

Secrets Pollard passed

Wolf Blitzer The Jerusalem Post Washington correspondent
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'He was a super-spy'

Secrets Pollard passed

The Jerusalem Post's Washington correspondent, **Wolf Blitzer**, wrote the following article in today's edition of the Washington Post.

WASHINGTON. - From the first revelation that U.S. Navy intelligence analyst Jonathan Jay Pollard was spying for Israel, one question has puzzled almost everyone knowledgeable about Israeli-American relations: Considering how close the two countries are and how much is already shared,

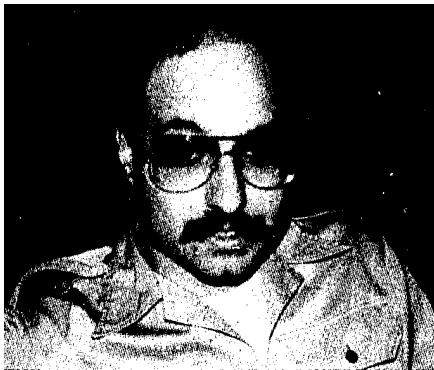
what could Pollard have provided that would be worth the risk?

After investigating the Pollard case for more than a year, and interviewing dozens of U.S. and Israeli officials, I have learned some of what Pollard provided to Israel. My information suggests that far from the small-time bungler portrayed in some news accounts, Pollard was a master spy, who provided very important information to the Israelis.

Leon **Charney**, a New York lawyer who briefly represented Pollard and is close to senior Israeli officials, says: "His help was clearly invaluable to the security of the State of Israel."

The motivation of my sources in telling me about the case was complex. Some Israeli and American sources wanted to show that Pollard was an Israeli hero. Other sources in Israel and America provided details because they believed the public deserved a fuller accounting of the Pollard case.

The intelligence provided by Pollard to Israel included specific material dealing with the following general areas:



Jonathan Pollard in jail

(**Wolf Blitzer**)

- Reconnaissance over Tunisia including a description of a HQ building there, according to one American with first-hand knowledge of the Pollard case and confirmed by an Israeli familiar with the information Pollard provided. This and other related data obtained by Pollard especially regarding the capabilities of the Libyan air defence system, and the movement of U.S., Soviet and French ships in the Mediterranean enabled the Israel Air Force to evade detection and to bomb those HQ on October 1, 1985. Pollard's

information "made our life much easier" in the Tunis raid, one Israeli official said.

- Iraqi and Syrian warfare production capabilities including detailed satellite pictures and maps showing the location of factories and storage facilities, according to Israeli officials who were told by colleagues what Pollard had provided. An American official subsequently confirmed that Pollard had provided information about Iraqi chemical warfare.

America's refusal to provide this chemical-warfare material directly to Israel had angered Pollard, according to one knowledgeable source. Israeli officials said that the first documents Pollard gave Israel, which greatly impressed his handlers, included:

- The layout of eight Iraqi chemical warfare factories.
- Regular U.S. intelligence assessments of operations planned by a PLO unit, according to an American account that was confirmed in Israel.
- Soviet arms shipments to Syria and other Arab states, including the specifics on the SS-21 ground-to-ground and the SA-5 anti-aircraft missiles, according to know-

(Continued on Page 4)

SECRETS POLLARD PASSED

ledgeable American and Israeli sources. Whenever the U.S. discovered that a Soviet ship was passing through the Bosphorus into the Mediterranean, Pollard passed that information to Israel, the sources said.

- The U.S. intelligence community's assessment of a particular Soviet-made fighter.
- Pakistan's programme to build an atomic bomb, including large satellite photographs of its nuclear facility outside Islamabad, according to an American source with detailed knowledge of the Pollard case.

Despite the official Israeli claim that Pollard was part of a rogue operation, Israeli officials speak of him in terms that suggest he may prove to be one of the most important spies in Israel's history.

Indeed, Pollard's Israeli handlers even compared him to the legendary Israeli spy in Damascus, Eli Cohen, who rose to the top echelon of the Syrian government in the

mid-1960s, but eventually was exposed and executed. When Pollard was given an Israeli passport containing his picture as a token of Israel's appreciation, the name on the passport was "Danny Cohen" - the implication being that Israel once had an Eli Cohen in Damascus and now had a Danny Cohen in Washington.

In general, Pollard gave Israel the pick of U.S. intelligence about Arab and Islamic conventional and unconventional military activity, from Morocco to Pakistan and every country in between. This included both "friendly" and "unfriendly" Arab countries.

