdish state emerging in northern Iraq.

Newsnight also reported that an Israeli security firm called Interop and two Swiss-registered subsidiaries, Kudo and Colosium, were among the main contractors at Irbil airport, providing security fencing and communications equipment.

Khaled Salih, a spokesman for the Kurdistan Regional Government, dismissed the former IDF soldier's claims.

"These are not new allegations for us. Back in the Sixties and Seventies we were called 'the second Israel' in the region and we were supposed to be eliminated by Islamist nationalist and now Islamist groups," he told Newsnight.

The former IDF soldier said he trained Kurds in "anti-terror lessons ... how to shoot first, how to identify a terrorist in a crowd. That's clearly special assignments.

Israeli Yedioth Ahronoth: Israelis Train Kurds

Israel's leading newspaper Yedioth Ahronot had reported in 2005 that a number of Israeli companies have won contracts with the Kurdish government in northern Iraq to train and equip Kurdish security forces and build an international airport. According to the Yedioth Ahronoth report, dozens of Israelis with a background in elite military combat training have been working for 'private' Israeli companies in northern Iraq where they helped the Kurds establish elite anti-terror units.

According to the report, leading Israeli companies in the field of security and counter-terrorism have set up a training camp under the codename Z at a secret location in a desertic region in northern Iraq, where Israeli experts provide training in live fire exercises and self-defense to Kurdish security forces.

*** La Stampa: Israelis in Northern Iraq under Fake IDs**

Similarly the Italian la Stampa daily paper reported that many Israeli military men were in Northern Iraq under fake names to help the Kurds to establish a strong army. According to the La Stampa's

December 2005 report the first contacts between the Kurds and Israel were established by Dany Yaton, former head of the MOSSAD. The paper also published the picture of the Israeli soldiers in an Iraqi airport.

* **'Illegal and Secret Operations'**

In 2006, Israeli newspaper Yedioth Ahronot reported that the Israelis in Iraq operated illegally and secretly. According to the Israeli newspaper, their operations were against even the Israeli laws.

It was understood that the Israelis did not only provide equipments but also intelligence to the Kurdish leaders. Most of the Israelis who helped the Kurdish military were retired officers according to the papers.

* **The New Yorker: Kurds are Israel's B Plan**

Seymour M. Hersh from the New Yorker was another journalist who revealed Israel's secret activities among the Iraqi Kurds. Hersh says in his 'Plan B' article of 30 June 2004:

"Israeli intelligence and military operatives are now quietly at work in Kurdistan, providing training for Kurdish commando units and, most important in Israel's view, running covert operations inside Kurdish areas of Iran and Syria. Israel feels particularly threatened by Iran, whose position in the region has been strengthened by the war. The Israeli operatives include members of the Mossad, Israel's clandestine foreign-intelligence service, who work undercover in Kurdistan as businessmen and, in some cases, do not carry Israeli passports."

Israel has denied all these 'claims', and argued that there is no single official Israeli who helped the Kurds.

Israel's secret operations in the region have mostly disturbed Turkey. Turkish press claimed that Israel had a secret agenda in the region arguing Israel aims to establish a pro-Israeli Kurdish state in Iraq. Turkey has been against separation of Iraq and has seen a possible Kurdish state as a threat to the regional peace and stability.

Pinhas Avivi, Israel's Ambassador to Ankara (Turkey), told the Turkish academicians and journalist in his lecture in USAK that Israel has done nothing special in Iraq without informing Turkey.

Ambassador Avivi also said Israel is against a Kurdish state in Iraq.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Mark Regev told Newsnight Israel had not authorized any firms to do defense work in Iraq. Firms would be prosecuted if police found they had broken export laws, he said.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sedat Laciner, head of the Ankara-based Turkish think tank USAK (International Strategic Research Organization) told the JTW that Turkey is not happy with Israel's Kurdish policy. "Turkish people think that Israel has secret plans to establish a Kurdish state in the region though the Israeli authorities refuse the claims" Dr. Laciner added.

Laciner further continued:

"Turkey-Israel co-operation is crucial for stability in the Middle East yet Israel's Kurdish policy undermines the relations as the American PKK policy has undermined Turkey-US relations. Turkish people do not want to hear any deny or any promise but concrete measures. If Israel and the US seek food relations with Turkey, I think the most crucial area is the PKK terrorism and Kurdish separatism. If Israel can persuade the Turks about its sincerity, it would be the greatest contribution to Turkish-Israeli relations".

JTW, 20 September 2006

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<http://www.turkishweekly.net/news.php?id=38693>

Saddam: Kurds dividing Iraq for Israeli benefit

Saddam Hussein attacks prosecution witnesses in his trial for genocide against Kurds, accusing them of sowing division among Iraqis for benefit of Israel

Associated Press

Saddam Hussein on Tuesday attacked prosecution witnesses in his trial for genocide against the Kurds, accusing them of sowing division among Iraqis for the benefit of Israel.

The deposed leader addressed the court after two Kurds testified that during a military offensive in northern Iraq in 1988, they were detained in a camp where conditions were so bad that hundreds of prisoners died of malnutrition.

"This will only serve the separation," Saddam said, referring to the deepening division among Iraqis as shown by the rising death toll in the insurgency and sectarian fighting.

"The Zionists are the only ones who will benefit from the differences among Iraqis," Saddam added.

Earlier, another defendant testified that his lawyer wanted to break ranks with the three-week legal boycott of the trial, but when the judge summoned the attorney, he failed to appear. And the chief defense lawyer for Saddam denied in an interview that any of the defense attorneys would end their boycott.

The back-and-forth was a continuation of the procedural difficulties that have plagued the trial in which Saddam and six members of his regime are charged with war crimes and crimes against humanity during a military offensive against Iraq's Kurdish population in 1987-88. Saddam and one other defendant are also charged with genocide.

<http://www.ynetnews.com/Ext/Comp/ArticleLayout/CdaArticlePrintPreview/1,2506,L-3316173,00.html>

Kurdish soldiers trained by Israelis

Newsnight has obtained the first pictures of Kurdish soldiers being trained by Israelis in Northern Iraq, as well as an interview with one of the former commandos who carried out the work.

When the former Israeli special forces soldiers were sent to Iraq in 2004 they were told they would be disowned if they were discovered.

Their role there was to train two groups of Kurdish troops.

One would act as a security force for the new Hawler International Airport (near Erbil) and the other, of more than 100 peshmerga or Kurdish fighters, would be trained for "special assignments", according to one of Newsnight's interviewees.

Contractors

An Israeli security consulting firm called Interop acted as the main contractor for the Hawler airport project and set up two subsidiaries (Kudo and Colosium) to carry out work in Iraq.

Kudo and Colosium described themselves as Swiss-registered companies.

In addition to the training, Kudo provided quad bikes, communications equipment and security fencing.

“ It's a bit tense because you know where you are and you know who you are, and there's always a chance that you'll get revealed ”

An Israeli trainer

One of the founders of Interop, and its Chairman until 2003, was Danny Yatom, a former Head of Mossad - the Israeli foreign intelligence service and now an MP.

He told Newsnight today: "I was not aware of what was done in 2004 and 2005 because I cut all contacts with the company when I entered the Israeli parliament in 2003."

During 2004-5, Interop and Kudo were run by Shlomi Michaels, a former head of Israel's counter-terrorist unit. Contacted by Newsnight, Mr Michaels declined to comment.

Special assignments

Newsnight was told by the Israeli interviewee involved in the training that senior Kurdish officials were aware of their nationality, but not the troops being trained.

The sensitivities for the Kurdish authorities are serious, since their political enemies have long accused them of being in cahoots with Israel.

The Kurdish authorities have previously denied allowing any Israelis into northern Iraq.

The Israeli trainer says: "You know, day by day it's a bit tense because you know where you are and you know who you are. And there's always a chance that you'll get revealed."

"My part of the contract was to train the Kurdish security people for a big airport project and for training, as well as the Peshmerga, and the actual soldiers, the army."

"We were training them in all kinds of anti-terror lessons, anti-terror, security airport, training them with long rifles, pistols; telling them, teaching them tactics like shooting behind doors, behind barricades, shooting from the left, shooting from the right, shooting from windows, how to shoot first, how to identify a terrorist in a crowd."

"That's clearly special assignments. That's only training that special units get for special assignments."

"We crossed the border from Turkey and one of the intelligence officers passed us by, through the border, without stamping our passports."

"So you reckon that if two guys from the intelligence service knew we were Israelis and they saw our passports as well, the leadership knew as well - I mean their bosses, that's natural."



Iran and Turkey are concerned about a Kurdish state emerging in Northern Iraq

"The second Israel"

Khaled Salih, a spokesman for the Kurdistan Regional Government, says: "These are not new allegations for us. Back in the sixties and seventies we were called 'the second Israel' in the region and we were supposed to be eliminated by Islamist nationalist and now Islamist groups.

"They look for internal enemies and we are the easiest to target. These kind of speculations have been around in the region for more than 30 years."

The Kurdistan region sits at a strategic crossroads. To the east is Iran, to the north-west Turkey. Both countries have significant Kurd minorities and are worried about a Kurdish state emerging in northern Iraq.

The authorities there have accepted that for now and that they must remain part of a federal Iraq.

As they develop their region, the Kurds have opened an international airport at Irbil (Hawler in Kurdish).

It now boasts dozens of international flights each week and it is at Hawler International that the Israelis began their work.

Strategic options

With Iran becoming Israel's principal enemy, there have been reports of Israelis using Kurdish areas of Iraq to increase its strategic options.

One constraint facing the Israelis, should they ever want to hit Iran, is distance. Most Israeli jets are short range and they have few in-flight tankers. Some studies have suggested that Israel could make refuelling stops at a modern airfield in Kurdistan.

If the Israelis ever planned to use Hawler airport as an emergency refuelling stop, it has now been compromised by Israeli press reports.

After finishing their training, Kurds sang their national anthem while marching behind one of the Israelis.

Israeli Government spokesman, Mark Regev, told Newsnight that the Investigations Division of the Israeli Ministry of Defence had passed the details of this case to the Israeli police to see if there had been any violation of export laws.



The Kurdish authorities have long been accused of being in cahoots with Israel

He added: "We have not authorised anyone to do any defence work in Iraq... If information is brought and there's clear evidence that people broke our law, of course I expect them to be prosecuted."

MARK URBAN'S REPORT WAS SHOWN ON NEWSNIGHT ON TUESDAY, 19 SEPTEMBER, 2006

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/newsnight/5363116.stm>

The Israel Lobby

John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt

For the past several decades, and especially since the Six-Day War in 1967, the centrepiece of US Middle Eastern policy has been its relationship with Israel. The combination of unwavering support for Israel and the related effort to spread 'democracy' throughout the region has inflamed Arab and Islamic opinion and jeopardised not only US security but that of much of the rest of the world. This situation has no equal in American political history. Why has the US been willing to set aside its own security and that of many of its allies in order to advance the interests of another state? One might assume that the bond between the two countries was based on shared strategic interests or compelling moral imperatives, but neither explanation can account for the remarkable level of material and diplomatic support that the US provides.

Instead, the thrust of US policy in the region derives almost entirely from domestic politics, and especially the activities of the 'Israel Lobby'. Other special-interest groups have managed to skew foreign policy, but no lobby has managed to divert it as far from what the national interest would suggest, while simultaneously convincing Americans that US interests and those of the other country – in this case, Israel – are essentially identical.

Since the October War in 1973, Washington has provided Israel with a level of support dwarfing that given to any other state. It has been the largest annual recipient of direct economic and military assistance since 1976, and is the largest recipient in total since World War Two, to the tune of well over \$140 billion (in 2004 dollars). Israel receives about \$3 billion in direct assistance each year, roughly one-fifth of the foreign aid budget, and worth about \$500 a year for every Israeli. This largesse is especially striking since Israel is now a wealthy industrial state with a per capita income roughly equal to that of South Korea or Spain.

Other recipients get their money in quarterly installments, but Israel receives its entire appropriation at the beginning of each fiscal year and can thus earn interest on it. Most recipients of aid given for military purposes are required to spend all of it in the US, but Israel is allowed to use roughly 25 per cent of its allocation to subsidise its own defence industry. It is the only recipient that does not have to account for how the aid is spent, which makes it virtually impossible to prevent the money from being used for purposes the US opposes, such as building settlements on the West Bank. Moreover, the US has provided Israel with nearly \$3 billion to develop weapons systems, and given it access to such top-

drawer weaponry as Blackhawk helicopters and F-16 jets. Finally, the US gives Israel access to intelligence it denies to its Nato allies and has turned a blind eye to Israel's acquisition of nuclear weapons.

Washington also provides Israel with consistent diplomatic support. Since 1982, the US has vetoed 32 Security Council resolutions critical of Israel, more than the total number of vetoes cast by all the other Security Council members. It blocks the efforts of Arab states to put Israel's nuclear arsenal on the IAEA's agenda. The US comes to the rescue in wartime and takes Israel's side when negotiating peace. The Nixon administration protected it from the threat of Soviet intervention and resupplied it during the October War. Washington was deeply involved in the negotiations that ended that war, as well as in the lengthy 'step-by-step' process that followed, just as it played a key role in the negotiations that preceded and followed the 1993 Oslo Accords. In each case there was occasional friction between US and Israeli officials, but the US consistently supported the Israeli position. One American participant at Camp David in 2000 later said: 'Far too often, we functioned . . . as Israel's lawyer.' Finally, the Bush administration's ambition to transform the Middle East is at least partly aimed at improving Israel's strategic situation.

This extraordinary generosity might be understandable if Israel were a vital strategic asset or if there were a compelling moral case for US backing. But neither explanation is convincing. One might argue that Israel was an asset during the Cold War. By serving as America's proxy after 1967, it helped contain Soviet expansion in the region and inflicted humiliating defeats on Soviet clients like Egypt and Syria. It occasionally helped protect other US allies (like King Hussein of Jordan) and its military prowess forced Moscow to spend more on backing its own client states. It also provided useful intelligence about Soviet capabilities.

Backing Israel was not cheap, however, and it complicated America's relations with the Arab world. For example, the decision to give \$2.2 billion in emergency military aid during the October War triggered an Opec oil embargo that inflicted considerable damage on Western economies. For all that, Israel's armed forces were not in a position to protect US interests in the region. The US could not, for example, rely on Israel when the Iranian Revolution in 1979 raised concerns about the security of oil supplies, and had to create its own Rapid Deployment Force instead.

The first Gulf War revealed the extent to which Israel was becoming a strategic burden. The US could not use Israeli bases without rupturing the anti-Iraq coalition, and had to divert resources (e.g. Patriot missile batteries) to prevent Tel Aviv doing anything that might harm the alliance against Saddam Hussein. History repeated itself in 2003: although Israel was eager for the US to attack Iraq, Bush could not ask it to help without triggering Arab opposition. So Israel stayed on the sidelines once again.

Beginning in the 1990s, and even more after 9/11, US support has been justified by the claim that both states are threatened by terrorist groups originating in the Arab and Muslim world, and by 'rogue states' that back these groups and seek weapons of mass destruction. This is taken to mean not only

that Washington should give Israel a free hand in dealing with the Palestinians and not press it to make concessions until all Palestinian terrorists are imprisoned or dead, but that the US should go after countries like Iran and Syria. Israel is thus seen as a crucial ally in the war on terror, because its enemies are America's enemies. In fact, Israel is a liability in the war on terror and the broader effort to deal with rogue states.

'Terrorism' is not a single adversary, but a tactic employed by a wide array of political groups. The terrorist organisations that threaten Israel do not threaten the United States, except when it intervenes against them (as in Lebanon in 1982). Moreover, Palestinian terrorism is not random violence directed against Israel or 'the West'; it is largely a response to Israel's prolonged campaign to colonise the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

More important, saying that Israel and the US are united by a shared terrorist threat has the causal relationship backwards: the US has a terrorism problem in good part because it is so closely allied with Israel, not the other way around. Support for Israel is not the only source of anti-American terrorism, but it is an important one, and it makes winning the war on terror more difficult. There is no question that many al-Qaida leaders, including Osama bin Laden, are motivated by Israel's presence in Jerusalem and the plight of the Palestinians. Unconditional support for Israel makes it easier for extremists to rally popular support and to attract recruits.

As for so-called rogue states in the Middle East, they are not a dire threat to vital US interests, except inasmuch as they are a threat to Israel. Even if these states acquire nuclear weapons – which is obviously undesirable – neither America nor Israel could be blackmailed, because the blackmailer could not carry out the threat without suffering overwhelming retaliation. The danger of a nuclear handover to terrorists is equally remote, because a rogue state could not be sure the transfer would go undetected or that it would not be blamed and punished afterwards. The relationship with Israel actually makes it harder for the US to deal with these states. Israel's nuclear arsenal is one reason some of its neighbours want nuclear weapons, and threatening them with regime change merely increases that desire.

A final reason to question Israel's strategic value is that it does not behave like a loyal ally. Israeli officials frequently ignore US requests and renege on promises (including pledges to stop building settlements and to refrain from 'targeted assassinations' of Palestinian leaders). Israel has provided sensitive military technology to potential rivals like China, in what the State Department inspector-general called 'a systematic and growing pattern of unauthorised transfers'. According to the General Accounting Office, Israel also 'conducts the most aggressive espionage operations against the US of any ally'. In addition to the case of Jonathan Pollard, who gave Israel large quantities of classified material in the early 1980s (which it reportedly passed on to the Soviet Union in return for more exit visas for Soviet Jews), a new controversy erupted in 2004 when it was revealed that a key Pentagon official called Larry Franklin had passed classified information to an Israeli diplomat. Israel is hardly

the only country that spies on the US, but its willingness to spy on its principal patron casts further doubt on its strategic value.

Israel's strategic value isn't the only issue. Its backers also argue that it deserves unqualified support because it is weak and surrounded by enemies; it is a democracy; the Jewish people have suffered from past crimes and therefore deserve special treatment; and Israel's conduct has been morally superior to that of its adversaries. On close inspection, none of these arguments is persuasive. There is a strong moral case for supporting Israel's existence, but that is not in jeopardy. Viewed objectively, its past and present conduct offers no moral basis for privileging it over the Palestinians.

Israel is often portrayed as David confronted by Goliath, but the converse is closer to the truth. Contrary to popular belief, the Zionists had larger, better equipped and better led forces during the 1947-49 War of Independence, and the Israel Defence Forces won quick and easy victories against Egypt in 1956 and against Egypt, Jordan and Syria in 1967 – all of this before large-scale US aid began flowing. Today, Israel is the strongest military power in the Middle East. Its conventional forces are far superior to those of its neighbours and it is the only state in the region with nuclear weapons. Egypt and Jordan have signed peace treaties with it, and Saudi Arabia has offered to do so. Syria has lost its Soviet patron, Iraq has been devastated by three disastrous wars and Iran is hundreds of miles away. The Palestinians barely have an effective police force, let alone an army that could pose a threat to Israel. According to a 2005 assessment by Tel Aviv University's Jaffee Centre for Strategic Studies, 'the strategic balance decidedly favours Israel, which has continued to widen the qualitative gap between its own military capability and deterrence powers and those of its neighbours.' If backing the underdog were a compelling motive, the United States would be supporting Israel's opponents.

That Israel is a fellow democracy surrounded by hostile dictatorships cannot account for the current level of aid: there are many democracies around the world, but none receives the same lavish support. The US has overthrown democratic governments in the past and supported dictators when this was thought to advance its interests – it has good relations with a number of dictatorships today.

Some aspects of Israeli democracy are at odds with core American values. Unlike the US, where people are supposed to enjoy equal rights irrespective of race, religion or ethnicity, Israel was explicitly founded as a Jewish state and citizenship is based on the principle of blood kinship. Given this, it is not surprising that its 1.3 million Arabs are treated as second-class citizens, or that a recent Israeli government commission found that Israel behaves in a 'neglectful and discriminatory' manner towards them. Its democratic status is also undermined by its refusal to grant the Palestinians a viable state of their own or full political rights.

A third justification is the history of Jewish suffering in the Christian West, especially during the Holocaust. Because Jews were persecuted for centuries and could feel safe only in a Jewish homeland, many people now believe that Israel deserves special treatment from the United States. The country's creation was undoubtedly an appropriate response to the long record of crimes against Jews, but it also brought about fresh crimes against a largely innocent third party: the Palestinians.

This was well understood by Israel's early leaders. David Ben-Gurion told Nahum Goldmann, the president of the World Jewish Congress:

If I were an Arab leader I would never make terms with Israel. That is natural: we have taken their country . . . We come from Israel, but two thousand years ago, and what is that to them? There has been anti-semitism, the Nazis, Hitler, Auschwitz, but was that their fault? They only see one thing: we have come here and stolen their country. Why should they accept that?

Since then, Israeli leaders have repeatedly sought to deny the Palestinians' national ambitions. When she was prime minister, Golda Meir famously remarked that 'there is no such thing as a Palestinian.' Pressure from extremist violence and Palestinian population growth has forced subsequent Israeli leaders to disengage from the Gaza Strip and consider other territorial compromises, but not even Yitzhak Rabin was willing to offer the Palestinians a viable state. Ehud Barak's purportedly generous offer at Camp David would have given them only a disarmed set of Bantustans under de facto Israeli control. The tragic history of the Jewish people does not obligate the US to help Israel today no matter what it does.

Israel's backers also portray it as a country that has sought peace at every turn and shown great restraint even when provoked. The Arabs, by contrast, are said to have acted with great wickedness. Yet on the ground, Israel's record is not distinguishable from that of its opponents. Ben-Gurion acknowledged that the early Zionists were far from benevolent towards the Palestinian Arabs, who resisted their encroachments – which is hardly surprising, given that the Zionists were trying to create their own state on Arab land. In the same way, the creation of Israel in 1947-48 involved acts of ethnic cleansing, including executions, massacres and rapes by Jews, and Israel's subsequent conduct has often been brutal, belying any claim to moral superiority. Between 1949 and 1956, for example, Israeli security forces killed between 2700 and 5000 Arab infiltrators, the overwhelming majority of them unarmed. The IDF murdered hundreds of Egyptian prisoners of war in both the 1956 and 1967 wars, while in 1967, it expelled between 100,000 and 260,000 Palestinians from the newly conquered West Bank, and drove 80,000 Syrians from the Golan Heights.

