

John Bredenkamp Puts His Foot in It

by the Editors of EIR

We publish—and then comment on—the attached letter by John Bredenkamp, a South Africa-born businessman who has been at the center of a large number of arms trafficking controversies over the past several decades.

Breco and Masters Group of Companies
From the Chairman's office—John A. Bredenkamp
28 June 2007

Dear Mr Steinberg,

In your article “Will BAE Scandal of Century Bring Down Dick Cheney?” (EIR Volume 34, Number 26, June 29, 2007), you make a number of untrue, incorrect and defamatory allegations about me, which are manifestly malicious.

- You state that I am ‘*a major arms broker throughout Africa*,’ This is a wholly erroneous and extremely damaging allegation. I have repeatedly stated that my involvement in the defence sector is that of a passive investor in Aviation Consultancy Services, a company that represents a number of leading aircraft manufacturers, both civil and military. A simple Google search on the internet would have led you to my website where you would have found this information.

- You say that ‘*U.S. intelligence sources have identified (me) as a conduit for Soviet arms to African insurgents*,’ This is an extremely serious allegation and utterly without foundation. I have never supplied arms to ‘African insurgents’. I can only assume you have made this up to further your own sensationalist agenda.

- You then go on to speculate that this identification raises “*questions about his (my) earlier involvement with the Al-Yamamah project*”. This is totally without foundation. I have never had any involvement in the Al-Yamamah project. Such a fictitious reference must clearly be designed as a deliberate and malevolent slur.

- I am indeed cooperating with the UK's Serious Fraud Office in their investigation re allegations about BAE sales to South Africa. As a non-UK resident, I voluntarily flew to the UK late last year to offer them my assistance.

If you had bothered to check my website—www.breco.info—you would have found the correct information and also would have had the opportunity to contact

my Press Office by e-mail. Instead, you have misrepresented me in a highly damaging, irresponsible and offensive manner. . . .

Regards,
John Bredenkamp

PS—It could also [be] construed by anyone who reads your article that the source of your allegations about me could be Mr William Simpson. To that end, I am copying this letter to him and his publishers, Harper Collins.

* * *

In describing the “charmed life” of John Arnold Bredenkamp, consistently described as an “arms broker,” “arms dealer,” “arms merchant,” “weapons dealer,” “weapons broker,” we must proceed from the reality of the circumstances under which Bredenkamp has operated since no later than the mid-1980s. He dwells in a no-man's land in which a man's hand pleads innocence of the actions conducted by his foot; a world in which the hand which loads the sniper's rifle denies any culpability for the eye which aims at the target, or the finger which pulls the trigger. In brief, he dwells in the same clock-work-orange world he shares with BAE.

Therefore, in describing the “charmed life” of John Arnold Bredenkamp, it is difficult to know where to start. In fact, it is difficult to find a media reference to him that *does not* mention his business in arms trafficking. From the notoriously unreliable, LaRouche-hating Wikipedia, to the London *Observer*, to the *Washington Times*, to the *Guardian* of the U.K., to WorldNet Daily, to the UN Association of the United Kingdom, to a broad swath of British-based organizations and NGOs that specialize in opposing arms proliferation, Bredenkamp is repeatedly mentioned in the context of arms trafficking—selling, brokering, and violating sanctions.

The first case always brought up is Rhodesia. When Zimbabwe was Britain's all-white-run racist colony known as Rhodesia, and Ian Smith declared its independence, as an all-white racist state, John Arnold Bredenkamp gained the reputation as a “sanctions buster” supporting the racist Smith regime. Many years later, in 2001, Bredenkamp was again charged with violating international sanctions—this time, the unjust, politically driven sanctions against Zimbabwe.

Bredenkamp describes himself this way: “Like many of my contemporaries, I have adapted to change. I was Rhodesian; I am now a Zimbabwean. I was a tobacco merchant; I am now an investor in many different sectors.” When the George W. Bush regime imposed sanctions against Zimbabwe and its President Robert Mugabe, Bredenkamp was reported to be among Zimbabwe businessmen put on the U.S. sanctions list. He denies violating the sanctions against Zimbabwe, and moaned that, “The U.S. State Department has tried me and judged me in a manner which affects my fundamental rights as an individual. . . . I have been given no opportunity to be heard in this matter.”¹

There have been detailed documentaries by European TV companies that provide colorful descriptions of Bredenkamp’s arms trafficking. Sweden’s Uppdrag Granskning TV show, which aired this year, suggested that Bredenkamp should be investigated in the BAE bribery scandal in South Africa. A British TV documentary, aired in 1994, called “The Casalee File,” contains detailed allegations about Bredenkamp and the arms trade.

The website of the British Film Institute—created by Royal Charter in 1983—describes “The Casalee File” as follows: “Exposé of a major Berkshire based tobacco company, The Casalee Group, now called Defco, which has been secretly at the heart of the arms trade and breached international sanctions in many of the deals it has done. Mines sold to Iraq killed and maimed British soldiers in the Gulf war. Owner John Arnold Bredenkamp has supplied arms to Rhodesia, Iran and Iraq. Contributors include wounded soldiers; former Casalee manager Mike Pelham; former directors of arms manufacturers ASTRA; a defence analyst; Congressman Henry Gonzalez.”

In the documentary, Mike Pelham, former financial officer of Casalee Zurich, which is one of the offices of Bredenkamp’s Casalee Tobacco company, said: “The objective was to arrange an introduction between a supplier to a purchaser. Casalee would do that. The arms would then be transferred from the manufacturer directly to the purchaser and on the deal having been finalized then a commission would be paid from the manufacturer to the agent, in this case Casalee.”

