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Gideon's Spies: The Secret History of the Mossad

Gordon Thomas

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By 1999, Mohamed al-Fayed's belief in a "plot" had hardened to what he saw as "a full-blown criminal conspiracy." He insisted it had been manufactured by MI5 and MI6, and French intelligence with Mossad "manipulating in the background." To those who would listen, and they were steadily declining in number, he would name a London newspaper editor as well as a close friend of Diana as both having "direct links" to Britain's intelligence services. The reasons why these services had become involved in the "conspiracy" were clear-cut in Mohamed's mind. "A decision had been made by the Establishment, and at the very top, that Diana must not be allowed to marry a Muslim. Then the future king of England, Prince William, would have an Arab as his stepfather and another as his grandfather. There was also a real fear that I would provide the money to allow Diana to become a rival to the Queen of England. The Establishment would do anything to end my son's relationship with the one woman he had ever truly loved." Facts were never produced to support an allegation which, if proven, would surely accelerate the end of the royal family in Britain and perhaps pave the way to a crisis of confidence that could even sweep away a government. Nevertheless, al-Fayed authorized his spokesman, Laurie Meyer, a former anchorman with one of Rupert Murdoch's television networks, to state to the media: "Mohamed firmly believes Di and Dodi were murdered by agents loyal to the British Crown and that other agencies were deeply involved in the crime. He further believes there is deep-seated racism within the Establishment." To confirm that murder most foul had taken place, al-Fayed had employed the skills of a former senior Scotland Yard detective, John MacNamara. By early 1999 the soft-spoken investigator was scouring the world for evidence. Along the way, in Geneva, Switzerland, he met a former MI6 officer, Richard Tomlinson, who claimed he had seen documents at MI6 headquarters on the bank of the River Thames. Tomlinson insisted they described "a plan to murder the Serbian leader, Slobodan Milošević—a plan that has

unsettling parallels to the way Di and Dodi died. The MI6 document stated that the 'accident' should happen in a tunnel where the chance of fatal injury is high. The weapon of choice the document recommended was a high-powered laser beam that could be used to temporarily blind the driver of the target vehicle."

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Despite all his efforts, MacNamara has been unable to find any independent evidence to support Tomlinson's claims—and efforts to obtain the MI6 document totally failed. Then came news, reluctantly confirmed, that the United States National Security Agency, NSA, had some 1,050 pages of documents on the couple. Al-Fayed launched an immediate court battle in Washington to obtain the documents. "The more he is blocked, the greater is his determination," said the loyal Meyer. But, like others, he is not holding his breath. "It could take years to work its way through the system."

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Part of the reason, I had discovered, was that Diana and Dodi had been under surveillance by ECHELON, one of NSA's most sensitive and ultrasecret surveillance systems. This global electronic network is of truly astounding proportions. It links satellites to a series of high-speed parallel computers. The system enables NSA and those it allows to share information—Britain is one—to intercept and decode virtually every electronic communication in the world—in real time. Searching for key words it has been fed, ECHELON can identify and segregate messages of interest to its users. Following her divorce from Prince Charles, Diana had launched her campaign to abolish land mines. She was blunt, outspoken, and quickly gathered support that was not welcomed by the Clinton administration or in London and other European capitals. She was seen as a meddler, someone who did not understand what she was talking about. "The reality was that the land mine manufacturing industry provided...

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The arrival of Dodi in Diana's life automatically meant he became part of ECHELON's collection activities. Unknown to them, their every

telephone conversation, however intimate, was silently gathered up by ECHELON's satellites. By 1997, Mohamed al-Fayed's name had also been added to the global computer search. ECHELON may well have been the first outside his family circle to know of his hope that his son would marry a princess of the line—and then later his claim that on the eve of their deaths he had planned to announce their engagement. There is much in the...