During the first intifada, the IDF distributed truncheons to its troops and encouraged them to break the bones of Palestinian protesters. The Swedish branch of Save the Children estimated that '23,600 to 29,900 children required medical treatment for their beating injuries in the first two years of the intifada.' Nearly a third of them were aged ten or under. The response to the second intifada has been even more violent, leading *Ha'aretz* to declare that 'the IDF . . . is turning into a killing machine whose efficiency is awe-inspiring, yet shocking.' The IDF fired one million bullets in the first days of the uprising. Since then, for every Israeli lost, Israel has killed 3.4 Palestinians, the majority of whom have been innocent bystanders; the ratio of Palestinian to Israeli children killed is even higher (5.7:1). It is also worth bearing in mind that the Zionists relied on terrorist bombs to drive the British from Palestine, and that Yitzhak Shamir, once a terrorist and later prime minister, declared that 'neither Jewish ethics nor Jewish tradition can disqualify terrorism as a means of combat.'

The Palestinian resort to terrorism is wrong but it isn't surprising. The Palestinians believe they have no other way to force Israeli concessions. As Ehud Barak once admitted, had he been born a Palestinian, he 'would have joined a terrorist organisation'.

So if neither strategic nor moral arguments can account for America's support for Israel, how are we to explain it?

The explanation is the unmatched power of the Israel Lobby. We use 'the Lobby' as shorthand for the loose coalition of individuals and organisations who actively work to steer US foreign policy in a pro-Israel direction. This is not meant to suggest that 'the Lobby' is a unified movement with a central leadership, or that individuals within it do not disagree on certain issues. Not all Jewish Americans are part of the Lobby, because Israel is not a salient issue for many of them. In a 2004 survey, for example, roughly 36 per cent of American Jews said they were either 'not very' or 'not at all' emotionally attached to Israel.

Jewish Americans also differ on specific Israeli policies. Many of the key organisations in the Lobby, such as the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) and the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organisations, are run by hardliners who generally support the Likud Party's expansionist policies, including its hostility to the Oslo peace process. The bulk of US Jewry, meanwhile, is more inclined to make concessions to the Palestinians, and a few groups – such as Jewish Voice for Peace – strongly advocate such steps. Despite these differences, moderates and hardliners both favour giving steadfast support to Israel.

Not surprisingly, American Jewish leaders often consult Israeli officials, to make sure that their actions advance Israeli goals. As one activist from a major Jewish organisation wrote, 'it is routine for us to say: "This is our policy on a certain issue, but we must check what the Israelis think." We as a community do it all the time.' There is a strong prejudice against criticising Israeli policy, and putting pressure on Israel is considered out of order. Edgar Bronfman Sr, the president of the World Jewish Congress, was accused of 'perfidy' when he wrote a letter to President Bush in mid-2003 urging him to persuade Israel to curb construction of its controversial 'security fence'. His critics said that 'it would be obscene at any time for the president of the World Jewish Congress to lobby the president of the United States to resist policies being promoted by the government of Israel.'

Similarly, when the president of the Israel Policy Forum, Seymour Reich, advised Condoleezza Rice in November 2005 to ask Israel to reopen a critical border crossing in the Gaza Strip, his action was denounced as 'irresponsible': 'There is,' his critics said, 'absolutely no room in the Jewish mainstream for actively canvassing against the security-related policies . . . of Israel.' Recoiling from these attacks, Reich announced that 'the word "pressure" is not in my vocabulary when it comes to Israel.'

Jewish Americans have set up an impressive array of organisations to influence American foreign policy, of which AIPAC is the most powerful and best known. In 1997, *Fortune* magazine asked members of Congress and their staffs to list the most powerful lobbies in Washington. AIPAC was

ranked second behind the American Association of Retired People, but ahead of the AFL-CIO and the National Rifle Association. A *National Journal* study in March 2005 reached a similar conclusion, placing AIPAC in second place (tied with AARP) in the Washington 'muscle rankings'.

The Lobby also includes prominent Christian evangelicals like Gary Bauer, Jerry Falwell, Ralph Reed and Pat Robertson, as well as Dick Armey and Tom DeLay, former majority leaders in the House of Representatives, all of whom believe Israel's rebirth is the fulfilment of biblical prophecy and support its expansionist agenda; to do otherwise, they believe, would be contrary to God's will. Neo-conservative gentiles such as John Bolton; Robert Bartley, the former *Wall Street Journal* editor; William Bennett, the former secretary of education; Jeane Kirkpatrick, the former UN ambassador; and the influential columnist George Will are also steadfast supporters.

The US form of government offers activists many ways of influencing the policy process. Interest groups can lobby elected representatives and members of the executive branch, make campaign contributions, vote in elections, try to mould public opinion etc. They enjoy a disproportionate amount of influence when they are committed to an issue to which the bulk of the population is indifferent. Policymakers will tend to accommodate those who care about the issue, even if their numbers are small, confident that the rest of the population will not penalise them for doing so.

In its basic operations, the Israel Lobby is no different from the farm lobby, steel or textile workers' unions, or other ethnic lobbies. There is nothing improper about American Jews and their Christian allies attempting to sway US policy: the Lobby's activities are not a conspiracy of the sort depicted in tracts like the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. For the most part, the individuals and groups that comprise it are only doing what other special interest groups do, but doing it very much better. By contrast, pro-Arab interest groups, in so far as they exist at all, are weak, which makes the Israel Lobby's task even easier.

The Lobby pursues two broad strategies. First, it wields its significant influence in Washington, pressuring both Congress and the executive branch. Whatever an individual lawmaker or policymaker's own views may be, the Lobby tries to make supporting Israel the 'smart' choice. Second, it strives to ensure that public discourse portrays Israel in a positive light, by repeating myths about its founding and by promoting its point of view in policy debates. The goal is to prevent critical comments from getting a fair hearing in the political arena. Controlling the debate is essential to guaranteeing US support, because a candid discussion of US-Israeli relations might lead Americans to favour a different policy.

A key pillar of the Lobby's effectiveness is its influence in Congress, where Israel is virtually immune from criticism. This in itself is remarkable, because Congress rarely shies away from contentious issues. Where Israel is concerned, however, potential critics fall silent. One reason is that some key members are Christian Zionists like Dick Armey, who said in September 2002: 'My No. 1 priority in foreign policy is to protect Israel.' One might think that the No. 1 priority for any congressman would

be to protect America. There are also Jewish senators and congressmen who work to ensure that US foreign policy supports Israel's interests.

Another source of the Lobby's power is its use of pro-Israel congressional staffers. As Morris Amitay, a former head of AIPAC, once admitted, 'there are a lot of guys at the working level up here' – on Capitol Hill – 'who happen to be Jewish, who are willing . . . to look at certain issues in terms of their Jewishness . . . These are all guys who are in a position to make the decision in these areas for those senators . . . You can get an awful lot done just at the staff level.'

AIPAC itself, however, forms the core of the Lobby's influence in Congress. Its success is due to its ability to reward legislators and congressional candidates who support its agenda, and to punish those who challenge it. Money is critical to US elections (as the scandal over the lobbyist Jack Abramoff's shady dealings reminds us), and AIPAC makes sure that its friends get strong financial support from the many pro-Israel political action committees. Anyone who is seen as hostile to Israel can be sure that AIPAC will direct campaign contributions to his or her political opponents. AIPAC also organises letter-writing campaigns and encourages newspaper editors to endorse pro-Israel candidates.

There is no doubt about the efficacy of these tactics. Here is one example: in the 1984 elections, AIPAC helped defeat Senator Charles Percy from Illinois, who, according to a prominent Lobby figure, had 'displayed insensitivity and even hostility to our concerns'. Thomas Dine, the head of AIPAC at the time, explained what happened: 'All the Jews in America, from coast to coast, gathered to oust Percy. And the American politicians – those who hold public positions now, and those who aspire – got the message.'

AIPAC's influence on Capitol Hill goes even further. According to Douglas Bloomfield, a former AIPAC staff member, 'it is common for members of Congress and their staffs to turn to AIPAC first when they need information, before calling the Library of Congress, the Congressional Research Service, committee staff or administration experts.' More important, he notes that AIPAC is 'often called on to draft speeches, work on legislation, advise on tactics, perform research, collect co-sponsors and marshal votes'.

The bottom line is that AIPAC, a de facto agent for a foreign government, has a stranglehold on Congress, with the result that US policy towards Israel is not debated there, even though that policy has important consequences for the entire world. In other words, one of the three main branches of the government is firmly committed to supporting Israel. As one former Democratic senator, Ernest Hollings, noted on leaving office, 'you can't have an Israeli policy other than what AIPAC gives you around here.' Or as Ariel Sharon once told an American audience, 'when people ask me how they can help Israel, I tell them: "Help AIPAC."'

Thanks in part to the influence Jewish voters have on presidential elections, the Lobby also has significant leverage over the executive branch. Although they make up fewer than 3 per cent of the population, they make large campaign donations to candidates from both parties. The *Washington*

Post once estimated that Democratic presidential candidates ‘depend on Jewish supporters to supply as much as 60 per cent of the money’. And because Jewish voters have high turn-out rates and are concentrated in key states like California, Florida, Illinois, New York and Pennsylvania, presidential candidates go to great lengths not to antagonise them.

Key organisations in the Lobby make it their business to ensure that critics of Israel do not get important foreign policy jobs. Jimmy Carter wanted to make George Ball his first secretary of state, but knew that Ball was seen as critical of Israel and that the Lobby would oppose the appointment. In this way any aspiring policymaker is encouraged to become an overt supporter of Israel, which is why public critics of Israeli policy have become an endangered species in the foreign policy establishment.

When Howard Dean called for the United States to take a more ‘even-handed role’ in the Arab-Israeli conflict, Senator Joseph Lieberman accused him of selling Israel down the river and said his statement was ‘irresponsible’. Virtually all the top Democrats in the House signed a letter criticising Dean’s remarks, and the *Chicago Jewish Star* reported that ‘anonymous attackers . . . are clogging the email inboxes of Jewish leaders around the country, warning – without much evidence – that Dean would somehow be bad for Israel.’

This worry was absurd; Dean is in fact quite hawkish on Israel: his campaign co-chair was a former AIPAC president, and Dean said his own views on the Middle East more closely reflected those of AIPAC than those of the more moderate Americans for Peace Now. He had merely suggested that to ‘bring the sides together’, Washington should act as an honest broker. This is hardly a radical idea, but the Lobby doesn’t tolerate even-handedness.

During the Clinton administration, Middle Eastern policy was largely shaped by officials with close ties to Israel or to prominent pro-Israel organisations; among them, Martin Indyk, the former deputy director of research at AIPAC and co-founder of the pro-Israel Washington Institute for Near East Policy (WINEP); Dennis Ross, who joined WINEP after leaving government in 2001; and Aaron Miller, who has lived in Israel and often visits the country. These men were among Clinton’s closest advisers at the Camp David summit in July 2000. Although all three supported the Oslo peace process and favoured the creation of a Palestinian state, they did so only within the limits of what would be acceptable to Israel. The American delegation took its cues from Ehud Barak, co-ordinated its negotiating positions with Israel in advance, and did not offer independent proposals. Not surprisingly, Palestinian negotiators complained that they were ‘negotiating with two Israeli teams – one displaying an Israeli flag, and one an American flag’.

The situation is even more pronounced in the Bush administration, whose ranks have included such fervent advocates of the Israeli cause as Elliot Abrams, John Bolton, Douglas Feith, I. Lewis (‘Scooter’) Libby, Richard Perle, Paul Wolfowitz and David Wurmser. As we shall see, these officials have consistently pushed for policies favoured by Israel and backed by organisations in the Lobby.

The Lobby doesn't want an open debate, of course, because that might lead Americans to question the level of support they provide. Accordingly, pro-Israel organisations work hard to influence the institutions that do most to shape popular opinion.

The Lobby's perspective prevails in the mainstream media: the debate among Middle East pundits, the journalist Eric Alterman writes, is 'dominated by people who cannot imagine criticising Israel'. He lists 61 'columnists and commentators who can be counted on to support Israel reflexively and without qualification'. Conversely, he found just five pundits who consistently criticise Israeli actions or endorse Arab positions. Newspapers occasionally publish guest op-eds challenging Israeli policy, but the balance of opinion clearly favours the other side. It is hard to imagine any mainstream media outlet in the United States publishing a piece like this one.

'Shamir, Sharon, Bibi – whatever those guys want is pretty much fine by me,' Robert Bartley once remarked. Not surprisingly, his newspaper, the *Wall Street Journal*, along with other prominent papers like the *Chicago Sun-Times* and the *Washington Times*, regularly runs editorials that strongly support Israel. Magazines like *Commentary*, the *New Republic* and the *Weekly Standard* defend Israel at every turn.

Editorial bias is also found in papers like the *New York Times*, which occasionally criticises Israeli policies and sometimes concedes that the Palestinians have legitimate grievances, but is not even-handed. In his memoirs the paper's former executive editor Max Frankel acknowledges the impact his own attitude had on his editorial decisions: 'I was much more deeply devoted to Israel than I dared to assert . . . Fortified by my knowledge of Israel and my friendships there, I myself wrote most of our Middle East commentaries. As more Arab than Jewish readers recognised, I wrote them from a pro-Israel perspective.'

News reports are more even-handed, in part because reporters strive to be objective, but also because it is difficult to cover events in the Occupied Territories without acknowledging Israel's actions on the ground. To discourage unfavourable reporting, the Lobby organises letter-writing campaigns, demonstrations and boycotts of news outlets whose content it considers anti-Israel. One CNN executive has said that he sometimes gets 6000 email messages in a single day complaining about a story. In May 2003, the pro-Israel Committee for Accurate Middle East Reporting in America (CAMERA) organised demonstrations outside National Public Radio stations in 33 cities; it also tried to persuade contributors to withhold support from NPR until its Middle East coverage becomes more sympathetic to Israel. Boston's NPR station, WBUR, reportedly lost more than \$1 million in contributions as a result of these efforts. Further pressure on NPR has come from Israel's friends in Congress, who have asked for an internal audit of its Middle East coverage as well as more oversight.

The Israeli side also dominates the think tanks which play an important role in shaping public debate as well as actual policy. The Lobby created its own think tank in 1985, when Martin Indyk helped to found WINEP. Although WINEP plays down its links to Israel, claiming instead to provide a 'balanced

and realistic' perspective on Middle East issues, it is funded and run by individuals deeply committed to advancing Israel's agenda.

The Lobby's influence extends well beyond WINEP, however. Over the past 25 years, pro-Israel forces have established a commanding presence at the American Enterprise Institute, the Brookings Institution, the Center for Security Policy, the Foreign Policy Research Institute, the Heritage Foundation, the Hudson Institute, the Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis and the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs (JINSA). These think tanks employ few, if any, critics of US support for Israel.

Take the Brookings Institution. For many years, its senior expert on the Middle East was William Quandt, a former NSC official with a well-deserved reputation for even-handedness. Today, Brookings's coverage is conducted through the Saban Center for Middle East Studies, which is financed by Haim Saban, an Israeli-American businessman and ardent Zionist. The centre's director is the ubiquitous Martin Indyk. What was once a non-partisan policy institute is now part of the pro-Israel chorus.

Where the Lobby has had the most difficulty is in stifling debate on university campuses. In the 1990s, when the Oslo peace process was underway, there was only mild criticism of Israel, but it grew stronger with Oslo's collapse and Sharon's access to power, becoming quite vociferous when the IDF reoccupied the West Bank in spring 2002 and employed massive force to subdue the second intifada.

The Lobby moved immediately to 'take back the campuses'. New groups sprang up, like the Caravan for Democracy, which brought Israeli speakers to US colleges. Established groups like the Jewish Council for Public Affairs and Hillel joined in, and a new group, the Israel on Campus Coalition, was formed to co-ordinate the many bodies that now sought to put Israel's case. Finally, AIPAC more than tripled its spending on programmes to monitor university activities and to train young advocates, in order to 'vastly expand the number of students involved on campus . . . in the national pro-Israel effort'.

The Lobby also monitors what professors write and teach. In September 2002, Martin Kramer and Daniel Pipes, two passionately pro-Israel neo-conservatives, established a website (Campus Watch) that posted dossiers on suspect academics and encouraged students to report remarks or behaviour that might be considered hostile to Israel. This transparent attempt to blacklist and intimidate scholars provoked a harsh reaction and Pipes and Kramer later removed the dossiers, but the website still invites students to report 'anti-Israel' activity.

Groups within the Lobby put pressure on particular academics and universities. Columbia has been a frequent target, no doubt because of the presence of the late Edward Said on its faculty. 'One can be sure that any public statement in support of the Palestinian people by the pre-eminent literary critic Edward Said will elicit hundreds of emails, letters and journalistic accounts that call on us to denounce Said and to either sanction or fire him,' Jonathan Cole, its former provost, reported. When Columbia

recruited the historian Rashid Khalidi from Chicago, the same thing happened. It was a problem Princeton also faced a few years later when it considered wooing Khalidi away from Columbia.

A classic illustration of the effort to police academia occurred towards the end of 2004, when the David Project produced a film alleging that faculty members of Columbia's Middle East Studies programme were anti-semitic and were intimidating Jewish students who stood up for Israel. Columbia was hauled over the coals, but a faculty committee which was assigned to investigate the charges found no evidence of anti-semitism and the only incident possibly worth noting was that one professor had 'responded heatedly' to a student's question. The committee also discovered that the academics in question had themselves been the target of an overt campaign of intimidation.

Perhaps the most disturbing aspect of all this is the efforts Jewish groups have made to push Congress into establishing mechanisms to monitor what professors say. If they manage to get this passed, universities judged to have an anti-Israel bias would be denied federal funding. Their efforts have not yet succeeded, but they are an indication of the importance placed on controlling debate.

A number of Jewish philanthropists have recently established Israel Studies programmes (in addition to the roughly 130 Jewish Studies programmes already in existence) so as to increase the number of Israel-friendly scholars on campus. In May 2003, NYU announced the establishment of the Taub Center for Israel Studies; similar programmes have been set up at Berkeley, Brandeis and Emory. Academic administrators emphasise their pedagogical value, but the truth is that they are intended in large part to promote Israel's image. Fred Laffer, the head of the Taub Foundation, makes it clear that his foundation funded the NYU centre to help counter the 'Arabic [*sic*] point of view' that he thinks is prevalent in NYU's Middle East programmes.

No discussion of the Lobby would be complete without an examination of one of its most powerful weapons: the charge of anti-semitism. Anyone who criticises Israel's actions or argues that pro-Israel groups have significant influence over US Middle Eastern policy – an influence AIPAC celebrates – stands a good chance of being labelled an anti-semite. Indeed, anyone who merely claims that there *is* an Israel Lobby runs the risk of being charged with anti-semitism, even though the Israeli media refer to America's 'Jewish Lobby'. In other words, the Lobby first boasts of its influence and then attacks anyone who calls attention to it. It's a very effective tactic: anti-semitism is something no one wants to be accused of.

Europeans have been more willing than Americans to criticise Israeli policy, which some people attribute to a resurgence of anti-semitism in Europe. We are 'getting to a point', the US ambassador to the EU said in early 2004, 'where it is as bad as it was in the 1930s'. Measuring anti-semitism is a complicated matter, but the weight of evidence points in the opposite direction. In the spring of 2004, when accusations of European anti-semitism filled the air in America, separate surveys of European public opinion conducted by the US-based Anti-Defamation League and the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press found that it was in fact declining. In the 1930s, by contrast, anti-semitism was not only widespread among Europeans of all classes but considered quite acceptable.

The Lobby and its friends often portray France as the most anti-semitic country in Europe. But in 2003, the head of the French Jewish community said that 'France is not more anti-semitic than America.' According to a recent article in *Ha'aretz*, the French police have reported that anti-semitic incidents declined by almost 50 per cent in 2005; and this even though France has the largest Muslim population of any European country. Finally, when a French Jew was murdered in Paris last month by a Muslim gang, tens of thousands of demonstrators poured into the streets to condemn anti-semitism. Jacques Chirac and Dominique de Villepin both attended the victim's memorial service to show their solidarity.

No one would deny that there is anti-semitism among European Muslims, some of it provoked by Israel's conduct towards the Palestinians and some of it straightforwardly racist. But this is a separate matter with little bearing on whether or not Europe today is like Europe in the 1930s. Nor would anyone deny that there are still some virulent autochthonous anti-semites in Europe (as there are in the United States) but their numbers are small and their views are rejected by the vast majority of Europeans.

Israel's advocates, when pressed to go beyond mere assertion, claim that there is a 'new anti-semitism', which they equate with criticism of Israel. In other words, criticise Israeli policy and you are by definition an anti-semite. When the synod of the Church of England recently voted to divest from Caterpillar Inc on the grounds that it manufactures the bulldozers used by the Israelis to demolish Palestinian homes, the Chief Rabbi complained that this would 'have the most adverse repercussions on . . . Jewish-Christian relations in Britain', while Rabbi Tony Bayfield, the head of the Reform movement, said: 'There is a clear problem of anti-Zionist – verging on anti-semitic – attitudes emerging in the grass-roots, and even in the middle ranks of the Church.' But the Church was guilty merely of protesting against Israeli government policy.

Critics are also accused of holding Israel to an unfair standard or questioning its right to exist. But these are bogus charges too. Western critics of Israel hardly ever question its right to exist: they question its behaviour towards the Palestinians, as do Israelis themselves. Nor is Israel being judged unfairly. Israeli treatment of the Palestinians elicits criticism because it is contrary to widely accepted notions of human rights, to international law and to the principle of national self-determination. And it is hardly the only state that has faced sharp criticism on these grounds.

In the autumn of 2001, and especially in the spring of 2002, the Bush administration tried to reduce anti-American sentiment in the Arab world and undermine support for terrorist groups like al-Qaida by halting Israel's expansionist policies in the Occupied Territories and advocating the creation of a Palestinian state. Bush had very significant means of persuasion at his disposal. He could have threatened to reduce economic and diplomatic support for Israel, and the American people would almost certainly have supported him. A May 2003 poll reported that more than 60 per cent of Americans were willing to withhold aid if Israel resisted US pressure to settle the conflict, and that

number rose to 70 per cent among the ‘politically active’. Indeed, 73 per cent said that the United States should not favour either side.

Yet the administration failed to change Israeli policy, and Washington ended up backing it. Over time, the administration also adopted Israel’s own justifications of its position, so that US rhetoric began to mimic Israeli rhetoric. By February 2003, a *Washington Post* headline summarised the situation: ‘Bush and Sharon Nearly Identical on Mideast Policy.’ The main reason for this switch was the Lobby.

The story begins in late September 2001, when Bush began urging Sharon to show restraint in the Occupied Territories. He also pressed him to allow Israel’s foreign minister, Shimon Peres, to meet with Yasser Arafat, even though he (Bush) was highly critical of Arafat’s leadership. Bush even said publicly that he supported the creation of a Palestinian state. Alarmed, Sharon accused him of trying ‘to appease the Arabs at our expense’, warning that Israel ‘will not be Czechoslovakia’.