Pelham discusses Casalee’s involvement in the sale of anti-aircraft guns to Iran by Oelikon Burhle, a Swiss arms manufacturer: “The amount sold into Iran would run into the hundreds of millions of dollars. The commission . . . would be 5% on an excess of 100 to 200 millions. . . . Every deal that went through had to have a bribe of some sort attached to it. The money would be paid to Casalee, and then Casalee would make the necessary payments to those people of influence in the purchasing country. For the manufac-

turer to make those payments it would become a little dicey. For an intermediary like Casalee or other companies of that nature to make the payment is not at all difficult. On the manufacturer’s books all you would get is that a commission would have been made to an agent, Casalee, and an investigation would not be made into Casalee’s books after a disposal of the funds.”

“Oelikon did not do the deal with Casalee,” Pelham adds. “The deal was done with a company called Vivian Corporation. . . . It is preferable to, on deals like this, to take them away from the main company. A big deal like this involving many millions should be isolated. It becomes more difficult to trace, more difficult to connect to Casalee. The offices concerned would be a lawyer. To Casalee, any subsequent tracing of Vivian would not show Mr. Bredenkamp.”

The payments, Pelham said, would be made “only in cash. There would have been no trace. . . . Corruption is the name of the game in the arms business. Yes in this particular scene it was a little worse than usual.”

Pelham adds, “Mr. Bredenkamp stated he would not deal or would not allow dealings to take place with Libya. He also refused to become involved in transactions with irregular groups, the Irish Republican Army, the IRA, he would not supply arms to.”

Any communications by Mr. Bredenkamp about Mike Pelham’s statements could not be located.

Spooks Speak

In the murky world of intelligence agencies, Bredenkamp also has a record in the media. A former MI-6 intelligence agent, Tracey Kinchen, spoke to WorldNet Daily about arms trafficking and MI6. “In the past, we worked with some of Bredenkamp’s satellite companies—like Casalee, Zimalzam, Breco Services, Masters International—in several of our former colonies. One minute, MI-6 . . . was on the side of the anti-communists in places like Rhodesia, Hong Kong, Tibet, Nepal and Cambodia. Then, suddenly, we were told to change sides.”²

On Feb. 18, 2000, *Washington Times* reporters Bill Gertz and Rowan Scarborough wrote that the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) wrote a classified report for Secretary of Defense William Cohen about secret arms shipments to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (D.R.C.). The reporters say that the D.R.C. and Zimbabwe were purchasing arms from Bredenkamp, whom they identify as an arms dealer based in Belgium.

A Leg To Stand On?

Mr. Bredenkamp’s letter provides no substantial facts refuting the matters raised in the cited *EIR* article.

1. Statement to the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, by Mungo Soggot and Phillip van Niekerk, Nov. 11, 2002.

2. Anthony LoBaido, “Surviving Mugabe’s communist reign,” WorldNet Daily, Dec. 10, 2000.

An Oct. 16, 2002 report to the United Nations Security Council by a panel of experts investigating the exploitation of raw materials in the D.R.C. cited Bredenkamp's role as an arms broker:

"John Bredenkamp, who has a history of clandestine military procurement, has an investment in Aviation Consultancy Services Company (ACS). The Panel has confirmed, independently of Mr. Bredenkamp, that this company represents British Aerospace, Dornier of France and Agusta of Italy in Africa. Far from being a passive investor in ACS as Tremalt representatives claimed, Mr. Bredenkamp actively seeks business using high-level political contacts. In discussions with senior officials he has offered to mediate sales of British Aerospace military equipment to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Mr. Bredenkamp's representatives claimed that his companies observed European Union sanctions on Zimbabwe, but British Aerospace spare parts for ZDF Hawk jets were supplied early in 2002 in breach of those sanctions. Mr. Bredenkamp also controls Raceview Enterprises, which supplies logistics to ZDF. The Panel has obtained copies of Raceview invoices to ZDF dated 6 July 2001 for deliveries worth \$3.5 million of camouflage cloth, batteries, fuels and lubricating oil, boots and rations. It also has copies of invoices

for aircraft spares for the Air Force of Zimbabwe worth another \$3 million."

Bredenkamp protested the findings of the UN panel and, along with others, brought pressure on the UN to change its findings. One year later, the same UN panel released a follow-up report which categorized the case of Bredenkamp as "resolved subject to NCP monitoring compliance." However, this second report was very general and contained no specific refutation of the same panel's earlier findings. Bredenkamp's Breco Company's press release praising the second UN report was equally vague, and also failed to specifically address the findings of the first UN panel with respect to the arms dealing activities of Bredenkamp's companies.

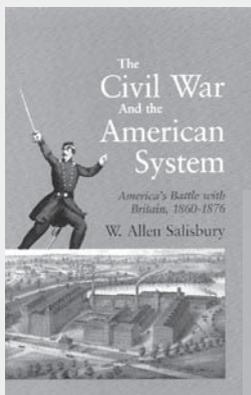
Bredenkamp has also been implicated in the BAE scandal. In October 2006, his home and office in England were raided by a joint force of the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) and the Ministry of Defence, which was reportedly looking into allegations of bribery in connection with BAE arms sales to South Africa. The SFO said the raids were "part of an ongoing investigation by the Serious Fraud Office and defence ministry police into suspected corruption relating to defence contracts where BAE Systems is the prime contractor," as reported by *Business Day* of Zimbabwe in November 2006.

KNOW YOUR HISTORY!

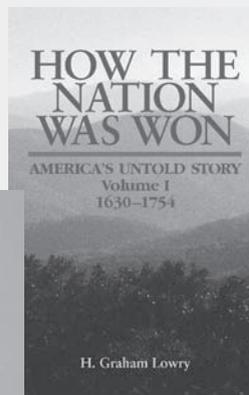
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