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A hint of what that could be came in late June 1999 when it emerged that the mysterious white Fiat Uno seen zigzagging away from the scene of the death crash of Diana and Dodi was destroyed in a car crusher. In moments the Uno, from which traces of paint scrapes had been found in the tunnel, had been reduced to a block of scrap metal. The claim was contained in a secret Mossad investigation that began within hours of the fatal crash. It had been launched by Mossad's then director general, Danny Yatom. He had been concerned that Mossad's determined attempts to recruit Henri Paul could lead to accusations that this had played a part in Diana's death. The investigation focused on a period that covered the two weeks before the accident—or what al-Fayed still calls "the appearance of an accident to cover up murder"—and the days afterward. Mossad investigators discovered that as well as the agency's own presence in Paris prior to the death of the couple, there was a four-man MI6 team in the city. They were based at the British embassy for the first week, but later moved into a rented apartment—"an MI6 safe house"—near the Ritz. One of the team checked into the hotel itself four days before the death of Dodi and Diana. The Mossad report reveals that around August 14–15 1997, a CIA team also arrived in the city. The team had been tracking Diana for some time, keeping tabs on her attacks on land mine manufacturers, many of which are U.S.-based. The CIA reports form part of the 1,051 documents Mohamed al-Fayed has unsuccessfully battled through the American courts to obtain copies of. The U.S. Justice Department has claimed the documents contained material "sensitive to national security." The Mossad report suggests that sensitivity could refer to why Britain had asked the United States to help in monitoring Diana. "Britain saw her as a loose cannon," insisted al-Fayed. "In fact she was a woman of great courage who was ready to confront the land mines issue." The Mossad investigation details how the various intelligence services hurriedly left Paris after the

deaths of Diana and Dodi. Mossad's report contains a detailed timetable of Dodi and Diana's last hours. It is partly based on firsthand observations by Maurice and his contacts. Other information came from Mossad's "back channel" contacts with agents in the French capital, from MI6, the CIA, and French intelligence.

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"I have been told by a former senior Israeli intelligence officer that all those services had a vested interest in Diana and Dodi," Mohamed al-Fayed has insisted. Mossad's account of the final moments of the lives of Diana and Dodi begins at 11:45 P.M. Saturday, August 29, 1997, when Henri Paul was put in charge of the operation to whisk them away from the Ritz Hotel. Mohamed al-Fayed still remembers vividly the instruction he had telephoned to Paul. "I told him he must drive carefully, that he must never forget he had the life of the mother of the future king of England and my beloved son in his hands. I trusted him never to forget that. God knows, how I trusted him. God only knows now why I did." The next Mossad entry is 11:50 P.M. In the Ritz bar Trevor Rees-Jones, who was there to body-guard Diana and Dodi, was in a huddle with other security men from the hotel staff and Henri Paul, discussing the route he would use. Paul was very bullish. He said the hotel would provide two Range Rovers to act as decoys for the waiting paparazzi. That would give him enough time to get away. Rees-Jones is reported to have said the plan "sounds good to me." 00:15 A.M. Sunday, August 30. In the hotel lobby Henri Paul was using his cell phone to mobilize the two decoy vehicles. 00:19 A.M. The two decoy vehicles roared out of the Place Vendome that fronts the Ritz. Paparazzi give chase. 00:20 A.M. At the hotel's rear entrance Paul arrived with the Mercedes. He was seen by one of the eyewitnesses that Mossad subsequently interviewed as "drumming his fingers nervously on the steering wheel." 00:21 A.M. At the top of the Rue Cambon, a Mossad agent kept watch. He would later report that "a white Fiat Uno passed the top of the street." The Mossad report states that in the car were two intelligence officers from the French security service, DST. The DST—more formally known as the Directorate for Surveillance of the Territory—is the largest and most powerful of France's intelligence agencies. With several thousand employees, it operates both internally and overseas. Its wide-ranging responsibilities include surveillance of all foreign embassies in Paris and conducting a number of clandestine operations. It reports to the

incumbent minister of the interior. 00:22 A.M. The white Fiat Uno passed through traffic lights in the Place de la Concorde. Henri Paul's Mercedes is forced to temporarily stop at the lights. 00:23 A.M. The Mercedes approaches the Alma tunnel. Henri Paul would most certainly have seen the white Uno ahead of him. 00:24 A.M. The Mercedes, traveling at high speed, passed over the dip at the tunnel entrance. In the back seat Diana and Dodi would have experienced for a split second a sensation not unlike that of a plunging roller-coaster. Seconds later there came a thunderous noise inside the tunnel. A roaring screeching of metal, a reverberating, crumping sound that seemed to go on and on. Henri Paul and Dodi were dead. Diana was dying. Moments later,...