Bush was reportedly furious at being compared to Chamberlain, and the White House press secretary called Sharon’s remarks ‘unacceptable’. Sharon offered a pro forma apology, but quickly joined forces with the Lobby to persuade the administration and the American people that the United States and Israel faced a common threat from terrorism. Israeli officials and Lobby representatives insisted that there was no real difference between Arafat and Osama bin Laden: the United States and Israel, they said, should isolate the Palestinians’ elected leader and have nothing to do with him.

The Lobby also went to work in Congress. On 16 November, 89 senators sent Bush a letter praising him for refusing to meet with Arafat, but also demanding that the US not restrain Israel from retaliating against the Palestinians; the administration, they wrote, must state publicly that it stood behind Israel. According to the *New York Times*, the letter ‘stemmed’ from a meeting two weeks before between ‘leaders of the American Jewish community and key senators’, adding that AIPAC was ‘particularly active in providing advice on the letter’.

By late November, relations between Tel Aviv and Washington had improved considerably. This was thanks in part to the Lobby’s efforts, but also to America’s initial victory in Afghanistan, which reduced the perceived need for Arab support in dealing with al-Qaida. Sharon visited the White House in early December and had a friendly meeting with Bush.

In April 2002 trouble erupted again, after the IDF launched Operation Defensive Shield and resumed control of virtually all the major Palestinian areas on the West Bank. Bush knew that Israel’s actions would damage America’s image in the Islamic world and undermine the war on terrorism, so he demanded that Sharon ‘halt the incursions and begin withdrawal’. He underscored this message two days later, saying he wanted Israel to ‘withdraw without delay’. On 7 April, Condoleezza Rice, then Bush’s national security adviser, told reporters: “Without delay” means without delay. It means now.’ That same day Colin Powell set out for the Middle East to persuade all sides to stop fighting and start negotiating.

Israel and the Lobby swung into action. Pro-Israel officials in the vice-president's office and the Pentagon, as well as neo-conservative pundits like Robert Kagan and William Kristol, put the heat on Powell. They even accused him of having 'virtually obliterated the distinction between terrorists and those fighting terrorists'. Bush himself was being pressed by Jewish leaders and Christian evangelicals. Tom DeLay and Dick Armey were especially outspoken about the need to support Israel, and DeLay and the Senate minority leader, Trent Lott, visited the White House and warned Bush to back off.

The first sign that Bush was caving in came on 11 April – a week after he told Sharon to withdraw his forces – when the White House press secretary said that the president believed Sharon was 'a man of peace'. Bush repeated this statement publicly on Powell's return from his abortive mission, and told reporters that Sharon had responded satisfactorily to his call for a full and immediate withdrawal. Sharon had done no such thing, but Bush was no longer willing to make an issue of it.

Meanwhile, Congress was also moving to back Sharon. On 2 May, it overrode the administration's objections and passed two resolutions reaffirming support for Israel. (The Senate vote was 94 to 2; the House of Representatives version passed 352 to 21.) Both resolutions held that the United States 'stands in solidarity with Israel' and that the two countries were, to quote the House resolution, 'now engaged in a common struggle against terrorism'. The House version also condemned 'the ongoing support and co-ordination of terror by Yasser Arafat', who was portrayed as a central part of the terrorism problem. Both resolutions were drawn up with the help of the Lobby. A few days later, a bipartisan congressional delegation on a fact-finding mission to Israel stated that Sharon should resist US pressure to negotiate with Arafat. On 9 May, a House appropriations subcommittee met to consider giving Israel an extra \$200 million to fight terrorism. Powell opposed the package, but the Lobby backed it and Powell lost.

In short, Sharon and the Lobby took on the president of the United States and triumphed. Hemi Shalev, a journalist on the Israeli newspaper *Ma'ariv*, reported that Sharon's aides 'could not hide their satisfaction in view of Powell's failure. Sharon saw the whites of President Bush's eyes, they bragged, and the president blinked first.' But it was Israel's champions in the United States, not Sharon or Israel, that played the key role in defeating Bush.

The situation has changed little since then. The Bush administration refused ever again to have dealings with Arafat. After his death, it embraced the new Palestinian leader, Mahmoud Abbas, but has done little to help him. Sharon continued to develop his plan to impose a unilateral settlement on the Palestinians, based on 'disengagement' from Gaza coupled with continued expansion on the West Bank. By refusing to negotiate with Abbas and making it impossible for him to deliver tangible benefits to the Palestinian people, Sharon's strategy contributed directly to Hamas's electoral victory. With Hamas in power, however, Israel has another excuse not to negotiate. The US administration has supported Sharon's actions (and those of his successor, Ehud Olmert). Bush has even endorsed unilateral Israeli annexations in the Occupied Territories, reversing the stated policy of every president since Lyndon Johnson.

US officials have offered mild criticisms of a few Israeli actions, but have done little to help create a viable Palestinian state. Sharon has Bush 'wrapped around his little finger', the former national security adviser Brent Scowcroft said in October 2004. If Bush tries to distance the US from Israel, or even criticises Israeli actions in the Occupied Territories, he is certain to face the wrath of the Lobby and its supporters in Congress. Democratic presidential candidates understand that these are facts of life, which is the reason John Kerry went to great lengths to display unalloyed support for Israel in 2004, and why Hillary Clinton is doing the same thing today.

Maintaining US support for Israel's policies against the Palestinians is essential as far as the Lobby is concerned, but its ambitions do not stop there. It also wants America to help Israel remain the dominant regional power. The Israeli government and pro-Israel groups in the United States have worked together to shape the administration's policy towards Iraq, Syria and Iran, as well as its grand scheme for reordering the Middle East.

Pressure from Israel and the Lobby was not the only factor behind the decision to attack Iraq in March 2003, but it was critical. Some Americans believe that this was a war for oil, but there is hardly any direct evidence to support this claim. Instead, the war was motivated in good part by a desire to make Israel more secure. According to Philip Zelikow, a former member of the president's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, the executive director of the 9/11 Commission, and now a counsellor to Condoleezza Rice, the 'real threat' from Iraq was not a threat to the United States. The 'unstated threat' was the 'threat against Israel', Zelikow told an audience at the University of Virginia in September 2002. 'The American government,' he added, 'doesn't want to lean too hard on it rhetorically, because it is not a popular sell.'

On 16 August 2002, 11 days before Dick Cheney kicked off the campaign for war with a hardline speech to the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the *Washington Post* reported that 'Israel is urging US officials not to delay a military strike against Iraq's Saddam Hussein.' By this point, according to Sharon, strategic co-ordination between Israel and the US had reached 'unprecedented dimensions', and Israeli intelligence officials had given Washington a variety of alarming reports about Iraq's WMD programmes. As one retired Israeli general later put it, 'Israeli intelligence was a full partner to the picture presented by American and British intelligence regarding Iraq's non-conventional capabilities.'

Israeli leaders were deeply distressed when Bush decided to seek Security Council authorisation for war, and even more worried when Saddam agreed to let UN inspectors back in. 'The campaign against Saddam Hussein is a must,' Shimon Peres told reporters in September 2002. 'Inspections and inspectors are good for decent people, but dishonest people can overcome easily inspections and inspectors.'

At the same time, Ehud Barak wrote a *New York Times* op-ed warning that 'the greatest risk now lies in inaction.' His predecessor as prime minister, Binyamin Netanyahu, published a similar piece in the *Wall Street Journal*, entitled: 'The Case for Toppling Saddam'. 'Today nothing less than dismantling his regime will do,' he declared. 'I believe I speak for the overwhelming majority of Israelis in

supporting a pre-emptive strike against Saddam's regime.' Or as *Ha'aretz* reported in February 2003, 'the military and political leadership yearns for war in Iraq.'

As Netanyahu suggested, however, the desire for war was not confined to Israel's leaders. Apart from Kuwait, which Saddam invaded in 1990, Israel was the only country in the world where both politicians and public favoured war. As the journalist Gideon Levy observed at the time, 'Israel is the only country in the West whose leaders support the war unreservedly and where no alternative opinion is voiced.' In fact, Israelis were so gung-ho that their allies in America told them to damp down their rhetoric, or it would look as if the war would be fought on Israel's behalf.

Within the US, the main driving force behind the war was a small band of neo-conservatives, many with ties to Likud. But leaders of the Lobby's major organisations lent their voices to the campaign. 'As President Bush attempted to sell the . . . war in Iraq,' the *Forward* reported, 'America's most important Jewish organisations rallied as one to his defence. In statement after statement community leaders stressed the need to rid the world of Saddam Hussein and his weapons of mass destruction.' The editorial goes on to say that 'concern for Israel's safety rightfully factored into the deliberations of the main Jewish groups.'

Although neo-conservatives and other Lobby leaders were eager to invade Iraq, the broader American Jewish community was not. Just after the war started, Samuel Freedman reported that 'a compilation of nationwide opinion polls by the Pew Research Center shows that Jews are less supportive of the Iraq war than the population at large, 52 per cent to 62 per cent.' Clearly, it would be wrong to blame the war in Iraq on 'Jewish influence'. Rather, it was due in large part to the Lobby's influence, especially that of the neo-conservatives within it.

The neo-conservatives had been determined to topple Saddam even before Bush became president. They caused a stir early in 1998 by publishing two open letters to Clinton, calling for Saddam's removal from power. The signatories, many of whom had close ties to pro-Israel groups like JINSA or WINEP, and who included Elliot Abrams, John Bolton, Douglas Feith, William Kristol, Bernard Lewis, Donald Rumsfeld, Richard Perle and Paul Wolfowitz, had little trouble persuading the Clinton administration to adopt the general goal of ousting Saddam. But they were unable to sell a war to achieve that objective. They were no more able to generate enthusiasm for invading Iraq in the early months of the Bush administration. They needed help to achieve their aim. That help arrived with 9/11. Specifically, the events of that day led Bush and Cheney to reverse course and become strong proponents of a preventive war.

At a key meeting with Bush at Camp David on 15 September, Wolfowitz advocated attacking Iraq before Afghanistan, even though there was no evidence that Saddam was involved in the attacks on the US and bin Laden was known to be in Afghanistan. Bush rejected his advice and chose to go after Afghanistan instead, but war with Iraq was now regarded as a serious possibility and on 21 November the president charged military planners with developing concrete plans for an invasion.

Other neo-conservatives were meanwhile at work in the corridors of power. We don't have the full story yet, but scholars like Bernard Lewis of Princeton and Fouad Ajami of Johns Hopkins reportedly played important roles in persuading Cheney that war was the best option, though neo-conservatives on his staff – Eric Edelman, John Hannah and Scooter Libby, Cheney's chief of staff and one of the most powerful individuals in the administration – also played their part. By early 2002 Cheney had persuaded Bush; and with Bush and Cheney on board, war was inevitable.

Outside the administration, neo-conservative pundits lost no time in making the case that invading Iraq was essential to winning the war on terrorism. Their efforts were designed partly to keep up the pressure on Bush, and partly to overcome opposition to the war inside and outside the government. On 20 September, a group of prominent neo-conservatives and their allies published another open letter: 'Even if evidence does not link Iraq directly to the attack,' it read, 'any strategy aiming at the eradication of terrorism and its sponsors must include a determined effort to remove Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq.' The letter also reminded Bush that 'Israel has been and remains America's staunchest ally against international terrorism.' In the 1 October issue of the *Weekly Standard*, Robert Kagan and William Kristol called for regime change in Iraq as soon as the Taliban was defeated. That same day, Charles Krauthammer argued in the *Washington Post* that after the US was done with Afghanistan, Syria should be next, followed by Iran and Iraq: 'The war on terrorism will conclude in Baghdad,' when we finish off 'the most dangerous terrorist regime in the world'.

This was the beginning of an unrelenting public relations campaign to win support for an invasion of Iraq, a crucial part of which was the manipulation of intelligence in such a way as to make it seem as if Saddam posed an imminent threat. For example, Libby pressured CIA analysts to find evidence supporting the case for war and helped prepare Colin Powell's now discredited briefing to the UN Security Council. Within the Pentagon, the Policy Counterterrorism Evaluation Group was charged with finding links between al-Qaida and Iraq that the intelligence community had supposedly missed. Its two key members were David Wurmser, a hard-core neo-conservative, and Michael Maloof, a Lebanese-American with close ties to Perle. Another Pentagon group, the so-called Office of Special Plans, was given the task of uncovering evidence that could be used to sell the war. It was headed by Abram Shulsky, a neo-conservative with long-standing ties to Wolfowitz, and its ranks included recruits from pro-Israel think tanks. Both these organisations were created after 9/11 and reported directly to Douglas Feith.

Like virtually all the neo-conservatives, Feith is deeply committed to Israel; he also has long-term ties to Likud. He wrote articles in the 1990s supporting the settlements and arguing that Israel should retain the Occupied Territories. More important, along with Perle and Wurmser, he wrote the famous 'Clean Break' report in June 1996 for Netanyahu, who had just become prime minister. Among other things, it recommended that Netanyahu 'focus on removing Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq – an important Israeli strategic objective in its own right'. It also called for Israel to take steps to reorder the entire Middle East. Netanyahu did not follow their advice, but Feith, Perle and Wurmser were soon urging the Bush administration to pursue those same goals. The *Ha'aretz* columnist Akiva Eldar

warned that Feith and Perle 'are walking a fine line between their loyalty to American governments . . . and Israeli interests'.

Wolfowitz is equally committed to Israel. The *Forward* once described him as 'the most hawkishly pro-Israel voice in the administration', and selected him in 2002 as first among 50 notables who 'have consciously pursued Jewish activism'. At about the same time, JINSA gave Wolfowitz its Henry M. Jackson Distinguished Service Award for promoting a strong partnership between Israel and the United States; and the *Jerusalem Post*, describing him as 'devoutly pro-Israel', named him 'Man of the Year' in 2003.

Finally, a brief word is in order about the neo-conservatives' prewar support of Ahmed Chalabi, the unscrupulous Iraqi exile who headed the Iraqi National Congress. They backed Chalabi because he had established close ties with Jewish-American groups and had pledged to foster good relations with Israel once he gained power. This was precisely what pro-Israel proponents of regime change wanted to hear. Matthew Berger laid out the essence of the bargain in the *Jewish Journal*: 'The INC saw improved relations as a way to tap Jewish influence in Washington and Jerusalem and to drum up increased support for its cause. For their part, the Jewish groups saw an opportunity to pave the way for better relations between Israel and Iraq, if and when the INC is involved in replacing Saddam Hussein's regime.'

Given the neo-conservatives' devotion to Israel, their obsession with Iraq, and their influence in the Bush administration, it isn't surprising that many Americans suspected that the war was designed to further Israeli interests. Last March, Barry Jacobs of the American Jewish Committee acknowledged that the belief that Israel and the neo-conservatives had conspired to get the US into a war in Iraq was 'pervasive' in the intelligence community. Yet few people would say so publicly, and most of those who did – including Senator Ernest Hollings and Representative James Moran – were condemned for raising the issue. Michael Kinsley wrote in late 2002 that 'the lack of public discussion about the role of Israel . . . is the proverbial elephant in the room.' The reason for the reluctance to talk about it, he observed, was fear of being labelled an anti-semitic. There is little doubt that Israel and the Lobby were key factors in the decision to go to war. It's a decision the US would have been far less likely to take without their efforts. And the war itself was intended to be only the first step. A front-page headline in the *Wall Street Journal* shortly after the war began says it all: 'President's Dream: Changing Not Just Regime but a Region: A Pro-US, Democratic Area Is a Goal that Has Israeli and Neo-Conservative Roots.'

Pro-Israel forces have long been interested in getting the US military more directly involved in the Middle East. But they had limited success during the Cold War, because America acted as an 'off-shore balancer' in the region. Most forces designated for the Middle East, like the Rapid Deployment Force, were kept 'over the horizon' and out of harm's way. The idea was to play local powers off against each other – which is why the Reagan administration supported Saddam against revolutionary Iran during the Iran-Iraq War – in order to maintain a balance favourable to the US.

This policy changed after the first Gulf War, when the Clinton administration adopted a strategy of 'dual containment'. Substantial US forces would be stationed in the region in order to contain both Iran and Iraq, instead of one being used to check the other. The father of dual containment was none other than Martin Indyk, who first outlined the strategy in May 1993 at WINEP and then implemented it as director for Near East and South Asian Affairs at the National Security Council.

By the mid-1990s there was considerable dissatisfaction with dual containment, because it made the United States the mortal enemy of two countries that hated each other, and forced Washington to bear the burden of containing both. But it was a strategy the Lobby favoured and worked actively in Congress to preserve. Pressed by AIPAC and other pro-Israel forces, Clinton toughened up the policy in the spring of 1995 by imposing an economic embargo on Iran. But AIPAC and the others wanted more. The result was the 1996 Iran and Libya Sanctions Act, which imposed sanctions on any foreign companies investing more than \$40 million to develop petroleum resources in Iran or Libya. As Ze'ev Schiff, the military correspondent of *Ha'aretz*, noted at the time, 'Israel is but a tiny element in the big scheme, but one should not conclude that it cannot influence those within the Beltway.'

By the late 1990s, however, the neo-conservatives were arguing that dual containment was not enough and that regime change in Iraq was essential. By toppling Saddam and turning Iraq into a vibrant democracy, they argued, the US would trigger a far-reaching process of change throughout the Middle East. The same line of thinking was evident in the 'Clean Break' study the neo-conservatives wrote for Netanyahu. By 2002, when an invasion of Iraq was on the front-burner, regional transformation was an article of faith in neo-conservative circles.

Charles Krauthammer describes this grand scheme as the brainchild of Natan Sharansky, but Israelis across the political spectrum believed that toppling Saddam would alter the Middle East to Israel's advantage. Aluf Benn reported in *Ha'aretz* (17 February 2003):

Senior IDF officers and those close to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, such as National Security Adviser Ephraim Halevy, paint a rosy picture of the wonderful future Israel can expect after the war. They envision a domino effect, with the fall of Saddam Hussein followed by that of Israel's other enemies . . . Along with these leaders will disappear terror and weapons of mass destruction.

Once Baghdad fell in mid-April 2003, Sharon and his lieutenants began urging Washington to target Damascus. On 16 April, Sharon, interviewed in *Yedioth Ahronoth*, called for the United States to put 'very heavy' pressure on Syria, while Shaul Mofaz, his defence minister, interviewed in *Ma'ariv*, said: 'We have a long list of issues that we are thinking of demanding of the Syrians and it is appropriate that it should be done through the Americans.' Ephraim Halevy told a WINEP audience that it was now important for the US to get rough with Syria, and the *Washington Post* reported that Israel was 'fuelling the campaign' against Syria by feeding the US intelligence reports about the actions of Bashar Assad, the Syrian president.

Prominent members of the Lobby made the same arguments. Wolfowitz declared that ‘there has got to be regime change in Syria,’ and Richard Perle told a journalist that ‘a short message, a two-worded message’ could be delivered to other hostile regimes in the Middle East: ‘You’re next.’ In early April, WINEP released a bipartisan report stating that Syria ‘should not miss the message that countries that pursue Saddam’s reckless, irresponsible and defiant behaviour could end up sharing his fate’. On 15 April, Yossi Klein Halevi wrote a piece in the *Los Angeles Times* entitled ‘Next, Turn the Screws on Syria’, while the following day Zev Chafets wrote an article for the *New York Daily News* entitled ‘Terror-Friendly Syria Needs a Change, Too’. Not to be outdone, Lawrence Kaplan wrote in the *New Republic* on 21 April that Assad was a serious threat to America.

Back on Capitol Hill, Congressman Eliot Engel had reintroduced the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act. It threatened sanctions against Syria if it did not withdraw from Lebanon, give up its WMD and stop supporting terrorism, and it also called for Syria and Lebanon to take concrete steps to make peace with Israel. This legislation was strongly endorsed by the Lobby – by AIPAC especially – and ‘framed’, according to the *Jewish Telegraph Agency*, ‘by some of Israel’s best friends in Congress’. The Bush administration had little enthusiasm for it, but the anti-Syrian act passed overwhelmingly (398 to 4 in the House; 89 to 4 in the Senate), and Bush signed it into law on 12 December 2003.

The administration itself was still divided about the wisdom of targeting Syria. Although the neo-conservatives were eager to pick a fight with Damascus, the CIA and the State Department were opposed to the idea. And even after Bush signed the new law, he emphasised that he would go slowly in implementing it. His ambivalence is understandable. First, the Syrian government had not only been providing important intelligence about al-Qaida since 9/11: it had also warned Washington about a planned terrorist attack in the Gulf and given CIA interrogators access to Mohammed Zammar, the alleged recruiter of some of the 9/11 hijackers. Targeting the Assad regime would jeopardise these valuable connections, and thereby undermine the larger war on terrorism.

Second, Syria had not been on bad terms with Washington before the Iraq war (it had even voted for UN Resolution 1441), and was itself no threat to the United States. Playing hardball with it would make the US look like a bully with an insatiable appetite for beating up Arab states. Third, putting Syria on the hit list would give Damascus a powerful incentive to cause trouble in Iraq. Even if one wanted to bring pressure to bear, it made good sense to finish the job in Iraq first. Yet Congress insisted on putting the screws on Damascus, largely in response to pressure from Israeli officials and groups like AIPAC. If there were no Lobby, there would have been no Syria Accountability Act, and US policy towards Damascus would have been more in line with the national interest.

Israelis tend to describe every threat in the starkest terms, but Iran is widely seen as their most dangerous enemy because it is the most likely to acquire nuclear weapons. Virtually all Israelis regard an Islamic country in the Middle East with nuclear weapons as a threat to their existence. ‘Iraq is a

problem . . . But you should understand, if you ask me, today Iran is more dangerous than Iraq,' the defence minister, Binyamin Ben-Eliezer, remarked a month before the Iraq war.

Sharon began pushing the US to confront Iran in November 2002, in an interview in the *Times*. Describing Iran as the 'centre of world terror', and bent on acquiring nuclear weapons, he declared that the Bush administration should put the strong arm on Iran 'the day after' it conquered Iraq. In late April 2003, *Ha'aretz* reported that the Israeli ambassador in Washington was calling for regime change in Iran. The overthrow of Saddam, he noted, was 'not enough'. In his words, America 'has to follow through. We still have great threats of that magnitude coming from Syria, coming from Iran.'

The neo-conservatives, too, lost no time in making the case for regime change in Tehran. On 6 May, the AEI co-sponsored an all-day conference on Iran with the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies and the Hudson Institute, both champions of Israel. The speakers were all strongly pro-Israel, and many called for the US to replace the Iranian regime with a democracy. As usual, a bevy of articles by prominent neo-conservatives made the case for going after Iran. 'The liberation of Iraq was the first great battle for the future of the Middle East . . . But the next great battle – not, we hope, a military battle – will be for Iran,' William Kristol wrote in the *Weekly Standard* on 12 May.

