

LaRouche proposed decades ago, canals between the Mediterranean and the Dead Sea, and from the Dead Sea to the Red Sea, should be dug. Along these canals, floating nuclear plants, high-temperature, gas-cooled reactors, should be placed, to produce the highest energy yield. With four nuclear modules, each 350 megawatts, a dual purpose desalination electricity plant would provide power for a multi-effect distillation system. This could provide a volume of fresh water of 401,500 cubic meters per day, and 466 megawatts net electrical power output.

Such an “island” of four nuclear modules, as the nuclear engineers call them, could provide 145.6 million cubic meters per year. Just four of these islands, would provide 650 million cubic meters. Twenty plants, half of them lining the new canals, would provide 2,920 million cubic meters of water per year, which would more than double the available water for Israel, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights. The availability of abundant fresh water, would make it possible to develop around each of these nuclear islands, new urban centers, with agricultural and industrial production.

Desalination technology is nothing new to the region. Saudi Arabia, a country which is largely desert, has become the world’s biggest producer of desalinated water, producing 520 million gallons per day, from 25 stations, which covers 70% of the potable water in the Kingdom. On Nov. 15, as reported by the Saudi Information Ministry, the governor of the Saline Water Conversion Corporation, Dr. Fahad Balghunem, announced that three new desalination plants are under construction in al-Khobar, Jubail, and al-Shoaia, and five delivery systems, which will bring the total length of water pipelines up to 4,155 kilometers, serviced by 29 pumping stations. His corporation is studying the possibility of installing “20 more plants, with a daily production capacity of 2.6 million cubic meters of water, in addition to 12 water delivery station projects, with a total length of 2,640 km.”

There is no reason why this could not be done elsewhere in the Middle East as well; indeed, there is no reason why it could not have been done in 1993, when the Oslo Accords had been signed. The most promising aspect of the Oslo agreement between Israel and the Palestinians, was, in fact, the economic annexes, which spelled out areas of cooperation, focussed on water development. In those annexes, not only bilateral water development plans were laid out, but also, a regional perspective, which explicitly included the Dead Sea-Mediterranean Canal, and explicitly identified desalination as the means to create new water sources.

The program—the only economically viable approach—did not go through at the time, due to the objections posed by the World Bank. If this perspective were introduced into the Israeli-Syrian talks, as well as those between the Palestinian Authority and Israel, and later with Lebanon, it would radically redefine the parameters of the conflict around water, solving it once and for all. If President Clinton were to facilitate such an approach, he could fully justify his expressed optimism.

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## Israel

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# Iran-Contra returns to haunt George Bush

by Dean Andromidas

Israeli police have discovered secret documents concerning the Iran-Contra affair in the home of a man accused of being hired as a hit-man for Ofer Nimrodi. Ofer Nimrodi is the son of the arms dealer Ya’acov Nimrodi, who had been a key player in the Iran-Contra affair, and served as the Israeli intermediary between U.S. representatives—in particular National Security Council consultant Michael Ledeen—and the Iranian regime. It was the senior Nimrodi who brokered the first round of the arms-for-hostages deals which were at the center of the Iran-Contra affair, which broke out in public in 1986.

The key man at the center of Irangate was not, of course, Oliver North or Nimrodi, but former U.S. President George Bush, who as Vice President in the Reagan administration, headed the Special Situation Group in the National Security Council. It was under Bush’s direction that the NSC staff apparatus became literally a parallel secret government that ran the illegal Contra supply operation, and hatched the idea of selling weapons to Iran in return for securing the freedom of American hostages, and then illegally transferring the proceeds earned in the transactions to fund the Contra supply operation. Bush later told the world that he was “out of the loop” on this affair, and escaped prosecution following a secret campaign of death and intimidation which has been detailed in the October 1996 *EIR Special Report*, “George Bush and the 12333 Serial Murder Ring.”

### **Bush very much ‘in the loop’**

According to Israeli press reports, the documents that were found by Israeli police included a report detailing financial irregularities concerning the various arms deals. According to the daily *Ha’aretz* on Dec. 6, the report was a censored version of a secret document written by Raphael Vardi, that not only detailed the financial irregularities, but also detailed the fact that then-Vice President Bush was well informed on the entire operation. The censored version, omits mention of Bush “so as not to injure his reputation,” according to the Israeli daily. This censored report was given by the Israeli government to the Congressional committee which investigated Irangate in 1987.

Israeli authorities believe that there is at least an indirect connection between these documents and the ongoing criminal case being pursued against Ofer and Ya’acov Nimrodi,

which includes conspiracy to murder. Their discovery led to a search of the senior Nimrodi's office and home where police discovered other documents. Nimrodi claims that the documents were not secret, and that he was preparing a book on his role in Iran-Contra.