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In March 1997, on receipt of information from Mossad's katsa in Washington, Yatom took action. He sent a yaholomin team to Washington to follow up on the katsa's report that President Clinton was repeatedly indulging in phone-sex calls with a former White House aide, Monica Lewinsky. He was making the calls from the Oval Office to her apartment in the Watergate complex. Knowing that the White House was totally protected by electronic countermeasures, the yaholomin team focused on Lewinsky's apartment. They began to intercept explicit phone calls from the president to Lewinsky. The recordings were couriered by diplomatic bag to Tel Aviv. On March 27, Clinton once more invited Lewinsky to the Oval Office and revealed he believed a foreign embassy was taping their conversations. He did not give her any more details, but shortly afterward the affair ended. In Tel Aviv, Mossad's strategists pondered how to use the highly embarrassing taped conversations; they were the stuff of blackmail—though no one suggested any attempt should be made to blackmail the president of the United States. Some, however, saw the recordings as a potent weapon to be used if Israel found itself with its back to the wall in the Middle East and unable to count on Clinton's support.

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There was common consensus that the FBI must also be aware of the conversations between Clinton and Lewinsky. Some strategists urged Yatom to use "the backdoor channel" with Washington and let the FBI

know Mossad was aware of the president's phone calls: it would be a not-very-subtle way of telling the agency to back off in their continuing hunt for Mega. Other analysts urged a wait-and-see policy, arguing that the information would remain explosive whenever it was released. That view prevailed. In September 1998, the Starr report was published and Yatomi had left office. The report contained a short reference to Clinton warning Lewinsky back in March 1997 that his phone was being bugged by a foreign embassy. Starr had not pursued the matter when Lewinsky had given her testimony before the grand jury about her affair with Clinton. However, the FBI could only have seen the revelations as further evidence of their inability to unmask Mega.

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Six months later, March 5th 1999, the New York Post published in a cover story the revelations in the original edition of this book. The Post story began: "Israel blackmailed President Clinton with phone-tapped tapes of his steamy sex talks with Monica Lewinsky, a blockbuster new book charges. The price Clinton paid for the silence of the Mossad spy agency was calling off an FBI hunt for a top-level Israeli mole." Within hours of this complete distortion of the facts in the book (which I had carefully checked with sources in Israel), the Post's version had appeared in thousands of newspapers around the world. The essential point of my story, that public prosecutor Kenneth Starr had not fully pursued his impeachment investigation into Clinton, was lost. Starr had noted in his report that on March 29, 1997: "He [Clinton] told her [Lewinsky] that he suspected that a foreign embassy [he did not specify which one] was taping his telephones. If anyone ever asked about their phone sex, she should say that they knew that their calls were being monitored all day long, and the phone sex was a put-on." The president's words most strongly indicated he was aware that he had become a potential target for blackmail. By talking to Lewinsky over a public phone network—there is no evidence he had attempted to secure the phone in her...

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Yatomi left office with the first ripples of a sensation beginning to emerge over the murder of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. A dedicated Israeli investigative reporter, Barry Chamish, had privately gathered

medical and ballistics reports and eyewitness accounts from Rabin's bodyguards, his widow, surgeons, and nurses, together with members of the Israeli intelligence community he had spoken to. Much of it was evidence given in closed court. By 1999 Chamish, at risk to himself, had begun to publish his findings over the Internet. They are an eerie replay of the doubts raised about a lone gunman in the John Kennedy assassination in 1963. Chamish's closely argued conclusions are, if nothing else, intriguing. He has concluded, "The gunman theory, accepted by the Israeli Government's Shamgar Commission into the Rabin assassination, is a cover-up in what was to be a staged, unsuccessful assassination to rekindle Rabin's flagging popularity with the electorate. Yigal Amir had agreed to perform the lone gunman function for his controller or controllers in the Israeli intelligence community. "Amir fired a blank bullet. And he fired just one shot, not the alleged three. Israeli police lab ballistic tests on a shell casing found at the scene do not match Amir's gun. No blood was seen coming from Rabin. Then there is the mystery of how Rabin's car got lost for eight to twelve minutes on what should have been a forty-five-second drive to hospital on clear streets cordoned off by police for the peace rally Rabin had been attending." Chamish's most explosive allegation—like all the others he has made, this one has yet to be refuted by any Israeli official in authority—claims: "During that strange drive to hospital by a very experienced chauffeur, Rabin was shot twice by real bullets and they came from the handgun of his own bodyguard Yoram Rubin. His gun disappeared at the hospital and has never been found. Two bullets retrieved from the prime minister's body went missing for eleven hours. Rubin later committed suicide."