The administration has responded to the Lobby's pressure by working overtime to shut down Iran's nuclear programme. But Washington has had little success, and Iran seems determined to create a nuclear arsenal. As a result, the Lobby has intensified its pressure. Op-eds and other articles now warn of imminent dangers from a nuclear Iran, caution against any appeasement of a 'terrorist' regime, and hint darkly of preventive action should diplomacy fail. The Lobby is pushing Congress to approve the Iran Freedom Support Act, which would expand existing sanctions. Israeli officials also warn they may take pre-emptive action should Iran continue down the nuclear road, threats partly intended to keep Washington's attention on the issue.

One might argue that Israel and the Lobby have not had much influence on policy towards Iran, because the US has its own reasons for keeping Iran from going nuclear. There is some truth in this, but Iran's nuclear ambitions do not pose a direct threat to the US. If Washington could live with a nuclear Soviet Union, a nuclear China or even a nuclear North Korea, it can live with a nuclear Iran. And that is why the Lobby must keep up constant pressure on politicians to confront Tehran. Iran and the US would hardly be allies if the Lobby did not exist, but US policy would be more temperate and preventive war would not be a serious option.

It is not surprising that Israel and its American supporters want the US to deal with any and all threats to Israel's security. If their efforts to shape US policy succeed, Israel's enemies will be weakened or overthrown, Israel will get a free hand with the Palestinians, and the US will do most of the fighting, dying, rebuilding and paying. But even if the US fails to transform the Middle East and finds itself in conflict with an increasingly radicalised Arab and Islamic world, Israel will end up protected by the world's only superpower. This is not a perfect outcome from the Lobby's point of view, but it is

obviously preferable to Washington distancing itself, or using its leverage to force Israel to make peace with the Palestinians.

Can the Lobby's power be curtailed? One would like to think so, given the Iraq debacle, the obvious need to rebuild America's image in the Arab and Islamic world, and the recent revelations about AIPAC officials passing US government secrets to Israel. One might also think that Arafat's death and the election of the more moderate Mahmoud Abbas would cause Washington to press vigorously and even-handedly for a peace agreement. In short, there are ample grounds for leaders to distance themselves from the Lobby and adopt a Middle East policy more consistent with broader US interests. In particular, using American power to achieve a just peace between Israel and the Palestinians would help advance the cause of democracy in the region.

But that is not going to happen – not soon anyway. AIPAC and its allies (including Christian Zionists) have no serious opponents in the lobbying world. They know it has become more difficult to make Israel's case today, and they are responding by taking on staff and expanding their activities. Besides, American politicians remain acutely sensitive to campaign contributions and other forms of political pressure, and major media outlets are likely to remain sympathetic to Israel no matter what it does.

The Lobby's influence causes trouble on several fronts. It increases the terrorist danger that all states face – including America's European allies. It has made it impossible to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a situation that gives extremists a powerful recruiting tool, increases the pool of potential terrorists and sympathisers, and contributes to Islamic radicalism in Europe and Asia.

Equally worrying, the Lobby's campaign for regime change in Iran and Syria could lead the US to attack those countries, with potentially disastrous effects. We don't need another Iraq. At a minimum, the Lobby's hostility towards Syria and Iran makes it almost impossible for Washington to enlist them in the struggle against al-Qaida and the Iraqi insurgency, where their help is badly needed.

There is a moral dimension here as well. Thanks to the Lobby, the United States has become the de facto enabler of Israeli expansion in the Occupied Territories, making it complicit in the crimes perpetrated against the Palestinians. This situation undercuts Washington's efforts to promote democracy abroad and makes it look hypocritical when it presses other states to respect human rights. US efforts to limit nuclear proliferation appear equally hypocritical given its willingness to accept Israel's nuclear arsenal, which only encourages Iran and others to seek a similar capability.

Besides, the Lobby's campaign to quash debate about Israel is unhealthy for democracy. Silencing sceptics by organising blacklists and boycotts – or by suggesting that critics are anti-semites – violates the principle of open debate on which democracy depends. The inability of Congress to conduct a genuine debate on these important issues paralyses the entire process of democratic deliberation. Israel's backers should be free to make their case and to challenge those who disagree with them, but efforts to stifle debate by intimidation must be roundly condemned.

Finally, the Lobby's influence has been bad for Israel. Its ability to persuade Washington to support an expansionist agenda has discouraged Israel from seizing opportunities – including a peace treaty with Syria and a prompt and full implementation of the Oslo Accords – that would have saved Israeli lives and shrunk the ranks of Palestinian extremists. Denying the Palestinians their legitimate political rights certainly has not made Israel more secure, and the long campaign to kill or marginalise a generation of Palestinian leaders has empowered extremist groups like Hamas, and reduced the number of Palestinian leaders who would be willing to accept a fair settlement and able to make it work. Israel itself would probably be better off if the Lobby were less powerful and US policy more even-handed.

There is a ray of hope, however. Although the Lobby remains a powerful force, the adverse effects of its influence are increasingly difficult to hide. Powerful states can maintain flawed policies for quite some time, but reality cannot be ignored for ever. What is needed is a candid discussion of the Lobby's influence and a more open debate about US interests in this vital region. Israel's well-being is one of those interests, but its continued occupation of the West Bank and its broader regional agenda are not. Open debate will expose the limits of the strategic and moral case for one-sided US support and could move the US to a position more consistent with its own national interest, with the interests of the other states in the region, and with Israel's long-term interests as well.

10 March

Note

An unedited version of this article is available at

<http://ksgnotes1.harvard.edu/Research/wpaper.nsf/rwp/RWPO6-011>, or at
<http://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=891198>.

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<http://www.lrb.co.uk/v28/no6/mearo1.html>

America's S.O.S to the IDF

By Amir Oren

At the end of last month, Brigadier General Joseph Votel, a boyish-looking, tall and smiling American, made an urgent request to an old friend of his from Washington – also a brigadier general, but in the Golani Brigade rather than the Rangers – Nitzan Nuriel, the chief of the foreign liaison department of the General Staff of the Israel Defense Forces. So urgent was the message that the Pentagon didn't even update their military attache in Tel Aviv. Votel implored Nuriel to send him a top-secret item the IDF has developed that could be useful in combating the improvised explosive devices (IED) used against U.S. forces in Iraq.

Nuriel called the chief of the Engineering Corps, Brigadier General Shimon Daniel, who was the Northern Command chief engineering officer during the war against Hezbollah IEDs before the IDF withdrawal from Lebanon and who has been holding professional contacts with Votel and his aides for the past year and a half. Daniel convened the Israeli experts, Nuriel set off on the obstacle course of coordination and authorization - and within a record time of five days, the items in question and their manuals were on a plane headed overseas.

It may sound exaggerated, unfounded, or at least pretentious, but at the end of 2005, the salvation of U.S. President George W. Bush is in large measure dependent on the military intelligence of Israel: the ability of the IDF, the Defense Ministry and the defense industries to help the Americans thwart the IED attacks in Iraq is becoming the tipping point on which the Bush administration is tottering. This conclusion is the final link in a logical chain, which is known to the decision-makers and those in uniform but has been hidden from others.

Bush's most severe entanglement is in Iraq; the quagmire has resulted in the deaths of more than 2,000 U.S. troops since the start of the war, though a quarter of them died in accidents, from sickness or suicides. The most lethal factor are the IEDs planted along roadways or in booby-trapped vehicles. By the Americans' admission, the most effective aid in their efforts to defeat the IEDs comes from Israel. The ministering angels who are working to extricate Bush from his distress are, thus, Daniel, Nuriel and Rafael. The last-named is not a person but a corporation: the Armament Development Authority. A bit of Rafael's activity to protect U.S. soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan was revealed last summer in the form of a report that the U.S. Army was acquiring anti-explosives protection kits manufactured jointly by Rafael and the U.S. firm General Dynamics. Other activity is classified.

Votel is one of the officers whom the U.S. Army is proud to present to the public in interviews and in Congressional hearings. In his previous rank, as a colonel, Votel was commanding officer of the elite

unit of the American ground forces, the 75th Rangers Brigade – in IDF terms: the Paratroop commandos (sayeret), but 10 times the size. Votel's Rangers landed in Afghanistan in 2001 and captured an airport, known as Camp Rhino, which then became the landing base for the forces that took Kandahar and Kabul. Afterward Votel led the Rangers in the Iraq war, until he was assigned to head a task force to combat the IEDs. As a former Ranger, Votel initially contacted Brigadier General Yossi Hyman, the IDF's chief infantry and Paratroops officer. At Hyman's initiative, the Engineering Corps and Army Headquarters were placed in charge of handling Votel's team.

Votel received an annual budget of \$1.2 billion and a promotion to the rank of general. His staff, which at first consisted of units from the army only, was expanded to include representatives of the marines, the special forces, the air force and the navy. The most senior levels, all the way up to deputy secretary of defense – at the time Paul Wolfowitz and now Gordon England – listened attentively, in gross contrast to the contempt being shown by the office of Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz to the warnings of Colonel (res.) Yossi Langotsky concerning the tunnels being dug by the Palestinians (and perhaps by Hezbollah as well).

The mobilization to fight against the IEDs reflected the gravity of the problem but did not solve it. True, fewer IEDs are striking their targets, but the results remain brutal and intolerable: three of every five people killed in Iraq in the past few months were killed by IEDs, planted either on the ground or in booby-trapped vehicles. The enemies of the Americans prepare the devices so that the explosion launches burning-hot armor-penetrating lead projectiles, and even if the soldiers' personal protection, ceramic vests and their like that block Kalashnikov bullets and fragments, saves their upper body, their limbs and other organs are in danger of being mortally wounded.

In the spring of 2004 every exploded device in Iraq caused casualties. This year only one in four explosions have caused casualties, but the absolute numbers of the losses is constantly accumulating. The British commander of the Basra and southern Iraq zone, Major General James Dutton, has had 18 of his troops killed by IEDs in the last three months.

A concealed mistress

It is dangerous to move about in Iraq in an American or British uniform, and frightening to serve there in a bomb disposal unit. Last month, National Defense, the monthly magazine of the U.S. National Defense Industrial Association, which has been persistent in covering the developments in combating IEDs, reported that the U.S. Navy's bomb disposal unit, which was called in to reinforce the army forces and the marines, is not succeeding in manning one-sixth of its available positions. Members of bomb disposal units get extra pay for danger, parachuting and diving, totaling \$625 a month. To tempt them to remain in career service, if they have accumulated at least six years of experience, the navy

offers them a grant of \$45,000 upon signing the contract.

In one of its recent visits to Israel, a delegation from Votel's task force spent three days touring IDF units, guided by the chief engineering officer of Northern Command and with the emphasis on the Engineering Corps' Yahalom unit, a special-operations force. The U.S. Army maintains frequent and regular contacts with the IDF.

The IDF takes pride in this. The U.S. Army is ashamed, citing outdated and transparent pretexts – what will the Arabs say? – which are unable to conceal professional embarrassment. This is not a matter of joint operational planning or intelligence secrets; it is a matter of saving lives – American lives – an issue that is the epicenter of the concern of politicians in Washington. However, instead of congratulating themselves about know-how that was acquired with the blood of the IDF soldiers who were killed in Lebanon and the territories and which is the property of the entire Israeli public, Israeli politicians – the latest of them was Mofaz in his visit to Washington a week ago – are willing to forgo the status of common-law wife and make do with the appearance of a concealed mistress.

Officially, Centcom (U.S. Central Command) is barred from talking directly to Israel – it is supposed to do so only through Eucom (European Command?) or Washington. The prohibition is usually maintained, but life-and-death issues override it. Centcom despaired of the bureaucracy, while soldiers are being killed every day, and three officers who are serving in Iraq came to Israel to learn from the IDF how to combat IEDs. There are also Israeli combatants in Iraq who were released from the IDF to enlist in the U.S. Army. These are not two-footed warriors but members of Oketz, the IDF's canine unit, whose American trainers came to the unit's base to learn how to work with the dogs.

A problem of stars

In the best tradition of official Washington doublespeak, even as Israel was requested to say nothing, the Pentagon decided to mention the Israeli angle, to prove that no stone is being left unturned in the effort to defeat the IEDs. A week ago the Los Angeles Times reported that the lone star worn by Votel is making it difficult for him to move along the corridors of the Pentagon. A more senior officer is needed, a three-star general. This is a peculiar idea: another two pieces of serrated tin on a general's shoulder and the explosive devices will be gone. The navy respects expertise and experience, the army respects ranks, the commander of the navy's bomb disposal unit was quoted as saying in National Defense. Maybe it will be Lieutenant General Russel Honore, who gained glory in commanding his troops in post-Katrina New Orleans. Honore, who commands the reserve units and National Guard forces being sent to Iraq and Afghanistan, was outraged that the soldiers' training does not include sufficient preparation to deal with the IEDs.

In a self-defensive press briefing at the Pentagon, Lieutenant General James Conway, the director of operations on the Joint Chiefs of Staff, stated that supreme priority has been assigned to combat the IEDs. "The only remaining effective tool Iraqi insurgency has against coalition forces is the improvised bomb," Conway said, and once U.S. and coalition forces find a way to eliminate IEDs, "it's over." The "it" in question is the campaign in Iraq, but before that happens, Conway confirmed it has been proposed to appoint a three-star general above Votel - like Conway's rank - to oversee IED work.

To prove the Americans are learning from the best and most experienced sources, Conway noted that the British had encountered the problem of explosive devices in Northern Ireland and the Israelis have coped with suicide bombers in Israel and Lebanon. "We've tried to study what their experiences were and learn from that." Dutton, the British general, added another piece of information which explains why it is vital to draw on the knowledge the IDF gleaned coping with Hezbollah devices: the materials and the technology used in making IEDs are entering Iraq from the same source - Iran.

Votel and his colleagues reviewed in public a range of systems and stratagems in use by the enemies of the Americans in Iraq and Afghanistan: detonation by wireless, by tripwire, by remote control of cars and by dog and sheep carcasses. Thousands of disruptive systems have been supplied to the forces, but according to reports these also disrupt the U.S. forces' communication network, so the soldiers tend to shut them off. Another difficulty the U.S. has is collecting accurate data about the attacks perpetrated by the IEDs, such as the time of the detonation, the location of the device and the situation of the force that was attacked. An analysis of this data in southern Lebanon helped the IDF improve its combat tactics against Hezbollah.

The key to booby-trapped cars

The key to the booby-trapped cars, an Israeli officer told his American colleagues, lies in mapping the fleet of vehicles in Iraq and marking them in a way that makes it possible to spot them from a safe distance and to identify suspicious vehicles which were not present along the route earlier. The weak point of the Americans is the movement on the roads, for patrols or in convoys. The U.S. Army also understood it is essential to train all logistics personnel and drivers as riflemen who are liable to encounter an attack aimed at killing or kidnapping them, and just to be on the safe side, a simulator for practicing responses in convoys was upgraded.

A soldier who is not present is not hurt, and the original sin of the U.S. Army in Iraq, in its mission to protect the emerging regime in Baghdad, is its failure to develop "control without presence" - a swift action, sparing in manpower and focused, that achieves results without banking on large-scale presence that eventually becomes bankruptcy. The IDF learned how to do this, on an impressive albeit

not absolute scale, in its activity against Palestinian terrorism in the West Bank. This is a decentralized combat doctrine, on which the copyright belongs, in part, to the former commander of the Israel Navy, Rear Admiral (res.) Yedidya Yaari, now the president of Rafael.

In the area of combating explosive devices, and in other areas as well, the IDF and sophisticated defense corporations in Israeli industry are so far ahead of their American counterparts that self-admiration needs to be cooled with a doze of modesty; it is not that the Israeli ability is small but that the American needs are large. "The new brigade that is equipped with the Striker combat vehicle is responsible for an area of 38,000 square kilometers in Iraq, almost twice the size of Israel," a realistic IDF officer said this week, "and without diminishing the importance of the lessons we learned and taught others from convoys of eight kilometers to the Beaufort and to the Dlaat outpost [in Lebanon], their convoys have to cover 80 and sometimes 180 kilometers. So we, with all respect, are a drop in the ocean."

<http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/644348.html>

Last update - 15:41 12/11/2005

Israel Ex-commandos Training Kurds in North Iraq: Report

CAIRO, December 1, 2005 (IslamOnline.net) - Dozens of former Israeli commandos have been training Kurdish security forces in northern Iraq, supplying them with equipment worth millions of dollars, *Yedioth Aharonot* newspaper reported Thursday, December 1.

Over the past 18 months, these ex-commandos, who were sent to Iraq by several Israeli corporations, have been training special security units as part of a program organized by the Kurdish authorities, said Israel's top-selling daily.

Operating from a secret desert stronghold dubbed Code Z, the ex-Israeli soldiers, all with elite-unit experience, have been training the Kurds in weapons, self-defense and anti-terror techniques.

The newspaper showed photographs of men it said were Israelis, their faces concealed, training Kurds in the use of weapons at an unknown location and preparing vehicles at an airport.



Operating from a secret desert stronghold, the Israeli soldiers have been training the Kurds in weapons, self-defense and anti-terror techniques.

The New Yorker veteran investigative reporter Seymour Hersh said [Israeli intelligence and military operatives](#) were quietly at work in northern Iraq, providing training for Kurdish commando units and running covert operations inside Kurdish areas of Iran and Syria.

Israeli Arms

According to the Israeli daily, Motorola Israel and Magalcom Communications and Computers won contracts with the Kurdish government to the tune of hundreds of millions of US dollars.

As part of the program, the firms have supplied the Kurds with tones of Israeli-manufactured equipment, including dozens of motorcycles and all-terrain vehicles, sniffer dogs, devices for upgrading Kalashnikov rifles, flack jackets, uniforms and helmets.

They have also been involved in the secret construction of a major airport near the northern town of Arbil, known as "Hawler International".

The Israelis entered Iraq through its northern border with Turkey posing as construction engineers and agricultural experts, the paper said.

Yedioth Aharonot added that a company owned by Israeli entrepreneur Shlomi Michaels is in full business partnership with the Kurdish government, providing strategic consultation on economic and security issues.

The company was initially established by former Mossad chief Danny Yatom and Michaels, yet Yatom sold his shares upon his election to the Knesset.

A shroud of secrecy has been imposed on the project for fear the Israelis could be targeted by Iraqi resistance groups.

The Kurds, who make up 15-20 percent of Iraq's population and live mostly along the borders with Iran and Turkey, have enjoyed broad autonomy since the 1991 Gulf War.

Despite assurances from both sides, Turkey has repeatedly raised concerned about the reported presence of Israeli operatives in northern Iraq and their cooperation with the country's Kurdish community.

<http://www.islamonline.net/English/News/2005-12/01/article05.shtml>

National Guard begins exchange with Israeli forces

By Master Sgt. Bob Haskell



Lt. Gen. H Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau, met Israeli Soldiers who were training in urban warfare techniques while visiting the Israeli Defense Force's National Center for Ground Training in the Negev Desert during the week before Thanksgiving.

Master Sgt. Bob Haskell

TEL AVIV, Israel (Army News Service, Nov. 29, 2005) – National Guard leaders visited Israel last week to forge a new relationship with that country's Home Front Command – to help keep both countries safe.

Lt. Gen. H Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau, led a 25-member delegation to Israel that included two state adjutants general.

The six-day visit ended Nov. 22 when Blum and Maj. Gen. Yitzshak (Jerry) Gershon, Israel's Home Front commander, signed two letters proposing to exchange ideas, to train in each other's country and to expand their expertise about responding to natural disasters and terrorist attacks.

Gershon: National Guard viewed as family

"We see the American people, and particularly the National Guard, as our family," said Gershon who leads the branch of the Israeli Defense Force that has been committed to homeland defense since 39 Iraqi SCUD missiles hit Israel during the 1991 Gulf War. The Home Front Command is Israel's equivalent to the National Guard. Both are comprised of reserve troops.

"Let's do business to protect our Soldiers, to protect our people and to strengthen our relationship," added Gershon. "I would ... propose that we pursue expanded training opportunities for National Guard personnel visiting Israel and for Home Front Command personnel visiting the United States," he stated in his letter to Blum.

It is the Ministry of Defense's policy to be completely open with the Americans, he said. Deputy Minister of Defense Saul Horev signaled his support by attending a meeting with the Israelis and Americans at the Home Front Command's headquarters on Nov. 20.

The National Guard would participate in the program under the auspices of the U.S. European Command, Blum explained.

"I think this is a natural marriage. This is appropriate," he said. "We are two nations in a world that is a very, very dangerous place. We are two democracies with a common purpose and common values. There are some things that we can offer to you back in the states, and there are some magnificent opportunities for us over here."

Safeguarding from terrorists is paramount

Keeping their people safe from terrorist attacks is paramount among the civilian and military leaders of both countries. The United States has waged its Global War Against Terrorism for four years, following the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. Israel has been conducting that grim business in the name of self defense for 57 years, since it was declared an independent nation in 1948.

Indeed, members of the Israeli Defense Force fought off a raid by Hezbollah guerillas against Israeli outposts along the northern border with Lebanon on Nov. 21, the night before Blum and Gershon signed their proposals for mutual cooperation on the Tuesday morning before Thanksgiving in Tel Aviv.

Terrorist attacks against the Israeli people have increased in recent years as outright warfare against neighboring Arab countries has declined, Gershon pointed out. That, he indicated, is why it is important for American and Israeli military people to put their heads together.

Israel, National Guard building relationship

Israel is the second Middle East country with which the National Guard is building a relationship. The Colorado National Guard and the Kingdom of Jordan, Israel's eastern neighbor, established a State Partnership alliance in April 2004 to exchange military, civil and cultural ideas.

In Israel, the National Guard put its best foot forward when Lt. Col. Patrick Tennis, the Guard Bureau's deputy director of Domestic Operations, explained how the National Guard responded to Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma which devastated the Gulf Coast in August and September.

Tennis also explained how the Guard's civil support teams and its chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, high-yield explosive enhanced response force packages (CERFPs) are trained and ready to

support civilian authorities in the event of natural disasters and terrorist attacks.

The visit was an outgrowth of two previous meetings between Blum and Israel's Home Front leaders. Blum visited Israel for a couple of days in September 2004. Gershon, who has had the Home Front command for 10 months, visited Blum in Washington last July.

The generals have discussed ways to explore such matters as emergency response to mass terror events and natural disasters, consequence management, and urban search and rescue.

The Guard delegation in November included the adjutants general from Oregon, Maj. Gen. Raymond Rees, and from Washington, Maj. Gen. Tim Lowenberg, and Brig. Gen. Steve Saunders, director of Doctrine, Training and Force Development for the Guard Bureau. The group also included representatives from nine of the Guard's regional CERFPs.