Pollard, 32, was arrested outside the Israeli embassy in Washington on November 21, 1985 after attempting to obtain political asylum there. He pleaded guilty to espionage charges and his wife, Anné Henderson-

Pollard, 26, pleaded guilty to lesser charges involving unauthorized possession of classified documents. Both of them are scheduled to be sentenced on March 4.

Why did Israel recruit and run Pollard? Some U.S. officials argue that the operation wasn't necessary, since Israel gets virtually everything it wants from American intelligence agencies. But Israeli officials, living on a thin margin of security, apparently were not convinced of this logic. They feared that the U.S. wasn't supplying everything. And what the U.S. wasn't supplying could be essential for Israel, especially in the area of sophisticated reconnaissance photography and electronic intercepts where Israel's capabilities are limited.

Pollard had all the proper credentials, as far as Israel was concerned. He was intelligent. And he was a dedicated Zionist. Indeed, Pollard told me in the only interviews he has granted since his arrest that he was obsessed by the need to help Israel "personally."

Pollard held "Top Secret" security clearances. According to the pre-sentencing memo submitted last month by U.S. Attorney Joseph diGenova, Pollard had access to "Sensitive Compartmented Information," principally data about technical systems for collecting intelligence "as well as the intelligence product collected by the systems." A relatively small percentage of individuals who have "Top Secret" clearances are also approved for SCI access, the court document said.

Throughout the Washington area there are secure libraries containing this kind of extremely sensitive intelligence information which is accessible only through computer terminals requiring codewords, diGenova's memo explained. He said Pollard could "readily access these libraries, repositories and computer terminals to obtain data in order to perform specific duties."

The court documents suggest lax security and sloppy procedures in the military intelligence facilities where Pollard worked. Like other intelligence analysts, he was supposed to operate on the honour system, meaning that he would limit his access to that information for which he had an official "need to know," according to diGenova's memo. But since he had the appropriate access codes, he could easily obtain information unrelated to his duties.

In addition, according to diGenova, Pollard had a "courier card," permitting him to leave these libraries without having his belongings checked by security personnel. In short, he had all the credentials to become an extremely valuable spy.

In fact, diGenova says that Pollard provided Israel with more than 1,000 classified documents, some of which were several hundred pages in length. Stacked up, the tens of thousands of pieces of paper could have filled a small hall. Most of the documents, according to the pre-sentencing memo, "were detailed analytical studies

containing technical calculations, graphs and satellite photographs." Other information included "highly classified message traffic and intelligence summaries" as well as data on "specific weapon systems." He apparently was able to take copies of this material - including satellite photos - with him out of the door.

Citing security concerns, the U.S. government has refused to release the exact nature of these documents. Secretary of Defence Caspar Weinberger, in a classified affidavit presented *in camera* to U.S. District Court Judge Aubrey Robinson, said that Pollard had indeed provided Israel with extensive information, according to two U.S. sources who are familiar with the memo. Weinberger reportedly complained in his memorandum to the court that because Pollard had already given away so much information, the U.S. intelligence community's bargaining power in official exchanges with Israel was severely reduced.

An Israeli intelligence official told me that some of the information was "so breathtaking" that it justified the risk Israel was taking in running an agent in Washington. Pollard's handlers - including Air Force Brigadier General Aviam Sella, veteran intelligence agent Rafael Eitan, and former science counsellor at the Israel Consulate in New York Yosef Yagur - often told him that he was "a one-man intelligence agency" for Israel, one source said.

What Pollard did was to make virtually the entire U.S. intelligence-gathering apparatus available to Israel, completing the picture in those areas where Israel's knowledge was limited. His Israeli contacts, knowing where Israel was in need of specific information, "tasked" Pollard on a weekly basis to obtain it, according to the American prosecutors.

The Israeli government has maintained officially that the Pollard operation was "unauthorized," part of a "rogue" unit that ran amok. Israel formally apologized to the U.S. and later cooperated in the investigation by making available for questioning to a visiting delegation of U.S. officials some of the Israeli operatives involved in the ring.

Some American intelligence sources remain very sceptical about Israel's denials. They argue that the unit that recruited Pollard, known as "Lekem," was created years ago to collect scientific intelligence. They also assert that Israeli intelligence experts had to know that only an inside American agent could supply the massive quantity and quality of satellite photography that they were getting. Israel lacks that capability and Israeli experts knew the U.S. was not supplying that information to Israel officially.

Israel had set up a special unit in New York and Washington to obtain Pollard's documents. Court papers showed that Irit Erb, a secretary at the Israeli embassy in Washington, was given a second apartment where she operated sophisticated photocopying equipment for the documents provided by Pollard.