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Chamish spoke to the three operating room surgeons who fought to save the prime minister's life. The reporter discussed the testimony of police officers who had been present when Amir fired. The officers had all testified that when Yitzhak Rabin was placed in the car, he showed no visible wounds. The surgeons were adamant. When the prime minister finally reached the hospital, he showed clear signs of having sustained a massive chest wound and severe damage to his spinal cord in the lower neck area. The surgeons insisted there was no possible gunshot wound that would have allowed Rabin to leave the attack site showing no evidence of a wound and arrive at the hospital

with multiple injuries. The Shamgar Commission concluded it had found no evidence to confirm those wounds had occurred. Subsequently the doctors have refused to discuss the matter. Outside Chamish's own investigation, there is independent sworn testimony to support his contention that "what happened is deep and is conspiratorial." At his arraignment hearing, Amir had told the court: "If I tell the truth, the whole system will collapse. I know enough to destroy this country." A Shin Bet agent who was close to Amir when he fired at Rabin testified: "I heard a policeman shout to people to calm down. The shot is a blank." His evidence was given in closed court. Leah Rabin stated at the same hearing that her husband did not stagger and fall after apparently being shot at close range. "He was standing and looking very well." She also insisted she was kept from seeing her husband for a full hour after she had arrived at the hospital and, according to Chamish, was told by a high-ranking intelligence officer that she should "not worry as the whole thing had been staged." The prime minister's widow has steadfastly refused to make any public comment on this or any aspect of her husband's murder. Chamish believes she had been scared into silence like seventeen nurses at the hospital where Rabin was admitted on that day. "The plan was evil and brilliant. They persuaded Rabin to let someone take a pot shot at him to help him regain his popularity. That was why he did not wear a bulletproof vest. Amir was carefully selected for his proverbial fifteen minutes of fame. He was a dupe in the hands of his controller or controllers. What he couldn't possibly know was how they would use his blank shot to murder Rabin in his car on the way to hospital." Barry Chamish does not fit the image of a "conspiracy nut." He is careful in what he writes and overwhelms every piece of evidence with corroborative testimony. He has been slow to rush to judgment and gives the impression there is a great deal more he can say but won't—yet. More certain, Chamish is a man who walks his own path, is beholden to no one and, most important of all, is trusted. He has posted all the evidence he has so far obtained on the Internet, doing so partly as insurance and partly because he wants to get the truth out. He is also realistic...

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There then occurred a conversation between the president and Robert McFarlane, a gung ho former marine who was national security adviser. Kimche was to recall that McFarlane told him that the

conversation went like this: "What do the Iranians need most, Mr. President?" "You tell me, Bob." "Weapons to fight Iraq." "So we give them what they want. And we get back our people in return." Reagan and McFarlane—against the advice of Casey and other U.S. intelligence chiefs—took the simplistic view that arming Iran would not only result in the mullahs bringing pressure to bear on the Beirut group to free the hostages, but would improve the administration's relations with Tehran. There could also be the added bonus that it was bound to weaken Moscow's position in Iran. The seeds were sown for what became known as Irangate. Marine colonel Oliver North was put in charge of supplying the arms. North and McFarlane decided to exclude the CIA from their plans. Both were action-oriented men. Their push-and-shove mentality had served them well in Vietnam, and from all they had heard, Israelis were similar men of action. So, in North's words, "it was time to bring Israel into the fold." There was also the personal prospect of visiting the Holy Land; a committed Christian, North relished the thought of treading in the footsteps of Jesus. Israel's new prime minister, Yitzhak Shamir, decided there was only one person capable of handling the request from Washington for help—and making sure Israel's interests were fully protected. On July 3, 1983, David Kimche flew to meet with McFarlane in the White House. Kimche said he believed the arms-for-hostages deal could work. He asked if the CIA was "actively involved." He was told the Agency was not. In turn, McFarlane asked Kimche how far Mossad would

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McFarlane drove to Bethesda Naval Hospital to present Kimche's views to Reagan, who was recovering from a colon operation. The president had one question: Could Kimche ensure that Israel would keep the deal secret? A leak could harm U.S. relations with more moderate Arab states already fearful of the growing radicalism of Tehran. Kimche claims that McFarlane reassured Reagan that Israel would "batten down the hatches." The deal was on. Kimche flew back to Israel. Two weeks later Kimche was back in Washington. Over dinner, he laid out his game plan to McFarlane.