They visited some of the world's most holy shrines in Old Jerusalem and they viewed some of Israel's most modern military facilities to learn about that country's culture.

The Israelis explained their sophisticated system for detecting and responding to an attack or incident anywhere in the country and how an extensive network of sensors makes it possible for people at the national command center and for troops on the ground to share the same information.

The Americans were also escorted to the headquarters for Israel's 200-member National Search and Rescue Unit, whose reserve personnel are sent on missions around the world, and to the National Search and Rescue and Civil Defense School where the young Soldiers are trained.

Military service mandatory for all Israelis

Military service is mandatory for all Israeli men and women when they turn 18, it was explained. Men serve for three years; women for two.

The Americans saw some of those troops sharpening their urban warfare skills at the Israeli Army's vast National Center for Ground Training, located west of the Gaza Strip and north of Egypt in the Negev Desert.

Yes, the National Guard leaders maintained that they lead solid Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen. Lt. Col. Bruce Holloman, commander of the CERFP in Colorado, told of how the 950 members of Task Force St. Bernard, which he commanded for three weeks after Katrina, were determined and proud to help their fellow Americans in Louisiana.

But the Guard leaders also acknowledged that they can learn some valuable lessons from the Israelis.

Capt. Michael Day, commander of a CERFP in California, said after watching two demonstrations at the search and rescue school: "They are a globally deployable force on the things that we want to be able to do in our own states and in neighboring states. I'd like to come back. I'd love to bring my search and rescue folks here."

The American general Blum and the Israeli general Gershon are making every effort to make that possible.

(Editor's note: Master Sgt. Bob Haskell writes for the National Guard Bureau.)

http://www4.army.mil/ocpa/read.php?story_id_key=8265

U.S. Army Awards Israeli Company \$300 Million Contract

18:44 Aug 24, '05 / 19 Av 5765

(IsraelNN.com) The United States Army has awarded Israel Military Industries a \$300 million contract for arms, the largest-ever munitions contract Israel has received from the U.S. The company is to supply light arms over the next five years, Israel Military Industry vice president Eli Gold said that the contract places Israel "among the world's top-tier munitions makers." The company won the tender as part of a consortium headed by General Dynamics.

http://www.nogw.com/download/2005_army_award_il.pdf

Israel's Battle in Fallujah

Rashid Khashana Al-Hayat 2004/11/22

It has become clear that Israel played a major role in the battle for Fallujah, despite the American concern to conceal this fact. What news leaked of officers, soldiers, and even rabbis of dual citizenships that took part in the battles, some of which were killed by the resistance's bullets, is only the tip of the iceberg. The killing of an Israeli officer in Fallujah exposed the existence of a large number officers, snipers, and paratroopers in Iraq. Based on Israeli press statistics, Israel currently has no fewer than 1,000 officers and soldiers scattered around the American units working in Iraq. In addition, 37 rabbis are operating within the American troops, which leads to believe that the real number is greater; since *Ha'aretz* admitted that others are concealing their Jewish identities, which makes them self-driven

Israeli citizens. Currently, there is a recruitment campaign coinciding with the escalation of the operations in Iraq, which seeks to send further assistance there. Amongst these campaigns is the incitement of Rabbi Irving Elson in his latest speech given in New York to allocate further "Fighting Rabbis" and encourage them to enlist in the American forces, in addition to another rabbi's advisory stating that those killed in Fallujah are "martyrs."

America needs the Israelis' experience in gang wars in order to manage the battles in the Iraqi cities; given that two generations of its armed forces lack this experience since the end of the Vietnam War. However, the Israeli role is neither technical nor complementary to the American plan. Rather, it is part of the vision established by its military and political leadership prior to the launching of the war, which aims at annulling any regional role for Iraq and eliminating any threat it might cause to its future. The Israeli plan became clear due to various headlines, most prominent of which is dispatching Mossad operatives to establish offices and networks in the north, south, eliminate the Iraqi scientists and intensify the real estate purchase of property and land in the north; specifically in Arbil, Kirkuk and Mosul. This comes as a completion of the previous project, launched ten years prior to the fall of Baghdad, through Jewish Turks.

Israel encourages the Kurdish leaderships to decentralize from Baghdad in administering their regions but at the same time, it aims at having the Kurdish parties play a pivotal role in the post-war Iraq due to the historical relations that it had established with the Kurds. More likely, Israel has advanced in developing the plan announced previously by the minister of infrastructure Joseph Paritzky that aims at laying oil pipelines from Iraq to Israel passing through Jordan; since a Turkish security report recently published by *Jumhuriyet* confirmed Israel's attempts to activate the line towards Haifa as soon as possible. Based on this vision, the Israelis believe that the American forces are incapable of imposing security and stability in Iraq. This obliged the Israelis to develop their own channels with the local powers beginning at the fulcrum point in the north and advancing in the implementation plan, which they had prepared prior to the fall of the former regime. However, they are now avoiding a confrontation with Turkey, which is worried from their expansion in the north.

In this course, Israel incites the Iraqi Jews to the forefront in order to head the bridge of organizing the relations with the new government and specifically intensify the trade initiatives with Iraq through Jordan. It also wants it to have a word in Iraq's destiny through the indirect influence at the Sharm El-Sheikh summit, which infuriated both Syria and Turkey. The vast and unexpected expansion of the Israeli role in various fields in Iraq, confirms that Israel is the major beneficiary in the continuity of the war, same as it is the first beneficiary from the American escalation with Iran regarding its nuclear file. Iraq is not Russia, and Iran is not China, hence they cause no threat to the U.S., nevertheless, they both represent a threat to the Hebrew state. In conclusion, it is possible to say that the Likudniks, who control decision-making posts in America, are using Bush's campaign against terrorism as a cover-up

to accomplish Israel's objectives in Iraq. Hence, the purpose of the Fallujah battle is to break the backbone of the resistance and pave the way for the completion of the Israeli plan.

<http://english.daralhayat.com/opinion/OPED/11-2004/Article-20041122-611bf698-coa8-10ed-002f-992445bfc5c/story.html>

July 13, 2004

Slipping Towards Armageddon

Israel in Iraq

By MARK GAFFNEY

There it was, in black and white, the worst news one could imagine staring back at me. I was seeing it, but still not really believing: the latest Sy Hersh report in the New Yorker, "[Plan B, Israel Looks to the Kurds](#)" (21 June 2004).

I didn't want to be reading this. I had better things to do, like bury my head in the Broncos official web page, where I occasionally go to escape: browsing foo-ball trivia and empty statistics about next season. With their big trade a done-deal and with the fabulous new free agents it looks like the Orange Crush will be back. But will the offense jell? Will Plummer step into Elway's big shoes and deliver at QB? Is this the year the Broncos make another run at the Superbowl? Momentous questions such as these!

Instead, I was wading through this nightmare of print a la Hersh, about how the Israelis are now in Iraq, where they have no business being (Can this really be happening?), arming and training the Kurds in the north along the border with Iran. For what purpose? Toward what end? Questions that no one seems to be asking these days, certainly not in Washington, where Israel holds court in the US Congress, no less than in the oval office.

Of course, it's possible Hersh got it wrong. Yes, maybe, there's always a chance. But I knew better. Seymour Hersh is one of our best and most careful journalists. He once told me that he never prints anything without multiple sources. So it's probably all too true. If one set out to create a doomsday scenario for the Mid East, one could not fabricate a more explosive trigger. The writing has been on the wall for many years, and now it all does appear to be coming to pass, yes, before our glazed eyes. And no one is doing anything to stop it, least of all John Kerry.

In 1991 George W. Bush's daddy went to war in the Gulf, a war I vigorously opposed. But at least George Sr. had the sense to keep the Israelis out of it. From all reports George Sr. was strongly opposed to the recent debacle. But Junior didn't listen to daddy. George W. was determined to one-up the old man.

The fact that Israeli operatives are now in Iraq explodes once and for all the oft-repeated claim that America is an honest peace broker. The whole world will now understand that this was just another of Washington's many deceptions. Bush's uncritical support of Sharon's iron fist shows that even the pretense of impartiality has now evaporated. And, to the shame of every American who cares about justice, candidate Kerry has seconded Bush on Israel without qualification.

Bush's Iraq policy has imploded. In fact, there never was a coherent policy, apart from grabbing the oil. It was always just a bunch of lies packaged as patriotic slogans for popular consumption here at home. And the Israelis, who wanted the war (just about any war is OK with them) are now where they've wanted to be for years, that is, on the Iran border, i.e., positioning themselves for the next round when the shinola really hits the fan: the shooting match that will make everything we've seen up until now look like a warm-up.

Clearly, Iran figures large in the Israeli calculus. Though it was not reported here in the US media -- at least, I never saw one word about it -- Iran was one of the key issues in the last Israeli election. Sharon and his opponent Benjamin Netanyahu squared-off during the campaign, and the issue was the specter of a nuclearized Shi'ite theocracy. The debate was bitter. Netanyahu took the view that it was too late to prevent Iran from going nuclear, and that Israel must accept this and come to terms. This inflamed Sharon, who accused Netanyahu of treason. Clearly, Sharon believed, and still believes, that Israel must go to any length to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons, even if this means going to war (again), which means persuading, pushing, and if necessary dragging the Americans into it.

I hasten to add that it's far from proved that Iran is building, or intends to build, Bombs. There is no smoking gun, and no hard evidence insofar as I know. It appears that Iran's policy is to develop nuclear power for energy production while keeping its options open for the future. Such a policy is totally understandable, given Israel's own massive nuclear arsenal, the existence of which is beyond dispute, even if the White House doesn't want to be reminded. Let us remember, Israel's nukes are aimed at Tehran. Put yourself in the Iranians' shoes. It's unreasonable to expect them to forswear nukes forever unless WE in America are also prepared to pressure the Israeli government to sign the NPT and open ALL of Israel's nuclear sites to inspectors. I mean the strengthened IAEA regime of unannounced inspections, whenever and wherever.

Of course, the Israelis don't need hard facts about what Iran is doing. They are perfectly capable of generating their own. If there were ever a case of a self-fulfilling prophecy-coming-to-fruit, the current slide toward the next Mid East war fits the bill.

A real leader in the White House would do the sane thing and order the Israelis to leave Iraq, IMMEDIATELY. But we haven't had that kind of leadership since Dwight D. Eisenhower ordered the IDF out of Sinai. At that time, in 1956, the Israelis had joined the Brits and French in an unprovoked assault upon Egypt. It was an attempt to oust Nasser, turn back the clock, and re-impose good old-fashioned colonial rule on the A-rabs. Ike foiled all of that, but not out of altruism. Ike's purpose was to assert US predominance in the region. Those were the glory days after World War II when the US star was rising.

US predominance might have become a force for good in the Mid East, with inspired leadership here at home. But, again, we haven't seen that kind of leadership for many a year -- I would argue -- not since the days of Abraham Lincoln. And without inspired leadership we went the way of empire. Are the Israelis serious? Judging from the recent deep cracks in their alliance with Turkey, one would have to conclude: yes, deadly serious. Israel has long cultivated a close relationship with Turkey. Would they jeopardize this important alliance if they were not serious?

The Turks are furious with Israel and also with Bush. They have repeatedly warned the US that they will not tolerate an independent Kurdistan on their border. Yet, the outcome of Israel's arming and training the Kurdish militias can only be to feed Kurdish national aspirations. Serious repercussions are likely too in the cases of Syria and Iran, which, like Turkey, have large Kurdish minorities; not to mention both Sunni and Shi'ite factions within Iraq itself, which have warned that Washington is playing with fire.

Bleeding a little more each day from the daily news of this disaster-in-the-making, the Bush administration has turned to theater, the trial of Saddam Hussein, hoping, once again, to divert attention. America loves a spectacle, bread and circuses. Just like in ancient Rome. Cradle to grave entertainment.

Bush has also pinned his hopes on the so-called transfer of power, banking that a hand-picked interim Iraqi government can hold things together through November 7. (US Ambassador Negroponte will be pulling the strings of power.) Beyond the election it's virgin turf. There is no plan. Bush: "We'll think of something!"

But events do not stand still. Don't look now, but mighty America is facing defeat in Iraq, and the Israelis are preparing to turn our defeat toward their own ends!



Israeli Involvement in the Occupation of Iraq

A Dossier of The **BRussells** Tribunal

Mark Gaffney is the author of a 1989 pioneering study of the Israeli nuke program, *Dimona the Third Temple*. Mark's latest book, [Gnostic Secrets of the Naassenes](#), has just been released by Inner Traditions Press.

<http://www.counterpunch.org/gaffney07132004.html>

Israel in Iraq: Evidence Mounts

by Jon Elmer July 9, 2004

Further evidence of the presence of Israeli operatives in Iraq arose this weekend when the general formerly in charge of the U.S.-run Iraqi prison system, herself considered partly responsible for torture at Abu Ghraib and other prisons under her command, told the BBC that she met an Israeli interrogator working in a U.S.-run "intelligence center" in Baghdad. Brigadier General Janet Karpinski told BBC Radio in an interview on Saturday that she met with a man who claimed to be Israeli and that he "did some of the interrogation" at the facility.

Karpinski is the highest-ranking official to confirm an Israeli presence in Iraq. As the head of the 800th Military Police Brigade, Karpinski was responsible for all of Iraq's 17 U.S.-run prison facilities. She was suspended in May for her role in the systemic torture carried out by personnel under her command in Abu Ghraib and elsewhere in Iraq.

Disclosures suggesting Israeli involvement in the ongoing occupation of Iraq are damaging to the U.S.' already meager credibility in the Middle East. Anger toward Israel's occupation of Palestinian lands, which the U.S. has backed since 1967, as well as its own human rights abuses and reputation for torturing Arab prisoners, render suspicion of Israeli involvement in Iraq an explosive issue throughout much of the Arab and Muslim worlds.

Kamal Muhammad, the manager of al-Aswar furniture shop in Baghdad gave a predictable reaction to the *Jerusalem Post*. "The Americans and the Israelis are one," he said. "They are the same enemy. Israel is just the baby of the U.S. with the same policies."

In an interview last week with *The Signal*, a newspaper in Santa Clarita, Cal., Karpinski said she was "shocked" by the Israeli interrogator's presence, and that the development struck her as "unusual."

But a mounting body of evidence indicates that the presence of Israeli operatives working in Iraq is not at all unusual.

New Yorker journalist Seymour Hersh told the BBC that his sources – which include high ranking Lebanese and Turkish officials – confirm the presence of Israeli agents in Iraq. Hersh said it is his

understanding that one of the Israeli aims was to gain access to detained members of the secret Iraqi intelligence unit who specialized in Israeli affairs, the BBC reports on its website.

In an article last month, Hersh quoted a senior CIA official and Israeli intelligence officer describing how agents of Israeli's Mossad intelligence service were active in Iraq, while Israeli commandos were training militants in the Kurdish areas of Syria, Turkey, Iran and Iraq. Hersh found this information to be "widely known" in the U.S. intelligence community.

A top US military official quoted in the *Washington Post* on Sunday denied claims of Israeli presence in Iraq, calling the story an "urban legend."

Israeli Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom similarly dismissed Gen. Karpinski's claims as "completely baseless," telling Israel's Army Radio: "We are not involved in any way in Iraq. We are not involved in training or in interrogations, or in anything else. The whole claim is preposterous."

The Foreign Minister's assertion is contradicted by significant documentation of Israeli-American "strategic cooperation" with regard to intelligence sharing and training in Iraq.

A December article in the *Guardian* described how Israeli advisers are involved in training U.S. special operations troops in counter-insurgency tactics to be used in Iraq. The operations being trained are said to include the use of assassination against resistance leaders. Quoting US intelligence and military sources, *Guardian* writer Julian Borger reported that the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) sent urban warfare specialists to Fort Bragg in North Carolina, the home of U.S. Army Special Forces.

On that same day, the Associated Press ran a story under the headline "U.S. employs Israeli tactics in Iraq," in which American and Israeli officials publicly noted "high-level meetings" and "strategic cooperation" between the two countries on the subject of operations in Iraq.

In a July letter in *Army Magazine*, Brigadier General Michael Vaneter, the deputy chief of staff at the Army's Training and Doctrine Command, acknowledged that he had "recently traveled to Israel to glean lessons learned from their counter-terrorist operations in urban areas."

In relation to the presence of Israeli interrogators and contractors working within U.S. prisons in Iraq, the torture report by General Antonio Taguba refers to "third country nationals" involved in the mistreatment of prisoners in Iraq. A company at the center of the scandal, CACI International, has extensive links to the IDF and Israeli military intelligence.

<http://www.antiwar.com/orig/elmer.php?articleid=2959>

May 10, 2004

The Israeli Torture Template

Rape, Feces and Urine-Dipped Cloth Sacks

By WAYNE MADSEN

With mounting evidence that a shadowy group of former Israeli Defense Force and General Security Service (Shin Bet) Arabic-speaking interrogators were hired by the Pentagon under a classified "carve out" sub-contract to brutally interrogate Iraqi prisoners at Baghdad's Abu Ghraib prison, one only needs to examine the record of abuse of Palestinian and Lebanese prisoners in Israel to understand what Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld meant, when referring to new, yet to be released photos and videos, he said, "if these images are released to the public, obviously its going to make matters worse."

According to a political appointee within the Bush administration and U.S. intelligence sources, the interrogators at Abu Ghraib included a number of Arabic-speaking Israelis who also helped U.S. interrogators develop the "R2I" (Resistance to Interrogation) techniques. Many of the torture methods were developed by the Israelis over many years of interrogating Arab prisoners on the occupied West Bank and in Israel itself.

Clues about worse photos and videos of abuse may be found in Israeli files about similar abuse of Palestinian and other Arab prisoners. In March 2000, a lawyer for a Lebanese prisoner kidnapped in 1994 by the Israelis in Lebanon claimed that his client had been subjected to torture, including rape. The type of compensation offered by Rumsfeld in his testimony has its roots in cases of Israeli torture of Arabs. In the case of the Lebanese man, said to have been raped by his Israeli captors, his lawyer demanded compensation of \$1.47 million. The Public Committee Against Torture in Israel documented the types of torture meted out on Arab prisoners. Many of the tactics coincide with those contained in the Taguba report: beatings and prolonged periods handcuffed to furniture. In an article in the December 1998 issue of *The Progressive*, Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb reported on the treatment given to a 23-year old Palestinian held on "administrative detention." The prisoner was "cuffed behind a chair 17 hours a day for 120 days . . . [he] had his head covered with a sack, which was often dipped in urine or feces. Guards played loud music right next to his ears and frequently taunted him with threats of physical and sexual violence." If additional photos and videos document such practices, the Bush administration and the American people have, indeed, "seen nothing yet."

Although it is still largely undocumented if any of the contractor named in the report of General Antonio Taguba were associated with the Israeli military or intelligence services, it is noteworthy that one, John Israel, who was identified in the report as being employed by both CACI International of

Arlington, Virginia, and Titan, Inc., of San Diego, may not have even been a U.S. citizen. The Taguba report states that Israel did not have a security clearance, a requirement for employment as an interrogator for CACI. According to CACI's web site, "a Top Secret Clearance (TS) that is current and US citizenship" are required for CACI interrogators working in Iraq. In addition, CACI requires that its interrogators "have at least two years experience as a military policeman or similar type of law enforcement/intelligence agency whereby the individual utilized interviewing techniques."

Speculation that "John Israel" may be an intelligence cover name has fueled speculation whether this individual could have been one of a number of Israeli interrogators hired under a classified contract. Because U.S. citizenship and documentation thereof are requirements for a U.S. security clearance, Israeli citizens would not be permitted to hold a Top Secret clearance. However, dual U.S.-Israeli citizens could have satisfied Pentagon requirements that interrogators hold U.S. citizenship and a Top Secret clearance. Although the Taguba report refers twice to Israel as an employee of Titan, the company claims he is one of their sub-contractors. CACI stated that one of the men listed in the report "is not and never has been a CACI employee" without providing more detail. A U.S. intelligence source revealed that in the world of intelligence "carve out" subcontracts such confusion is often the case with "plausible deniability" being a foremost concern.

In fact, the Taguba report does reference the presence of non-U.S. and non-Iraqi interrogators at Abu Ghraib. The report states, "In general, US civilian contract personnel (Titan Corporation, CACI, etc), third country nationals, and local contractors do not appear to be properly supervised within the detention facility at Abu Ghraib."

The Pentagon is clearly concerned about the outing of the Taguba report and its references to CACI, Titan, and third country nationals, which could permanently damage U.S. relations with Arab and Islamic nations. The Pentagon's angst may explain why the Taguba report is classified Secret No Foreign Dissemination.

The leak of the Taguba report was so radioactive, Daniel R. Dunn, the Information Assurance Officer for Douglas Feith's Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, Policy (Policy Automation Services Security Team), sent a May 6, 2004, For Official Use Only Urgent E-mail to Pentagon staffers stating, "THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS REPORT IS CLASSIFIED; DO NOT GO TO FOX NEWS TO READ OR OBTAIN A COPY." Considering Feith's close ties to the Israelis, such a reaction by his top computer security officer, a Certified Information System Security Professional (CISSP), is understandable, although considering the fact that CISSPs are to act on behalf of the public good, it is also regrettable..

The reference to "third country nationals" in a report that restricts its dissemination to U.S. coalition partners (Great Britain, Poland, Italy, etc.) is another indication of the possible involvement of Israelis

in the interrogation of Iraqi prisoners. Knowledge that the U.S. may have been using Israeli interrogators could have severely fractured the Bush administration's tenuous "coalition of the willing" in Iraq. General Taguba's findings were transmitted to the Coalition Forces Land Component Command on March 9, 2004, just six days before the Spanish general election, one that the opposition anti-Iraq war Socialists won. The Spanish ultimately withdrew their forces from Iraq.

During his testimony before the Senate Armed Service Committee, Rumsfeld was pressed upon by Senator John McCain about the role of the private contractors in the interrogations and abuse. McCain asked Rumsfeld four pertinent questions, ". . . who was in charge? What agency or private contractor was in charge of the interrogations? Did they have authority over the guards? And what were the instructions that they gave to the guards?"

When Rumsfeld had problems answering McCain's question, Lt. Gen. Lance Smith, the Deputy Commander of the U.S. Central Command, said there were 37 contract interrogators used in Abu Ghraib. The two named contractors, CACI and Titan, have close ties to the Israeli military and technology communities. Last January 14, after Provost Marshal General of the Army, Major General Donald Ryder, had already uncovered abuse at Abu Ghraib, CACI's President and CEO, Dr. J.P. (Jack) London was receiving the Jerusalem Fund of Aish HaTorah's Albert Einstein Technology award at the Jerusalem City Hall, with right-wing Likud politician Israeli Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz and ultra-Orthodox United Torah Judaism party Jerusalem Mayor Uri Lupolianski in attendance. Oddly, CACI waited until February 2 to publicly announce the award in a press release. CACI has also received grants from U.S.-Israeli bi-national foundations.