Nonetheless, the discovery of the documents has sparked new interest in the Iran-Contra affair, especially given that several unsolved issues in the case affect Israel directly.

Speaking on Israeli TV on Dec. 5, former Prime Minister Shimon Peres told an interviewer that in 1985, he, as Foreign Minister, along with Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, approved the request by the Reagan administration to arrange the sale of weapons to Iran in order to secure the release of American hostages in Lebanon in 1985. Peres revealed that, while the request came from U.S. security agents, he personally discussed the deal with President Ronald Reagan, and had no idea that Reagan's Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger and Secretary of State George Shultz were not fully informed about the operation. "I didn't know there was a dispute among them," Peres said, no doubt tongue-in-cheek. "It was the surprise of my life when I later found out that Shultz and Weinberger didn't know."

It should be remembered that Weinberger disclaimed any specific knowledge of the Iran arms transfers, as did Bush. It was a denial that did not prevent independent counsel Lawrence Walsh from indicting Weinberger in late 1992 for perjury. He never went to trial because George Bush in effect obstructed justice by pardoning him, in one of Bush's last acts as President.

The Israelis never tried to deny their role as intermediaries, because no Israeli laws were broken, and it was done as a result of a formal request from Israel's principal ally. Nonetheless, there continues to be a long list of unsolved mysteries concerning the Israeli side of the affair.

In its coverage of the discovery of these documents, the Dec. 2 *Jerusalem Post* recounted the mysterious death of Amiram Nir, who replaced Nimrodi as the key liaison with North and Bush when Peres became Prime Minister in 1986. The *Post* wrote how Nir died in a plane crash in Mexico just as the Iran-Contra scandal broke, and how the Central Intelligence Agency was suspected as causing the crash. They write that North had wanted Nir to take the entire blame for the Iran-Contra diversion scheme, but Nir refused.

The *Jerusalem Post* then mentions the role of George Bush: "The deals took place during the administrations of former U.S. President Ronald Reagan and Vice President George Bush. At the time both denied any knowledge of Nir's activities, however Bush met with Nir at the King David Hotel in Jerusalem three months before the scandal became public and at one point Reagan wrote to Peres expressing his gratitude for the efforts being undertaken by Nir."

There were also suspicions that Ya'acov Nimrodi arranged for the death of Nir, presumably as a favor to Bush. In addition, Nimrodi has been accused of illegally siphoning off \$2 million from the arms sales which became the seed money

for his latter rise to become an Israeli billionaire.

The possibility that these earlier cases may be reopened could have unpredictable consequences for former President Bush's continued quiet retirement, not to mention the election hopes of Texas Gov. George W. Bush. In fact, these revelations come at a time when there is an ongoing fight within the Israeli government over whether to release all the documents related to Israel's role in Iran-Contra, and illegal arms sales to Iran during the 1980s Iran-Iraq War.

### **Profile: Ya'acov Nimrodi**

Ya'acov Nimrodi was born in Iran and immigrated to Israel as a boy. In the 1960s and 1970s, he was the Israeli military attaché in Tehran, and then a private businessman conducting arms and business deals. He was also reputed to be an agent of the Mossad; some say he was Mossad station chief and was involved in training the Shah of Iran's Savak secret intelligence services.

After the overthrow of the Shah, he resumed his role, now brokering secret arms deals between Israel and Iran. In 1985, Michael Ledeen, a Mossad mole on the U.S. National Security Council, proposed that Nimrodi act as intermediary in making contacts with Iran for the arms-for-hostages deals which later became part of what was called "Iran-Contra." Nimrodi worked with Al Schwimmer, founder of Israel Aircraft industries, and David Kimche, who was director of the Foreign Ministry and sometime Mossad agent. It is no secret that the arrangement was approved by the leaders of both the Labor and Likud parties, which were in a coalition government at the time. But, when Peres became Prime Minister in 1986, he had Nimrodi replaced by Nir. (Around the same time, Ledeen's role was taken over by North.) While many say that the Americans did not trust Nimrodi, it is also said that Peres did not trust him either.

Working in cahoots with Saudi arms dealer Adnan Khashoggi, Nimrodi became one of the many former Mossad and Shin Bet (domestic intelligence) agents, along with retired military officers, who could parlay their "professional skills" with both Israeli and international business interests that straddled the fine line between big business and organized crime.

In 1988, with the millions earned in his arms deals, Nimrodi gained control of the Israeli Land Development Company, which controlled valuable tracts of property throughout Israel. He used this as a base to enter the entertainment, insurance, and communications sectors, but he never left the arms business. It is well known that he sells weapons throughout the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Africa. Nimrodi's latest project is an effort to open up a casino in the Negev Desert. Although he has yet to receive a government permit (casino gambling is still illegal in Israel), it is rumored that Nimrodi is a secret partner in the Jericho Casino inside the Palestinian National Authority.