Titan also has had close connections to Israeli interests. After his stint as CIA Director, James Woolsey served as a Titan director. Woolsey is an architect of America's Iraq policy and the chief proponent of and lobbyist for Ahmad Chalabi of the Iraqi National Congress. An adviser to the neo-conservative Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, Jewish Institute of National Security Affairs, Project for the New American Century, Center for Security Policy, Freedom House, and Committee for the Liberation of Iraq, Woolsey is close to Stephen Cambone, the Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence, a key person in the chain of command who would have not only known about the torture tactics used by U.S. and Israeli interrogators in Iraq but who would have also approved them. Cambone was associated with the Project for the New American Century and is viewed as a member of Rumsfeld's neo-conservative "cabal" within the Pentagon.

Another person considered by Pentagon insiders to have been knowledgeable about the treatment of Iraqi prisoners is U.S. Army Col. Steven Bucci, a Green Beret and Rumsfeld's military assistant and chief traffic cop for the information flow to the Defense Secretary. According to Pentagon insiders, Bucci was involved in the direction of a special covert operations unit composed of former U.S. special operations personnel who answered to the Pentagon rather than the CIA's Special Activities Division,

the agency's own paramilitary group. The Pentagon group included Arabic linguists and former members of the Green Berets and Delta Force who operated covertly in Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, and Uzbekistan. Titan also uses linguists trained in the languages (Arabic, Dari, Farsi, Pashto, Urdu, and Tajik) of those same countries. It is not known if a link exists between Rumsfeld's covert operations unit and Titan's covert operations linguists.

Another Titan employee named in the Taguba report is Adel L. Nakhla. Nakhla is a name common among Egypt's Coptic Christian community, however, it is not known if Adel Nakhla is either an Egyptian-American or a national of Egypt. A CACI employee identified in the report, Steven Stephanowicz, is referred to as "Stefanowicz" in a number of articles on the prison abuse. Stefanowicz is the spelling used by Joe Ryan, another CACI employee assigned with Stefanowicz to Abu Ghraib. Ryan is a radio personality on KSTP, a conservative radio station in Minneapolis, who maintained a daily log of his activities in Iraq on the radio's web site before it was taken down. Ryan indicated that Stefanowicz (or Stephanowicz) continued to hold his interrogation job in Iraq even though General Taguba recommended he lose his security clearance and be terminated for the abuses at Abu Ghraib.

In an even more bizarre twist, the *Philadelphia Daily News* identified a former expatriate public relations specialist for the government of South Australia in Adelaide named Steve Stefanowicz as possibly being the same person identified in the Taguba report. In 2000, Stefanowicz, who grew up in the Philadelphia and Allentown areas, left for Australia. On September 16, 2001, he was quoted by the *Sunday Mail* of Adelaide on the 911 attacks. He said of the attacks, "It was one of the most incredible and most devastating things I have ever seen. I have been in constant contact with my family and friends in the US and the mood was very solemn and quiet. But this is progressing into anger." Stefanowicz returned to the United States and volunteered for the Navy in a reserve status. His mother told the Allentown *Morning Call* in April 2002 that Stefanowicz was stationed somewhere in the Middle East but did not know where because of what Stefanowicz said was "security concerns." His mother told the *Philadelphia Daily News* that her son was in Iraq but she knew nothing about his current status.

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<http://www.counterpunch.org/madsen05102004.html>

Israeli link possible in US torture techniques

Ali Abunimah, *The Daily Star*, 11 May 2004

The head of the American defense contracting firm implicated in the torture of Iraqis at Abu Ghraib prison has close ties to Israel and visited an Israeli "anti-terror" training camp in the occupied West Bank earlier this year.



Jack London, chairman, president and CEO of CACI International Incorporated, traveled to Israel in January this year as part of a high-level delegation of US Congressmen, defense contractors and pro-Israel lobbyists, sponsored and paid for in part by the Jerusalem Fund of Aish HaTorah, a pro-Israel lobbying and fundraising group, and Greenberg Traurig, LLP, a prominent Washington law and lobby firm.

The purpose of the visit, according to a CACI press release, was "to promote opportunities for strategic partnerships and joint ventures between US and Israeli defense and homeland security companies."

As one of the highlights of the visit, London was presented with the Albert Einstein Technology Award by Israeli Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz at a gala dinner at Jerusalem city hall, for "achievements in the field of defense and national security."

Delegates also spent several hours in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights with Housing and Construction Minister Effie Eitam, a former Israeli general, who is notorious for his view that Israel should "transfer" - that is, expel - all the Palestinians.

According to the official itinerary for the Jan. 11-17 Defense Aerospace Homeland Security Mission, obtained from the Jerusalem Fund of Aish HaTorah, London's trip included a visit to Beit Horon, "the central training camp for the anti-terrorist forces of the Israeli police and the border police," in the occupied West Bank. The visitors were also "briefed by top experts," and were able to "witness exercises related to anti-terror warfare."

Two CACI employees, Steven Stephanowicz and John Israel, were named in the leaked report by US Major General Antonio M. Taguba on the abuses at Abu Ghraib prison. Taguba wrote that Stephanowicz, a "contract US civilian interrogator," "allowed and/or instructed MPs (military police), who were not trained in interrogation techniques, to facilitate interrogations by 'setting conditions' which were neither authorized or in accordance with applicable regulations/policy. He clearly knew his instructions equated to physical abuse."

John Israel, an interpreter, did not have the appropriate security clearance, according to Taguba.

Although Taguba recommended that Stephanowicz be terminated and his security clearance revoked, a May 5 statement from CACI confirmed, "at present, all CACI employees continue to work on site providing the contracted for services to our clients in that location." It added: "We have not received any information to stop any of our work, to terminate or suspend any of our employees."

Although no evidence has emerged directly linking CACI's involvement in the Abu Ghraib atrocities to Israel, it has long been known that the US military has been interested in "learning" from Israel's experience attempting to suppress the Palestinian uprising. In March 2003, for example, the AP reported that the "the (US) military has been listening closely to Israeli experts and picking up tips from years of Israeli Army operations in Palestinian areas and Lebanese towns."

This cooperation has included briefings of US personnel by Israeli officers, and, according to AP, "In January and February (2003), Israeli and American troops trained together in southern Israel's Negev Desert ... Israel has also hosted senior law enforcement officials from the United States for a seminar on counterterrorism."

Meanwhile, more evidence has emerged undermining the US thesis that the abuses at Abu Ghraib were the work of a "few bad apples." *The Guardian* reported that the "sexual humiliation of Iraqi prisoners at Abu Ghraib prison was not an invention of maverick guards, but part of a system of ill-treatment and degradation used by special forces soldiers that is now being disseminated among ordinary troops and contractors."

This system, known to insiders as "R2I," short for resistance to interrogation, also includes such methods as "hooding, sleep deprivation, time disorientation and depriving prisoners not only of dignity, but of fundamental human needs, such as warmth, water and food." These are all techniques long employed by Israel.

The visit of the US delegation that included the CACI head exposes a rarefied web of influence sharing in which US government officials and congressmen, defense contractors and lobbyists parcel out huge contracts, and siphon significant portions off to Israel.

As Batya Feldman of Israel's Globes financial news service put it, the visit provided Israeli companies with "an excellent opportunity to encounter big bucks in homeland security."

To help Israeli companies pry some of these "big bucks" loose, the visit included seminars for Israeli companies given by US pro-Israel lobbyists called "How to Approach the Homeland Security Department," and "How to Sell to the US Defense Department."



Israeli Involvement in the Occupation of Iraq

A Dossier of The **BRussells** Tribunal

Israeli participants would have had a chance to test the helpful tips, since present on the trip were Assistant Secretary for Homeland Security Robert Liscouski and many leading US legislators, including top members of the US House and Senate Armed Services Committees, which jointly oversee tens of billions of dollars in military spending.

Ali Abunimah is a co-founder of The Electronic Intifada. This article first appeared in [The Daily Star](#) on 11 May 2004

<http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article2641.shtml>

Iraqi Muslims Did Not Blow Up Christian Churches

By Sam Hamod

8-2-4

Having discussed the matter in detail with other experts on the Middle East, Christianity in Iraq and on Islam in Iraq, we have all concluded this is not the work of any Muslim group. There has never been any animosity between the Christian and Muslim communities in Iraq, in fact, they have stood toe-to-toe against the American occupation and they have resisted efforts by the Israeli office in Baghdad to become allied with Israel.

With these matters in mind, it appears as if this new "attack on the Christian churches is just another attempt either by the American CIA or its operatives, or the Mossad of Israel, to paint Islam with terrorism and to split the Muslim and Christian communities in Iraq. They tried to do the same thing in Palestine, but the Palestinians wouldn't buy it. As you may remember, the Israelis shelled the holy churches of the Church of the Nativity and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Both events were condemned by Christian and Muslim alike. Even today in Iraq, all Iraqis interviewed said they knew no Iraqi or Muslim would do such a thing. But, in America, where we are fed the news as it is planned by Bush and by Zionist influence, the story plays big to the evangelical group and to Christians who believe the U.S. propaganda media.

This is another sad chapter in the U.S. occupation of Iraq. Since the early days of the war, the Iraqis complained about the treatment of prisoners taken by the Americans. Unfortunately, no one would listen to the Iraqis or those of us who reported these atrocities. You all know the truth by now, how we were lied to by our government and by the U.S. media; so much for truth and "embedding." So, once again, we have to report to you, this is just another American cover-up to create more chaos in Iraq, just as America did in Viet Nam to keep us in that war, and to justify more attacks on Muslims groups in Iraq. This will also help justify the continuing immoral and unjust shelling of Fallujah to allegedly

kill Zarqawi. The townspeople keep saying, "There is no Zarqawi here, and there never was ;yet our U.S. military keeps lying in order to justify the bombings of civilians in order to punish the Fallujahns for having kept the American forces out of their city.

At this point, there is no telling what the U.S. or the Israeli Mossad will do in Iraq in order to foment civil war among the Iraqis and to justify the continuation of an American occupation in Iraq. Some of you may remember that JFK felt he had to go into Viet Nam in order to protect the Christian Catholic leadership in the south. We have a replay of this today in Iraq, with this "news."

As for me, I've just about given up on believing anything the Bush administration or the major American media tells us; they've lied to us too often. We think this is just another self-serving lie by the Bush or Mossad team.

Sam Hamod is a former advisor to the US State Department and an expert on the Middle East; he is also the former founder and editor of 3rd World News in Washington, DC.

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[http://www.todaysalternativenews.com/index.php?event=link.150&values\[0\]=&values\[1\]=1776](http://www.todaysalternativenews.com/index.php?event=link.150&values[0]=&values[1]=1776)

Israel, US Use Similar Torture Tactics: Report

[More Reports](#)

The latest report by the Israeli committee against torture, covering the period from September 2001 to April 2003, said that detainees.."

CAIRO - The accounts of physical abuse of Iraqis by American soldiers at Abu Ghraib prison outside Baghdad are similar to the Israeli army techniques in torturing Palestinian detainees, the Washington Post reported on Wednesday, June 16.

It cited cases of Palestinian detainees painfully tortured by their Israeli interrogators and placed in stress postures similar to those imposed on Iraqi detainees.

The daily said Palestinian detainees were forced to stand for days at a time or were shackled in tightly contorted positions on low stools, a procedure known as shabah.

The Palestinians were violently shaken, deprived of sleep, bombarded with loud, continuous music, exposed to extremes of cold and heat and forced to relieve themselves in their clothing, according to the Post.

Their heads were often covered with canvas hoods that reeked of urine or vomit, a familiar scene in Abu Ghraib, it added.

New Techniques

Ziad Arafah, a 48-year political activist who lives in the Balata refugee camp outside the West Bank city of Nablus, recalled he had been detained 14 times over the past two decades.

Each time, he said, his interrogators seemed to have mastered a new technique, said the Post.

Arafah stressed that at first crude physical and sexual abuse was commonplace.

When he was first detained in 1983 an interrogator put on rubber gloves and squeezed his testicles until he cried out in pain.

On another occasion Arafah said he was kept in his underwear in a small, cold cell and splashed with water every few hours.

Now the emphasis is on psychological pressure, he asserted, recalling that during his detention a year ago he was deprived of sleep for several days but not beaten.

The Israeli soldiers are often cruel, kicking and humiliating detainees in ways similar to the behavior reported at Abu Ghraib, he told the Post.

Casual Beatings

Anan Labadeh, who was detained at an Israeli military camp in March of last year, said he was familiar with the casual beatings, the humiliations, the trophy photos taken by both male and female guards at Abu Ghraib.

"Three days without food and without sleep and you're eager to tell them anything. It just shows us the Americans are amateurs. They should have taken lessons from the Israelis."

Labadeh, 31, became a cause célèbre after he fell from a third-story balcony while being chased by Israeli soldiers during a stone-throwing incident in the late 1980s, said the American daily.

Paraplegic Labadeh said he was routinely punched and kicked by the soldiers who escorted him to a military detention center at nearby Hawara and then by other soldiers at the center itself over three days.

He said he was blindfolded, denied food and water, left outside in the rain and cold, deprived of sleep and forced to urinate and defecate in his clothing, reported the Post.

"For a person like me to be surrounded by a group of soldiers, punched, insulted, peeing on myself, my dignity was insulted," Labadeh said.

There are around 8000 Palestinian detainees in 22 Israeli prisons, detentions and concentration camps.

New Regime

The latest report by the Israeli committee against torture, covering the period from September 2001 to April 2003, said that detainees faced a new regime of sleep deprivation, shackling, slapping, hitting, kicking, exposure to extreme cold and heat, threats, curses, insults and prolonged detention in subhuman conditions.

"Torture in Israel has once more become routine, carried out in an orderly and institutional fashion," the Post quoted the report, which was based on 80 affidavits and court cases.

The committee accused the Israeli legal system of effectively sanctioning torture by routinely rejecting petitions seeking to grant detainees access to lawyers.

Sanctioned

The Post said although its officials never use the word "torture", Israel is perhaps the only Western-style democracy that has acknowledged sanctioning mistreatment of prisoners in interrogation.

The paper said that in 1987, following a long debate in legal and security circles, an Israeli state commission established a set of secret guidelines for interrogators using what the panel called "moderate physical and psychological pressure" against detainees.

Although Israel's Supreme Court struck down those guidelines, ruling that torture was illegal under any circumstances in 1999, the security agencies returned to physical coercion as a standard practice after the second Palestinian Intifadah against Israeli occupation in September 2000.

The authorization is similar to the memos in which the U.S. Justice Department had advised the Pentagon that torturing detainees outside the U.S. "may be justified", and that anti-torture international laws "may be unconstitutional" in interrogations related to the so-called "war on terror".

But the difference is that the torture techniques the Israeli forces have used command widespread support from the Israeli public.

A long parade of Israeli prime ministers and justice ministers with a variety of political views have defended the security agencies and either denied that torture is used or defended it as a last resort in preventing Palestinian attacks against occupation forces, said the Post.

<http://www.jerusalemities.org/reports/4.htm>

Published on Saturday, March 29, 2003 by the [Independent/UK](#)

Israelis Trained US Troops in Jenin-style Urban Warfare

by Justin Huggler in Amman

The American military has been asking the Israeli army for advice on fighting inside cities, and studying fighting in the West Bank city of Jenin last April, unnamed United States and Israeli sources have confirmed. Reports that US troops trained with Israeli forces for street-to-street fighting have been denied.

If the US army believes the road to Baghdad lies through Jenin, there is reason for Iraqi civilians to be concerned. During fighting in the Jenin refugee camp last April, more than half the Palestinian dead were civilians. There was compelling evidence that Israeli soldiers targeted civilians, including Fadwa Jamma, a Palestinian nurse shot dead as she tried to treat a wounded man. A 14-year-old boy was killed by Israeli tank-fire in a crowded street after the curfew was lifted. A Palestinian in a wheelchair was shot dead, and his body was crushed by an Israeli tank.

Israeli soldiers prevented ambulances from reaching the wounded and refused the Red Cross access. Using bulldozers, the Israeli army demolished an entire neighborhood— home to 800 Palestinian families – reducing it to dust and rubble.

Martin van Creveld, a professor of military history and strategy at Jerusalem's internationally respected Hebrew University, has told reporters that, following his advice to US Marines, the American military bought nine of the converted bulldozers used in the Jenin demolitions from Israel.

Professor van Creveld said he gave advice to marines last year in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. He said he was questioned about Israeli tactics in Jenin, and told them the giant D9 bulldozers,

manufactured for civilian use in the US but fitted with armour-plating in Israel, were among the most useful weapons.

Israeli troops at first found they could not get their tanks and armored vehicles into the narrow alleys of the refugee camp, so they bulldozed wide swaths through houses to get them in.

If the US military intends to use converted D9 bulldozers in Iraqi cities, there is cause for concern. When reporters got into the Jenin refugee camp, we found the fronts of houses neatly scythed off so the insides of the houses were visible from the street, with personal belongings, sofas, beds, children's toys, hanging precariously from half-collapsed floors.

Israeli use of the bulldozers has not been limited to clearing the way for tanks. They have also been used in collective punishment, such as the destruction of an entire neighborhood in Jenin after the fighting ended.

In Nablus last April, eight members of the al-Shubi family were killed when an Israeli soldier bulldozed their home, burying them alive, despite shouted warnings from neighbors that they were still inside. The Israeli military has supplied US forces with video of incursions by Israeli soldiers into Palestinian cities, said unnamed "security sources". They added that Israeli officers have given their American counterparts extensive briefings on Israeli tactics.

One of the tactics identified was the Israeli army's practice of moving from house to house by knocking holes in connecting walls to avoid being exposed in the streets, a practice that has wrecked the homes of thousands of Palestinians.

The Israeli army has also routinely used Palestinian civilians as human shields to protect them as they advance, a practice that has continued despite Israeli court rulings forbidding it. There was no word on whether Israeli officers had briefed American troops on this tactic.

There were reports in the US and Israel media last November that American troops had been trained by Israeli instructors in a mock-up of a Palestinian city inside an army base in Israel. Those reports have been denied, but an unnamed Israeli source told the Associated Press that US officers did visit the mocked-up Palestinian city and attended a briefing on Israeli training methods.

There have also been reports that Palestinians who have fought against Israeli forces in Jenin and other Palestinian cities during Israeli offensives last year have telephoned friends and acquaintances in Iraq to advise them on tactics to use against American and British forces if street-to-street fighting begins.

There is another lesson to draw from Jenin. The Palestinians who defended the city were armed only with assault rifles and crude, home-made booby-traps and pipe-bombs, against the massively better-equipped Israeli army.

But they held out for 11 days, and managed to kill 23 Israeli soldiers, 13 of them in a single ambush. When the Palestinians ran out of ammunition, they kept fighting and started throwing stones at the Israeli soldiers. If the much better-equipped Iraqi forces take the same attitude to defending Baghdad and other cities the battles could be bloody.

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<http://www.commondreams.org/headlines03/0329-07.htm>

<http://portland.indymedia.org/en/2004/05/287679.shtml>

MOSSAD AGENTS INVOLVED IN IRAQ PRISON ABUSE

author: Mauricio Dolce

Mossad agents are behind the Iraq prison scandale

General Taguba's report about the Iraq prison abuse, strongly implicate John Israel, Steven Stephanowicz and Adel L. Nakhla; describes them as interrogators contract employees for Titan and CACI corporation.

Both Corporation has indicated that these individuals work for a sub contractor that they refused to name, the truth is that John Israel, Steven Stephanowicz and Adel L. Nakhla works for the Mossad, Arabic speakers and has been sent to train CIA, DIA and MI in interrogation techniques already used in Palestinians.

What has not been reported yet is that women and minors has been sodomized, pictures and video tapes has been withheld by the media to avoid further embarrassing the Army.

<http://www.itszone.co.uk/zone0/viewtopic.php?t=15069>

Resistance kills Mossad agents in Iraq

KIRKOUK, Iraq - A huge blast has caused extensive damage in a [Mossad](#) office building in Kirkouk in northern Iraq late on Monday killing and wounding an unspecified number of Mossad agents and civilian Kurds, the Middle East News Agency said yesterday.

US troops and rescue workers were rushed into the devastated building to remove the bodies and take the wounded to a hospital in Mousel, MENA said. The workers have arrived at the site during the night to remove the debris and evacuate the injured persons, the news agency added.

US troops prevented the people from getting closer to the building and imposed a news black out on the cause of the explosion, **which occurred in the garage** of the building, it said.

The troops wanted to hide the true activities of the office, which the Mossad rented a week ago, and the identities of its occupants, MENA said.

In another development, witnesses said that at least three explosions echoed across Baghdad last night, although the location of the blasts was not clear. The explosions, which sounded like mortar fire, follow a trend of mortar attacks on the US-led administration's headquarters in central Baghdad in the past 10 days.

Four Iraqis were killed and nine others wounded when a roadside bomb ripped apart a car in the southern city of Basra, while the top US ground commander announced the capture of 20 suspected Al Qaeda members.

In Basra, police Colonel **Mohammed Khazim al-Ali** said that among those killed were two policemen, while the wounded included several schoolchildren.

The top US ground commander in Iraq, Lieutenant General **Ricardo Sanchez**, said the coalition had detained 20 people suspected of belonging to the Al Qaeda terror group.

"We have up to 20 suspected Al Qaeda members," Sanchez said, adding they were still being questioned and had not yet been proven to belong to **bin Laden**'s organisation.

Meanwhile, **Mohannad Ghazi al Kaabi**, the area's top municipal official, died from wounds after troops shot him when he refused to follow security procedures for entering a municipal building, the US military said in a statement.

A US military official told reporters that US jet fighters also bombed a house, near Mahmudiyah, south of the capital apparently used as a base for anti-coalition attacks.

"We used F-16s to precision bomb the house," said Captain Dan Froehlich, a spokesman for the 82nd Airborne's Third Brigade.

http://www.fpp.co.uk/online/03/11/Mossad_agents_killed.html

Analysis: US 'emulates' Israeli tactics

By Jonathan Marcus

BBC defence correspondent

With sporadic fighting in Falluja and US forces moving into position outside Najaf, the Arab press is pointing to similarities between US military operations in Iraq and the tactics Israeli forces employ in the West Bank and Gaza.

Such similarities are not coincidental.

The Israeli army has long experience of offensive operations in urban areas and it is experience that the Pentagon has been eager to draw upon.

Israel and the US have developed a close military relationship over the years.

Two-way exchange

Israel's armed forces are undergoing a process of transformation similar to that advocated by US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld with the emphasis on lighter, more agile units employing devastating firepower and drawing on a variety of new information and intelligence gathering systems.

Go to any US military exercise and Israeli observers are much in evidence.

But the transfer of doctrine and tactics is not just a one-way street.

US commanders have drawn extensively on Israel's experiences in the West Bank and Gaza Strip for lessons that might be applicable to Iraq.



US soldiers in Iraq have been faced with revolts on more than one front

Urban trap

Fighting in urban areas is something that modern armies tend to avoid wherever possible.

In the low-rise warren of alleys and narrow streets the advantages of technologically sophisticated soldiers are much reduced.

Even lightly armed opponents with local knowledge can constitute serious opposition.

And the proximity of civilians adds the risk of significant loss of innocent life and widespread damage to property.

While many of Israel's methods are controversial it has, in purely military terms, developed highly effective tactics for offensive operations in urban areas along with a range of specialised equipment which, for example, can help troops to breach walls, gather intelligence, and locate snipers.

The Pentagon has already bought some Israeli equipment. It is planning to buy more.

And senior US commanders have visited Israel specifically to discuss what the Pentagon jargon calls "Military Operations on Urban Terrain".

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/3625315.stm



Many Palestinians have demonstrated against the occupation of Iraq

Israel Training US Assassination Squads In Iraq

The Guardian - UK

4-11-4

Israeli advisers are helping train US special forces in aggressive counter-insurgency operations in Iraq, including the use of assassination squads against guerrilla leaders, US intelligence and military sources said.

The Israeli Defence Force (IDF) has sent urban warfare specialists to Fort Bragg in North Carolina, the home of US special forces, and according to two sources, Israeli military "consultants" have also visited Iraq.

US forces in Iraq's Sunni triangle have already begun to use tactics that echo Israeli operations in the occupied territories, sealing off centres of resistance with razor wire and razing buildings from where attacks have been launched against US troops.

But the secret war in Iraq is about to get much tougher, in the hope of suppressing the Ba'athist-led insurgency ahead of next November's presidential elections.

US special forces teams are already behind the lines inside Syria attempting to kill foreign jihadists before they cross the border, and a group focused on the "neutralisation" of guerrilla leaders is being set up, according to sources familiar with the operations.

"This is basically an assassination programme. That is what is being conceptualised here. This is a hunter-killer team," said a former senior US intelligence official, who added that he feared the new tactics and enhanced cooperation with Israel would only inflame a volatile situation in the Middle East.

"It is bonkers, insane. Here we are - we're already being compared to Sharon in the Arab world, and we've just confirmed it by bringing in the Israelis and setting up assassination teams."

"They are being trained by Israelis in Fort Bragg," a well-informed intelligence source in Washington said.

"Some Israelis went to Iraq as well, not to do training, but for providing consultations." The consultants' visit to Iraq was confirmed by another US source who was in contact with American officials there.

The Pentagon did not return calls seeking comment, but a military planner, Brigadier General Michael Vane, mentioned the cooperation with Israel in a letter to Army magazine in July about the Iraq counter-insurgency campaign.

"We recently travelled to Israel to glean lessons learned from their counterterrorist operations in urban areas," wrote General Vane, deputy chief of staff at the army's training and doctrine command.

An Israeli official said the IDF regularly shared its experience in the West Bank and Gaza with the US armed forces, but said he could not comment about cooperation in Iraq.

"When we do activities, the US military attaches in Tel Aviv are interested. I assume it's the same as the British. That's the way allies work. The special forces come to our people and say, do debrief on an operation we have done," the official said.

"Does it affect Iraq? It's not in our interest or the American interest or in anyone's interest to go into that. It would just fit in with jihadist prejudices."

Colonel Ralph Peters, a former army intelligence officer and a critic of Pentagon policy in Iraq, said there was nothing wrong with learning lessons wherever possible. "When we turn to anyone for insights, it doesn't mean we blindly accept it," Col Peters said.

"But I think what you're seeing is a new realism. The American tendency is to try to win all the hearts and minds. In Iraq, there are just some hearts and minds you can't win. Within the bounds of human rights, if you do make an example of certain villages it gets the attention of the others, and attacks have gone down in the area."

The new counter-insurgency unit made up of elite troops being put together in the Pentagon is called Task Force 121, *New Yorker* magazine reported in yesterday's edition.

One of the planners behind the offensive is a highly controversial figure, whose role is likely to inflame Muslim opinion: Lieutenant General William "Jerry" Boykin.

In October, there were calls for his resignation after he told a church congregation in Oregon that the US was at war with Satan, who "wants to destroy us as a Christian army".

"He's been promoted a rank above his abilities," he said. "Some generals are pretty good on battlefield but are disastrous nearer the source of power."

<http://www.rense.com/general51/addad.htm>

Israel helping train U.S. forces to combat Iraqi insurgents

by Ellis Shuman, *Israel Insider*, 10 December 2003

Israeli advisers are helping train U.S. special forces in aggressive counter-insurgency operations in Iraq, *The Guardian* reported yesterday. A former U.S. intelligence agent told the paper that the IDF sent urban warfare specialists to Fort Bragg in North Carolina to help set up "assassination teams" that would target guerilla leaders.

Officials at Fort Bragg, however, denied that Israeli advisers had come to the base to train special forces soldiers in counter-insurgency tactics including assassination, the Fayetteville (N.C.) Observer

reported today. "This command is not conducting any combined U.S. or Israeli training at Fort Bragg," said Lt. Col. Hans Bush, a spokesman for U.S. Army Special Operations.

But according to American and Israeli military and intelligence officials, Israeli commandos and intelligence units have been working closely with their American counterparts at Fort Bragg and in Israel to help them prepare for operations in Iraq, the *New Yorker* and other media sources reported.

"The Americans now realize their forces are in Iraq for the long haul, and are reorganizing accordingly," a senior Israeli security source told Reuters. "Israel has been providing advice on how to shift from a reliance on heavy, armored occupation troops to mobile forces that are more effective in quelling urban resistance and cause less friction with the general populace," he said.

U.S. forces already have adopted IDF tactics

According to media reports, American forces in Iraq have already begun to use tactics that echo Israeli operations in the Palestinian territories, including the sealing off centers of resistance with razor wire and razing buildings from where attacks have been launched against U.S. troops.

Reuters reported that the American forces plan to adopt the IDF's tactic of a "swarm assault," such as was used by the Israeli army during its operations in Nablus in April 2002. The "swarm assault," according to Reuters, constituted the "unleashing" of "roving covert infantry squads whose movements were coordinated using air surveillance."

"The Americans are used to fighting either in force or with isolated commando teams, while the swarm tactic is a combination of both," an Israeli military source said, quoted by Reuters. "It is ideal for hitting terrorists concentrated in civilian populations."

U.S. officials noted the similarity of their tactics in Iraq with those employed by the IDF, but denied that they are modeled on them, Reuters reported.

Israelis go to Iraq, U.S. officers come to Israel

The Guardian reported that Israeli security officials went to Iraq to advise American troops there. "Some Israelis went to Iraq as well, not to do training, but for providing consultations," an American intelligence source told the newspaper.

Brigadier-General Michael Vane, deputy chief of staff at the U.S. Army's training and doctrine command, mentioned the cooperation with Israel in a letter to *Army* magazine in July. "We recently traveled to Israel to glean lessons learned from their counter-terrorist operations in urban areas," he wrote.

Yediot Aharonot reported that the American military officials were in Israel for a few days and visited the IDF command center, focusing on ways to deal with Iraqi insurgency.

"They were interested in things in which we have a lot of experience," a senior Israeli security official told Yediot Aharonot. "They learned about explosive charges, and how to neutralize them, ... intelligence gathering, the use of dogs to locate charges. They were completely unfamiliar with the use of dogs, and this greatly interested them," the official said.

According to Reuters, the U.S. special forces have so far been slow in adopting one IDF tactic -- having commandos dressed as civilians swoop in to capture or kill fugitive insurgents. "In consultations, the Americans have made it clear that they see the need for undercover work to flush out wanted terrorists. But they lack personnel qualified in Arabic and the basic cultural knowledge needed to blend in," an Israeli military source said.

The Guardian reported that Israeli "consultants" were helping train U.S. special forces in ways to "neutralize" guerrilla leaders. "This is basically an assassination program. That is what is being conceptualized here. This is a hunter-killer team," a former senior U.S. intelligence official told the newspaper.

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West Bank of the Tigris

The Baltimore Sun, 10 December 2003

AMERICAN TACTICS against insurgents in Iraq are coming to resemble Israel's in its conflict with the Palestinians, and it's not hard to see why.

For one thing, cordoning off villages and blowing up houses and seizing relatives of suspected fighters may simply be the most obvious policy for a big army occupying uncertain or hostile territory. But for another, it turns out that the U.S. Army has actually been coached by Israeli officers, according to several published reports.

Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, the U.S. commander in Iraq, says that attacks by insurgents are likely to escalate through the winter and spring. The Pentagon has apparently decided to borrow a page from the Israelis and send in more Special Forces troops, essentially to target and kill leaders of enemy cells. The hope is that elite assassination squads will do a better job ferreting out their foes, while minimizing civilian casualties, than an armored division can do, even if they don't win any hearts and

minds. It seems reasonable, because it actually comes closer to police work than to warfare, and that's what is needed.

There are just two problems: Identification with Israel is fatal to the American cause in Iraq and throughout the Middle East. To the extent that Iraqis see Hamas as fighting for them, and to the extent that fedayeen and jihadist fighters in Iraq see bombing an American convoy as a blow on behalf of the Palestinians, the whole U.S. enterprise is lost.

Second, it's difficult to argue that Israeli policies in the West Bank and Gaza Strip have been paying off. The intifada continues. Peace seems remote at best. And world opinion has turned strongly against Israel.

Surely, Pentagon planners recognize the risks inherent in their new course. The clear implication is that they have lost faith in the previous occupation policies.

It is worth noting that another major shift is going on: Finally, belatedly, the State Department has started sending virtually all available Arabic speakers to Iraq. They no longer need to get political (meaning neoconservative) clearance. The aim is to get Americans into the country who might actually be able to get a sense of what is going on there.

Neither of these is a small change, or a midcourse correction. They wouldn't have happened if the first seven months of the U.S. occupation of Iraq had been anything close to a success. It's commendable that the Bush administration is pragmatic enough to try something new, though the prospect of stoking an intifada from one end of Iraq to the other is unsettling.

One course of action that looks as though it may be shaping up would be particularly disastrous: jamming a lid on Iraq sometime in the first half of 2004, so that the place appears to be subdued come Election Day in November. Short-term fixes like that have a way of leading to long-term and needlessly painful headaches. A migraine in Iraq would be no way to mark President Bush's second term.

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[Army: No Israeli trainers at Bragg](#)

by Kevin Maurer, *Fayetteville Observer*, 10 December 2003

U.S. Army Special Operations officials are denying a British newspaper report that Israeli advisers came to Fort Bragg to train special forces soldiers in counter-insurgency tactics including assassination.

The Guardian, a British newspaper, reported Tuesday that the Israeli Defense Force sent urban warfare specialists to Fort Bragg to train special forces soldiers to act as "hunter-killer" teams tasked with killing guerrilla leaders in Iraq and foreign fighters attempting to cross the Syrian border with Iraq.

The Guardian quoted two unnamed sources in its report. One confirmed that the Israeli advisers did the training at Fort Bragg.

"This command is not conducting any combined U.S. or Israeli training at Fort Bragg," Lt. Col. Hans Bush, a spokesman for U.S. Army Special Operations, said. The U.S. Army Special Operations Command is based at Fort Bragg.

It is unclear if the training occurred elsewhere. Calls to U.S. Special Operations Command, which oversees all U.S. special operations forces and U.S. Central Command, which is in charge of U.S. forces in Iraq, seeking comment about the reported training were not returned. Both commands are based at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Fla.

Bush said working and training with foreign military soldiers "is a core task" of special operations units.

"Our training focuses on doctrinal approaches to special operations in general," he said.

International flavor

Soldiers from other nations often come to Fort Bragg to train at the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School.

U.S. Special Forces units are trained in guerrilla warfare, and one of their primary missions is "foreign internal defense."

Foreign internal defense is the development of skills, tactics and techniques to counter a guerrilla movement against a standing government, he said.



Israeli Involvement in the Occupation of Iraq

A Dossier of The **BRussells** Tribunal

Bush said assassination is not part of that training.

Special Forces units are also trained to perform combat search and rescue missions, peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance and counter-drug operations.

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US, Israel prepare mass killings in Iraq

By Bill Vann

10 December 2003

The Bush administration is about to launch a campaign of wholesale killings in Iraq with the assistance of the Israeli military, according to both US and Israeli sources quoted in several recent news reports.

Frustrated over the growing popular resistance to the US military occupation and determined to reduce US casualties in Iraq before next November's election, the administration has authorized a policy that could well resemble the infamous "Operation Phoenix" assassination program run by the CIA during the Vietnam War. That operation claimed the lives of as many as 41,000 Vietnamese over a four-year period beginning in 1968.

In preparation for the new counterinsurgency campaign, the US military has brought urban warfare specialists from the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) to Fort Bragg, North Carolina, the headquarters of the US Special Forces. They are training assassination teams in methods that the IDF has used to suppress Palestinian resistance to the Israel occupation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"This is basically an assassination program.... This is a hunter-killer team," a former senior intelligence official told the British *Guardian* newspaper. He warned that Washington's reliance on Israeli assistance in launching the operation would only intensify anger over the US occupation throughout the Middle East.

"It is bonkers, insane," the former official said. "Here we are—we're already being compared to Sharon in the Arab world, and we've just confirmed it by bringing in the Israelis and setting up assassination teams."

The *Guardian* also cited intelligence sources in Washington as reporting that Israeli military "consultants" have been sent to Iraq to advise US forces there on counterinsurgency operations.

According to the British newspaper, the new operation also includes the deployment of killer squads inside Syria to hunt down suspected resistance fighters from other Arab countries before they cross the border into Iraq.

Meanwhile, an article by Seymour Hersh, the veteran US investigative reporter, appeared in this week's *New Yorker* magazine also warning of a "major escalation of the Special Forces covert war in Iraq" and providing additional confirmation of Israel's role in training those who will carry out the assassination program.

According to Hersh, a new Special Forces group—Task Force 121—has been formed, drawing upon Army Delta Force troops, Navy SEALs and CIA paramilitaries. "Its highest priority is the neutralization of the Baathist insurgents, by capture or assassination," he reports.

Hersh continues: "According to American and Israeli military and intelligence officials, Israeli commandos and intelligence units have been working closely with their American counterparts at the Special Forces training base at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, and in Israel to help them prepare for operations in Iraq. Israeli commandos are expected to serve as ad-hoc advisers—again, in secret—when full-field operations begin."

US and Israeli officials have refused to comment on the record about this collaboration on the Iraqi counterinsurgency campaign. "No one wants to talk about this; it's incendiary," an Israeli official told Hersh. "Both governments have decided at the highest level that it is in their interest to keep a low profile on US-Israeli cooperation" on the assassination program.

The new revelations concerning the Israeli role in preparing US troops to drown the Iraqi resistance in blood follow reports from Iraq indicating that the US military has already introduced tactics pioneered by the IDF in the occupied Palestinian territories.

In recent weeks there have been repeated incidents in which US forces have demolished homes believed to belong to members of the Iraqi resistance. In addition, relatives of suspected resistance leaders have been taken hostage, and, in at least one instance, an entire village has been surrounded by razor wire, with its residents forced to enter and leave through a checkpoint manned by US soldiers.

All of these are tactics that have been employed by the Israeli occupation forces during their crackdowns in the West Bank and Gaza.

A substantiation of the Israeli role in supplying tactics for the US counterinsurgency campaign in Iraq came last July in a letter to *Army* magazine from a senior Pentagon planning officer.

Brig. Gen. Michael Vane, US Army Deputy Chief of Staff for Doctrine, Concepts and Strategies, confirmed that US military officers had been sent to Israel to consult on urban combat and intelligence methods with the IDF.

The general wrote: “Although there is much work to be done, it is inaccurate to characterize our thinking and doctrine on urban warfare as anachronistic. Experience continues to teach us many lessons, and we continue to evaluate and incorporate them appropriately into our concepts, doctrine and training.”

Vane continued: “For example, we recently traveled to Israel to glean lessons learned from their counterterrorist operations in urban areas.”

The US-Israeli cooperation on Iraq is not new. Before the invasion last March, US forces were sent to Israel to train for urban warfare at an IDF mockup of a Palestinian town in the Negev desert. US officers also reportedly reviewed Israeli tactics in the brutal assault on the Palestinian refugee camp in Jenin the previous year.

There is an unmistakable irony in Washington’s turn to the Israeli “experts” on repression. Within the last month, four former heads of Shin Bet, Israel’s internal security agency that directs so-called anti-terrorist operations, as well as the current chief of staff of the Israeli military have all warned that the iron-fisted repression employed in the occupied territories by the right-wing Zionist regime of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon is preparing a social and military catastrophe.

So-called “targeted assassinations” that almost invariably claim the lives of large numbers of bystanders and collective punishment—including the mass destruction of homes and the use of roadblocks and curfews—have only increased the Palestinians’ hatred of the occupation and led to mass support for acts of resistance.

There is no reason to believe that the deployment of Israeli-trained US military death squads in Iraq combined with the other illegal means of repression already in use by the occupation authorities will not generate a similar increase in support for the resistance among broad layers of the Iraqi population. Far from extricating American troops from the quagmire created by Bush’s policy, the resort to these murderous tactics will only deepen the conflict in Iraq.

Many of the leading figures in the Bush administration, who planned the Iraq war and continue to direct the occupation, have the closest political connections to the right-wing Likud government in Israel and are politically blind to the bankruptcy of Sharon’s strategy of repression.

Meanwhile, playing the central role in organizing the new counterinsurgency campaign is Lt. Gen. William “Jerry” Boykin. The general, a Special Forces veteran, became embroiled in controversy earlier

this year for publicly portraying the war in Iraq as a struggle between Christianity and Islam. He also proclaimed that he answered only to God for his actions as a commander of a “Christian army.” In remarks to Christian evangelical audiences, Boykin expressed the view that God had placed Bush in the White House, despite the fact that “the majority of the American people did not vote for him.”

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld brushed aside the widespread demands for Boykin’s dismissal when reports of the inflammatory remarks were published in October. It is now clear that Rumsfeld insisted that the general remain at his post because of his key involvement in planning the escalation of repression in Iraq.

Hersh points out an additional motive behind the turn to greater reliance on Special Forces troops in Iraq. Under the Pentagon’s rules of engagement, the operations of Special Forces units remain secret, including their deployment overseas. Therefore, the addition of such troops to the US occupation force in Iraq will not be publicly disclosed. Under conditions in which, for political reasons, the administration has vowed to reduce the number of US troops deployed in Iraq, it can covertly add substantial forces, while hiding the buildup from the American people.

The Special Forces have undergone an immense expansion under the Bush administration. Hersh notes that the Pentagon’s budget provides \$6.5 billion for their operations and that the total number of such troops, both active and reserve, has risen to 47,000.

http://www.wsws.org/articles/2003/dec2003/iraq-d10_prn.shtml

U.S. employs Israeli tactics in Iraq

Urban warfare methods adapted to fight insurgency

The Associated Press

updated 11:58 a.m. ET Dec. 13, 2003

JERUSALEM - In fighting insurgents in Iraq, the United States is drawing on some of Israel’s methods and experiences in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, including running checkpoints and tracking militants with drone aircraft, Israeli officials say.

Israeli and U.S. security experts have met repeatedly in recent months to discuss urban warfare and Israel’s lessons from its grueling three-year fight against Palestinian militants.

In public comments, Israeli and U.S. officials acknowledge “strategic cooperation” and confirm high-level meetings, the most recent one last week in Tel Aviv. However, they play down the contacts as routine, apparently for fear the Arab world will be outraged.

Recent U.S. methods in Iraq increasingly mimic those Israel uses in the West Bank and Gaza — setting up impromptu checkpoints, keeping militants on the defensive with frequent arrest raids and, in at least one case, encircling a village and distributing travel permits.

Israel briefs U.S. on use of drones

An Israeli security official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Israel has briefed the U.S. military on its frequent use of drones, or unmanned reconnaissance aircraft, which allow officers at Israeli military headquarters to watch operations in real time.

Israel uses drones to monitor targeted killings, often helicopter missile attacks on fugitives' cars. Israel has killed at least 117 terror suspects and 88 bystanders in targeted attacks.

The Israeli security official said Israel has taught the U.S. military how to make use of intelligence information within minutes to attack a moving target. The U.S. military has not formally adopted targeted killings, though some wanted Iraqis have been killed in arrest raids.

A U.S. Army officer, speaking on condition of anonymity, said U.S. troops try to stay clear of methods that look like collective punishment. Israel routinely demolishes the family homes of Palestinian attackers in hopes of deterring future attacks.

The British newspaper The Guardian recently reported Israeli advisers are training U.S. soldiers at Fort Bragg, N.C.

Lt. Col. Hans Bush, of the U.S. Army's Special Operations Command, said there are no Israeli forces "currently teaching Army Special Operations Command forces at Fort Bragg."

Last week, a large delegation from the Army Training and Doctrine Command in Fort Monroe, Va., visited Israel. Harvey Perritt, the command's civilian spokesman, said the meeting was routine, but would not elaborate.

The Israeli army said in a statement it does not comment on "ongoing strategic cooperation between the U.S. and the Israeli military."

But military officials close to the sides, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the meetings focused on lessons learned from Israel's fighting in the West Bank and Gaza and how to adapt them to Iraq.

Israel also gave the United States a training video for troops to illustrate an 11-point code on treating civilians, the rights of international relief groups and other issues "very tied into...the daily dilemmas" of urban warfare, said Lt. Col. Amos Guiora, commander of the Israeli army's school of military law.

The Israeli military recently began showing the video to its troops, amid persistent Palestinian complaints of mistreatment by soldiers.

Checkpoint doctrine

Israel has an entire doctrine on operating checkpoints: how many soldiers are needed for different types of blockades and how to differentiate between civilians and militants, said Eitan Ben-Eliahu, a former Israeli air force commander.

“These are details that only people who were involved in it for many years can know, and other armies, like the U.S. military, haven’t had ... enough experience,” he said.

Urban warfare is different from conventional fighting in every way, Ben-Eliahu said. Soldiers are often confronted with face-to-face battles against an enemy willing to commit suicide. And soldiers have to avoid killing civilians who mingle, knowingly or not, among militants, he said.