Under the Likud governments in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and later under former Prime Minister Benjamin

Netanyahu, Nimrodi flourished. As the current investigations of Nimrodi show, these tycoons maintain a parallel government that has corrupted the most important institutions of the Israeli government. This secret government has the capability to destabilize or sabotage the elected government, and run terrorist operations. As in the case of slain Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, the potential target of this apparatus is no longer merely Arabs and Palestinians, but Israelis themselves.

### Ofer Nimrodi conspires to murder

In November 1991, Robert Maxwell, the British media tycoon, disappeared from his yacht off the coast of Spain. His body was later found, and an incredulous public was told that he committed suicide. Known alternately as an MI6 and Mossad agent, he also enjoyed strong ties to the Russian mafia. The bankrupt Maxwell communications empire owned the major Israeli daily, *Ma'ariv*. Nimrodi bought it in 1992 and made his son, Ofer, editor-in-chief.

In 1995, a major scandal broke out when it was discovered that Nimrodi was illegally wiretapping journalists and editors of his two major competitors, *Ha'aretz* and *Yediot Aharonot*. By the time the police investigation went to the point of indicting Ofer Nimrodi, it was revealed that he was wiretapping government officials, including the police, Defense Ministry officials, the Shin Bet, leading politicians, and even the President of Israel. After Ya'acov Tsur, one of the private detec-

tives whom Nimrodi had hired to do the wiretapping, became a government witness, Nimrodi ended up facing charges of wiretapping and obstruction of justice, including bribing police officers and witnesses. Pleading guilty, he received a light sentence of eight months, of which he only served four.

Then, earlier this year, a private investigator who had worked for Nimrodi in the wiretapping affair, confessed to police that he had been hired by Nimrodi to organize the murder of state witness Ya'acov Tsur. Also targeted was Amos Shockan, the owner and editor-in-chief of *Ha'aretz*, and Arnon Mozes, owner of Israel's largest circulating daily, *Yediot Aharonot*. By the time Nimrodi was arrested, the charges against him included attempted murder, bribery, obstruction of justice, and falsification of evidence. In addition, several senior retired and active duty police officers, as well as two of his lawyers, had also been arrested for conspiring in these crimes with Nimrodi.

As the case proceeded, it has revealed depths of corruption and criminal activity that has frightening implications for the "rule of law" in Israel.

Judge Aryeh Even-Ari, in his denial of Nimrodi's petition for bail on Dec. 4, said, "Even if we begin with the assumption that half of the evidence arrayed against the petitioner has not yet been established, there was enough investigative material to make the court lose sleep. We're talking about a difficult and complex investigation that includes not only the investigation of civilians but also a person in public service."

As of this writing, Ya'acov Nimrodi has also been arrested for his participation in the conspiracy. Although Ofer Nimrodi remains in jail, Ya'acov has been released on bail.

Is there a connection between this current case and Iran-Contra, and therefore George Bush? Is this part of a major political struggle inside Israel over the peace process?

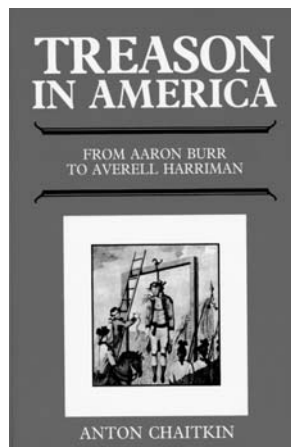
In answer to the first question, one must recall the death of Amiram Nir. His widow has been publicly outspoken about the fact that the official cause of his plane crash was labelled an "accident." She happens to be the sister of Arnon Mozes, the editor-in-chief of *Yediot Aharonot*, whom Nimrodi is accused of conspiring to kill.

The senior Nimrodi is not the only Iran-Contra veteran. According to sources who had been involved in the Contra supply operation, Oded Ben Dov, the alleged hit-man in whose house the police found the Iran-Contra secret documents, is well-known as a player in the Central American arms deals in that period. There are, no doubt, others. Under the threat of prosecution and imprisonment, such figures have been known to speak out.

On the second question, it is important to note that the wiretapping case started during the brief prime ministership of Shimon Peres, yet was concluded when Benjamin Netanyahu became Prime Minister, and Nimrodi was given a light, four-month sentence. The current murder conspiracy case began earlier this year, shortly after Labor Party Prime Minister Ehud Barak took over the government from Netanyahu. Our readers can draw their own conclusions.

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