An Israeli security source said American officers have visited a mock-up of an Arab town used for Israeli training. Earlier this year, Israeli and American troops held joint exercises in Israel’s Negev Desert, focusing on air defenses.

Brig. Gen. Michael Vane, deputy chief of staff at the U.S. Army’s Training and Doctrine Command, acknowledged in a letter to Army Magazine in July that “we recently traveled to Israel to glean lessons learned from their counter-terrorist operations in urban areas.”

Israeli expert predicts U.S. defeat

Martin Van Creveld, an Israeli military expert, warned that just as Israel has been unsuccessful in eliminating militant groups and suicide bombers, the United States cannot expect to be victorious in Iraq.

Van Creveld traveled to Camp Lejeune, N.C., last year to lecture U.S. military officials on the door-to-door fighting that took place in April 2002 in the West Bank refugee camp of Jenin. Twenty-three Israeli soldiers and 52 Palestinians were killed in the battle.

“They are already doing things that we have been doing for years to no avail, like demolishing buildings ... like closing off villages in barbed wire,” Van Creveld said. “The Americans are coming here to try to mimic all kinds of techniques, but it’s not going to do them any good.”

In Iraq, the Americans have a more difficult task than Israel’s in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Van Creveld said. Iraq is larger, the borders are open and there is almost unlimited access to arms.

“I don’t see how on earth they (the U.S.) can win. I think this is going to end the same way Vietnam did,” Van Creveld said. “They are going to flee the country hanging on the strings of helicopters,” he added, referring to the 1973 U.S. departure from Saigon.

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URL: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/3702655/p1/0/>

- **Israel trains US assassination squads in Iraq**
- [Julian Borger](#) in Washington
- [The Guardian](#),
- Tuesday December 9 2003

About this article

This article appeared in [the Guardian](#) on Tuesday December 09 2003 . It was last updated at 02:12 on December 09 2003.

Israeli advisers are helping train US special forces in aggressive counter-insurgency operations in Iraq, including the use of assassination squads against guerrilla leaders, US intelligence and military sources said yesterday.

The Israeli Defence Force (IDF) has sent urban warfare specialists to Fort Bragg in North Carolina, the home of US special forces, and according to two sources, Israeli military "consultants" have also visited Iraq.

US forces in Iraq's Sunni triangle have already begun to use tactics that echo Israeli operations in the occupied territories, sealing off centres of resistance with razor wire and razing buildings from where attacks have been launched against US troops.

But the secret war in Iraq is about to get much tougher, in the hope of suppressing the Ba'athist-led insurgency ahead of next November's presidential elections.

US special forces teams are already behind the lines inside Syria attempting to kill foreign jihadists before they cross the border, and a group focused on the "neutralisation" of guerrilla leaders is being set up, according to sources familiar with the operations.

"This is basically an assassination programme. That is what is being conceptualised here. This is a hunter-killer team," said a former senior US intelligence official, who added that he feared the new tactics and enhanced cooperation with Israel would only inflame a volatile situation in the Middle East.

"It is bonkers, insane. Here we are - we're already being compared to Sharon in the Arab world, and we've just confirmed it by bringing in the Israelis and setting up assassination teams."

"They are being trained by Israelis in Fort Bragg," a well-informed intelligence source in Washington said.

"Some Israelis went to Iraq as well, not to do training, but for providing consultations."

The consultants' visit to Iraq was confirmed by another US source who was in contact with American officials there.

The Pentagon did not return calls seeking comment, but a military planner, Brigadier General Michael Vane, mentioned the cooperation with Israel in a letter to Army magazine in July about the Iraq counter-insurgency campaign.

"We recently travelled to Israel to glean lessons learned from their counterterrorist operations in urban areas," wrote General Vane, deputy chief of staff at the army's training and doctrine command.

An Israeli official said the IDF regularly shared its experience in the West Bank and Gaza with the US armed forces, but said he could not comment about cooperation in Iraq.

"When we do activities, the US military attaches in Tel Aviv are interested. I assume it's the same as the British. That's the way allies work. The special forces come to our people and say, do debrief on an operation we have done," the official said.

"Does it affect Iraq? It's not in our interest or the American interest or in anyone's interest to go into that. It would just fit in with jihadist prejudices."

Colonel Ralph Peters, a former army intelligence officer and a critic of Pentagon policy in Iraq, said yesterday there was nothing wrong with learning lessons wherever possible.

"When we turn to anyone for insights, it doesn't mean we blindly accept it," Col Peters said. "But I think what you're seeing is a new realism. The American tendency is to try to win all the hearts and minds. In Iraq, there are just some hearts and minds you can't win. Within the bounds of human rights, if you do make an example of certain villages it gets the attention of the others, and attacks have gone down in the area."

The new counter-insurgency unit made up of elite troops being put together in the Pentagon is called Task Force 121, New Yorker magazine reported in yesterday's edition.

One of the planners behind the offensive is a highly controversial figure, whose role is likely to inflame Muslim opinion: Lieutenant General William "Jerry" Boykin.

In October, there were calls for his resignation after he told a church congregation in Oregon that the US was at war with Satan, who "wants to destroy us as a Christian army".

"He's been promoted a rank above his abilities," he said. "Some generals are pretty good on battlefield but are disastrous nearer the source of power."

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2003/dec/09/iraq.israel/print>

Israel Claims 'Lost Property' In Arab Countries

GAZA CITY, August 17 (IslamOnline.net & News Agencies) – In a bid seen as trying to get a bigger slice of the grand Iraqi cake, Israel has drawn up a file on Jewish property and money allegedly left by Jewish immigrants in Arab countries, particularly Iraq.

The Israeli justice ministry spokesman said that the government would ask Jews in Israel and all over the world within the few coming days to present information on their purported belongings in Iraq, the Palestinian Information Center (PIC) said Saturday, August 16.



The Jews are seeking 'compensation'

Israeli sources put at \$10 billion the value of the so-called Jewish property in Iraq alone, noting that Israel expects the would-be Iraqi oil minister return these money calmly and without any media fuss.

One of the Jews whose family used to live in Iraq has estimated the value of Jewish property there at a mind-boggling \$20 billion, the PIC said.

Quoting former Israeli energy minister Moshe Shahal, of an Iraqi origin, the center said that negotiations between Tel Aviv and Washington over this issue are underway, disclosing that a secret agreement was currently being drafted over the alleged Jewish property in Iraq.

He said that former U.S. president Bill Clinton took the initiative in raising the issue, claiming that Clinton had touched on the matter with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat.

Shahal further purported that Clinton suggested establishing an international fund under the supervision of the United States and the European Union to compensate those Jews.

He said that former Israeli governments abstained from tackling the issue for fear that it would give the Palestinians "a pretext" to demand compensations from Israel.

Prof. Ehuda Shinhab, professor of sociology in Tel Aviv University, has dismissed as "evil and immoral" the Israeli attempt to compare between immigration of Arab Jews to the Zionist state and Palestinian forced evacuation in 1948.

He affirmed that the Palestinians' mass exodus in 1948 was enforced by Zionist forces that later razed to the ground their villages while Jews leaving the Arab countries and heading to "Israel" had done that with their own free will.

Lawsuits

He said that thousands of Jews of Iraqi origin, who live in Northern America and Europe, have already filled in applications to restore their alleged property, noting that Jews living in the U.S. states of Los Angeles and Boston are set to file lawsuits to demand substantial compensations from Iraq, Syria, Egypt and Lebanon.

Shahal further expected that Jews would be compensated shortly after the yet-to-be new Iraqi regime in Iraq abolish the so-called nationalization laws drafted by the ousted Iraqi regime of Saddam Hussein.

"Annulling these laws would give legitimacy to restoring the Jewish property (in Arab countries," he said.

He said that the current Israeli government of Ariel Sharon -- the only Israeli government to agree on demanding compensations -- held relevant talks recently and put forward possible alternatives to restore the alleged property.

Shahal, however, said that the Israeli cabinet has decided to put the "Jewish property" in Iraq on the back burner due to the "hypersensitive" situation there, noting that the compensations campaign would focus now restoring alleged property of some 900,000 Jews, one-third of them are from Iraq, Egypt and Yemen.

The Israeli finance minister, for its part, said that the attention is riveted now on the frozen Iraqi money in the U.S., which is estimated at \$3 billion.



Shahal expects that Jews would be compensated

Israel seeks pipeline for Iraqi oil

US discusses plan to pump fuel to its regional ally and solve energy headache at a stroke

- Ed Vuillamy in Washington
- [The Observer](#),
- Sunday April 20 2003
- [Article history](#)

About this article

This article appeared in [the Observer](#) on Sunday April 20 2003 . It was last updated at 04:09 on April 20 2003.

Plans to build a pipeline to siphon oil from newly conquered Iraq to Israel are being discussed between Washington, Tel Aviv and potential future government figures in Baghdad.

The plan envisages the reconstruction of an old pipeline, inactive since the end of the British mandate in Palestine in 1948, when the flow from Iraq's northern oilfields to Palestine was re-directed to Syria.

Now, its resurrection would transform economic power in the region, bringing revenue to the new US-dominated Iraq, cutting out Syria and solving Israel's energy crisis at a stroke.

It would also create an end less and easily accessible source of cheap Iraqi oil for the US guaranteed by reliable allies other than Saudi Arabia - a keystone of US foreign policy for decades and especially since 11 September 2001.

Until 1948, the pipeline ran from the Kurdish-controlled city of Mosul to the Israeli port of Haifa, on its northern Mediterranean coast.

The revival of the pipeline was first discussed openly by the Israeli Minister for National Infrastructures, Joseph Paritzky, according to the Israeli newspaper Ha'aretz .

The paper quotes Paritzky as saying that the pipeline would cut Israel's energy bill drastically - probably by more than 25 per cent - since the country is currently largely dependent on expensive imports from Russia.

US intelligence sources confirmed to The Observer that the project has been discussed. One former senior CIA official said: 'It has long been a dream of a powerful section of the people now driving this

administration [of President George W. Bush] and the war in Iraq to safeguard Israel's energy supply as well as that of the United States.

'The Haifa pipeline was something that existed, was resurrected as a dream and is now a viable project - albeit with a lot of building to do.'

The editor-in-chief of the Middle East Economic Review, Walid Khadduri, says in the current issue of Jane's Foreign Report that 'there's not a metre of it left, at least in Arab territory'.

To resurrect the pipeline would need the backing of whatever government the US is to put in place in Iraq, and has been discussed - according to Western diplomatic sources - with the US-sponsored Iraqi National Congress and its leader Ahmed Chalabi, the former banker favoured by the Pentagon for a powerful role in the war's aftermath.

Sources at the State Department said that concluding a peace treaty with Israel is to be 'top of the agenda' for a new Iraqi government, and Chalabi is known to have discussed Iraq's recognition of the state of Israel.

The pipeline would also require permission from Jordan. Paritzky's Ministry is believed to have approached officials in Amman on 9 April this year. Sources told Ha'aretz that the talks left Israel 'optimistic'.

James Akins, a former US ambassador to the region and one of America's leading Arabists, said: 'There would be a fee for transit rights through Jordan, just as there would be fees for Israel from those using what would be the Haifa terminal.'

'After all, this is a new world order now. This is what things look like particularly if we wipe out Syria. It just goes to show that it is all about oil, for the United States and its ally.'

Akins was ambassador to Saudi Arabia before he was fired after a series of conflicts with then Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, father of the vision to pipe oil west from Iraq. In 1975, Kissinger signed what forms the basis for the Haifa project: a Memorandum of Understanding whereby the US would guarantee Israel's oil reserves and energy supply in times of crisis.

Kissinger was also master of the American plan in the mid-Eighties - when Saddam Hussein was a key US ally - to run an oil pipeline from Iraq to Aqaba in Jordan, opposite the Israeli port of Eilat.

The plan was promoted by the now Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, and the pipeline was to be built by the Bechtel company, which the Bush administration last week awarded a multi-billion dollar contract for the reconstruction of Iraq.

The memorandum has been quietly renewed every five years, with special legislation attached whereby the US stocks a strategic oil reserve for Israel even if it entailed domestic shortages - at a cost of \$3 billion (£1.9bn) in 2002 to US taxpayers.

This bill would be slashed by a new pipeline, which would have the added advantage of giving the US reliable access to Gulf oil other than from Saudi Arabia.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2003/apr/20/israelandthepalestinians.oil>

U.S. May Study Israel Occupation Tactics

By MATTHEW ROSENBERG

Associated Press Writer

09/19/03: JERUSALEM (AP) -- In an apparent search for pointers on how to police a hostile population, the U.S. military that's trying to bring security to Iraq is showing interest in Israeli software instructing soldiers on how to behave in the West Bank and Gaza, an Israeli military official said Thursday.

Using animated graphics and clips from movies like "Apocalypse Now," the software outlines a "code of conduct" for avoiding abuse of civilians while manning roadblocks, searching homes and conducting other activities, said Lt. Col. Amos Guiora, head of the School of Military Law.

Israeli troops have frequently faced criticism from Palestinian and human rights groups. Two weeks ago, Amnesty International said in a report that Israeli military checkpoints and curfews violate Palestinians' human rights.

U.S. soldiers have also faced criticism in Iraq, where they have been accused of using excessive force.

In a reflection of tensions in Iraq, guerrillas ambushed two U.S. military convoys Thursday, wounding two soldiers. And a nervous American patrol shot at a wedding party late Wednesday, killing a 14-year-old boy and wounding six other people after mistaking celebratory gunfire for an attack, witnesses said.

Guiora told The Associated Press that U.S. military officials had recently seen the software, which was developed this year, and expressed interest. As a result, he said, the military is now working on an

English version for them.

A U.S. official with the Embassy in Tel Aviv would say only that American officers have seen the Israeli software and considered it useful.

Guiora said the software was developed after military lawyers found themselves giving dry lectures to disinterested audiences of troops.

"There are complicated issues. The fact that this (software) is so user-friendly, that it has the movie clips, the sounds, the animation - we felt this was the best way," he said.

Israel's military has set up dozens of roadblocks in the West Bank and Gaza to keep suicide bombers out of Israel. But Palestinians say the travel restrictions unfairly make life a misery for millions. In some cases, sick Palestinians heading to hospitals have died at roadblocks.

Human rights groups have also accused troops of using excessive force and said soldiers are often confused about the rules-of-engagement.

The "code of conduct" includes principles such as not shooting at anyone who is surrendering, showing respect for religious and cultural artifacts and providing medical care to anyone injured - conditions permitting.

Guiora said the software, which is currently being distributed to junior commanders in military, also includes scenarios often encountered by troops.

In one, he said, two soldiers drive up to a pile of rocks blocking the road and are told it may be mined. What to do - call mine-clearing experts, remove the rocks themselves, or get some Palestinians to do it? Anyone choosing the last option is disabused by the program.

<http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article4756.htm>

Israeli Center Opened In Baghdad

By Kamel al-Sharqi, IOL Correspondent

BAGHDAD, August 16 2003 (IslamOnline.net) – An Israeli center said to be specialized in Mid Eastern studies was opened in the occupied Iraqi capital Baghdad, in a provocative move seen by Iraqi academics as the beginning of an Israeli scheme to infiltrate the Iraqi society.

"Israel opened its center on August 1 at a large rented building in Abu Nawaas St. overlooking The Tigris river," they told IslamOnline.net Friday, August 15.

The sources, who requested anonymity, said the center has already started operation, noting that it was the first Israeli center operating publicly in Baghdad since its downfall on April 9.

The heavily-guarded building, they said, obtained work permits from the U.S. occupation authority in Iraq and the Pentagon.

The Iraqis sources said the center is affiliated to the Washington-based MEMRI (short for the Middle East Media Research Institute), an Israeli association set up five years ago, with offshoots in London, Berlin and West Jerusalem.

"Superficially, the center follows up Arab newspapers in the Arab world and Europe, particularly London, translates key articles into Hebrew, English, German, French and Italian and circulate them among subscribers, not to mention state-run Israelis institutions," they clarified.

The sources put at 35,000 the number of subscribers, who receive MEMRI's services on a daily basis, adding that it is a non-profitable organization and employs dozens in its different offshoots.

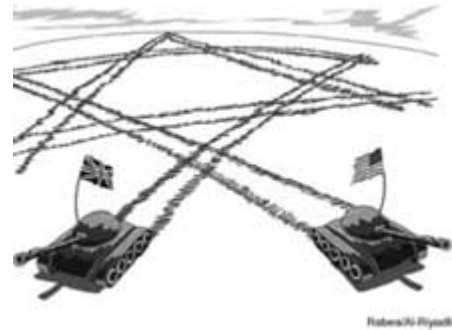
"MEMRI receives donations from Jewish and Zionist institutions from all over the world," they averred.

Brian Whitaker, a Guardian writer, has investigated whether the 'independent' MEMRI is quite what it seems.

He wrote on August 12, 2002, that MEMRI is "rather a mysterious organization. Its website does not give the names of any people to contact, not even an office address."

Whitaker attributed "Memri's air of secrecy" to those who run it, noting that its co-founder, president and registered owner of its website, "is an Israeli called Yigal Carmon."

"Mr - or rather, Colonel - Carmon spent 22 years in Israeli military intelligence and later served as counter-terrorism adviser to two Israeli prime ministers, Yitzhak Shamir and Yitzhak Rabin."



A cartoon published by [Israeli MEMRI](#) institute

The Guardian writer said that based on a retrieved now-deleted page from MEMRI's website archives, he came across the names of six people, "three - including Col Carmon - are described as having worked for Israeli intelligence."

He added that another staff "served in the Israeli army's Northern Command Ordnance Corps."

According to Whitaker MEMRI's co-founder is "Meyrav Wurmser, who is also director of the center for Middle East policy at the Indianapolis-based Hudson Institute.

He noted, in this respect that the "ubiquitous Richard Perle, (former) chairman of the Pentagon's defense policy board, recently joined Hudson's board of trustees."

Judging from the e-mails he receives from MEMRI, the Guardian writer concluded that "the stories selected by Memri for translation follow a familiar pattern: either they reflect badly on the character of Arabs or they in some way further the political agenda of Israel. I am not alone in this unease."

He recalled that Ibrahim Hooper of the Council on American-Islamic Relations told the Washington Times: "Memri's intent is to find the worst possible quotes from the Muslim world and disseminate them as widely as possible."

Whitaker also challenged MEMRI's "claims that it does provide translations from Hebrew media, I can't recall receiving any."

Foul Play

Dr. Anwar Abdu Aziz, professor of political sciences in Baghdad University, charged that MEMRI and its offshoots have sinister objectives.

"Israel's underground goals in the Middle East are not a secret; this center is, in effect, a façade for intelligence and security bodies orchestrated by the Mossad (Israel's intelligence service)," he stressed.

The academic urged the U.S.-handpicked interim Iraqi Governing Council to immediately shut down the Israeli center in Baghdad "because it will penetrate our security."

For her part, Dr. Soad Bahudin al-Mousli from Al-Rafeden University, said Iraqis have never pronounced the word "Israel" and always referred to it as "the Zionist enemy."

She wondered: "Who would have imagined that Baghdad would someday host a center serving Israeli plots and schemes?"



A sample of Israeli-made products now invading Iraqi markets

Before the ouster of Iraqi president Saddam Hussein, Iraq was the only country in the Arab world – if not in the entire world – to sentence anyone who imported Israeli products to capital punishment.

"This is the product of the U.S. occupation of Iraq and reaffirms our conviction that Israel and the United States are two sides of the same coin," Dr. Mousli underlined.

She further exhorted Iraqis to stand up to this Israeli infiltration, which runs counter to the interests of the Arab nations.

"Arab intelligentsia should expose all hostile Israeli practices," she said, charging that the U.S. occupation is Israel in disguise.

Famed Palestinian journalist Mohammad Samara regretted the existence of such a center in Baghdad.

"It is breaking our hearts to see the Israeli Mossad in Baghdad, the citadel of Arabs," Samara lamented.

Retaining some optimism, he said: "We still pin our high hopes on the brave people of Iraq to resist.

"Iraqis and Palestinians will continue to hold the Arab torch of struggle against powers of evil.

"Israel will never fulfill its much-pursued dream of establishing a (Jewish) state from the Euphrates to the River Nile as long as the Arab nation continues to give birth to heroes every day," Samara said.

<http://www.islamonline.net/English/News/2003-08/16/article02.shtml>

Israel reportedly helping with U.S. war preparation

By John Diamond, USA TODAY

WASHINGTON — Israel is secretly playing a key role in U.S. preparations for possible war with Iraq, helping to train soldiers and Marines for urban warfare, conducting clandestine surveillance missions in the western Iraqi desert and allowing the United States to place combat supplies in Israel, according to U.S. Defense and intelligence officials.

The activities are designed to help shorten any war with Iraq and keep Israel out of it. But working with Israel on the war effort is highly sensitive. It could undercut already shaky support for an invasion among friendly Arab states.

Because Israel's activities are classified, they have drawn little attention or criticism in the Middle East. "The Americans have asked us to keep a low profile, and we accept that," an Israeli official says.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, members of the Bush administration, intelligence officials and diplomats described Israel's involvement:

- Israeli commandos, using their own satellite intelligence and imagery provided by U.S. intelligence services, have conducted clandestine surveillance missions of Scud missile sites in western Iraq, according to the intelligence official and a senior Pentagon official.

Missiles launched from western Iraq could reach Israel, potentially carrying chemical or biological weapons. That could prompt an Israeli response that would drive Arab nations to Saddam's side.

The teams have mapped concrete launch pads built by the Iraqis to improve the accuracy of their Scuds. They have also conducted reconnaissance that could help U.S. commandos attack the sites.

- Israeli infantry units with experience in urban warfare during the Palestinian uprising helped train U.S. Army and Marine counterparts this summer and fall for possible urban battles in Iraq, a foreign defense official says. The Israelis have built two mock cities, complete with mosques, hanging laundry and even the odd donkey meandering down dusty streets. A defense official said the sites far surpass U.S. facilities. The location of the training centers is classified.
- The Pentagon has beefed up stocks of ammunition, fuel and other basic military staples at six storage depots in Israel over the past year, U.S. Defense and intelligence officials say. The material is not part of normal U.S. military aid to Israel but would be held in reserve for possible use by U.S. forces in combat contingencies, such as a threat to Israel by a neighboring state or commando missions into western Iraq by U.S. forces. The location of the depots is classified.

Israel has declared that it "reserves the right to defend itself against an unprovoked attack," according to an Israeli official. But Prime Minister Ariel Sharon has told Bush administration officials that only an attack that caused mass casualties would prompt a massive Israeli military response.

Find this article at: http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2002-11-03-israel-usat_x.htm