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The president agreed to support the proposition that the United

States would replace all arms Israel sold to Iran. Once more Kimche returned home with a green light. Nevertheless, Shamir insisted that all possible steps should also be taken so that he “could deny any connection with the matter should there be a problem.” To ensure this, Kimche assembled a colorful cast of characters to initiate the operation. There was Adnan Khashoggi, the Saudi petrobillionaire, with a habit of eating caviar by the pound and an eye for the current cover girls; Manacher Thorbanifer, a former agent in the shah’s notorious SAVAK secret service who still behaved like a spy, calling meetings for the middle of the night. There was the equally mysterious Yakov Nimrodi, who had run agents for Aman and had once been Israel’s military attaché in Iran during the shah’s regime. He was invariably accompanied by Al Schwimmer, the closemouthed founder of Israel Aircraft Industries. Khashoggi brokered a deal that was to be a precursor for

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In late August 1985, the first planeload of arms landed in Tehran from Israel. On September 14, a U.S. hostage, the Reverend Benjamin Weir, was freed in Beirut. As the pace quickened, still more raffish players joined the consortium, including Miles Copeland, a former CIA officer who, on the eve of the shah falling from power in what was soon to be renamed the Islamic Republic of Iran, had sent CIA agents into Tehran souks distributing hundred-dollar bills to anyone who dared shout “Long live the shah!” Other shadowy figures also became involved, such as a former Special Air Services officer who ran a company in London that had once provided nonspecific services to Mossad. Meanwhile, the policymakers in Israel and Washington looked the other way. All that mattered was that the operation had taken off under the noses of an unsuspecting world—at least for the moment.

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The weapons were shipped with certificates showing Israel was the end user. From IDF military bases in the Negev Desert, the consortium arranged for chartered transport aircraft to fly the weapons to Iran. The consortium received a “handling fee” for each consignment, Iran paying the money out of funds in Swiss bank accounts. The sum eventually totaled \$7 million. Israel received no financial reward—

only the satisfaction of witnessing Iran improve its capability to kill more Iraqis in the long-drawn-out war between both countries. For David Kimche it was a further example of the “divide and rule” policy he strongly advocated.

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All this and more Rafi Eitan explained to his houseguest, Earl Brian. In turn Brian described how Promis worked. In his view, there was still work to be done to bring the program up to speed. Rafi Eitan realized that Promis could then have an impact on the Intifada. For a start, the system could lock on to computers in the PLO's seventeen offices scattered around the world to see where Arafat was going and what he could be planning. Rafi Eitan put aside his foraging for scrap metal and focused on how to exploit the brave new world Promis offered. No longer, for instance, would it be necessary to rely solely on human intelligence to understand the mind-set of a terrorist. With Promis it would be possible to know exactly when and where he would strike. Promis could track a terrorist's every step. To achieve such a breakthrough would once more undoubtedly make him a powerful figure in the Israeli intelligence community. But the wounds inflicted on him by his former peers had gone deep. He had been turned out into the cold with little more than a modest pension. He was getting on in years; his first obligation was to his family, whom, through his work, he had been forced to neglect for long periods. Promis offered an opportunity to make amends; handled properly, it could make his fortune. However, for all his brilliance, Rafi Eitan was no computer genius; his skills in that area extended to little more than switching on his modem. But his years at LAKAM had given him access to all the experts he would need.

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When Earl Brian returned to the United States, Rafi Eitan put together a small team of former LAKAM programmers. They deconstructed the Promis disc and rearranged its various components, then added several elements of their own. There was no way for anyone to be able to claim ownership of what Promis had become. Rafi Eitan decided to keep the original name because it was “a good marketing tool to explain what the system was.” Intelligence operatives, untrained in computer technology beyond knowing which keys to tap,

would be able to access information and judgments far more comprehensive than they could ever carry in their own heads. A Promis disc could fit a laptop computer and choose from a myriad of alternatives the one that made most sense. It would eliminate the need for deductive reasoning because there were too many correct but irrelevant matters to simultaneously take into account for human reasoning alone to suffice. Promis could be programmed to eliminate all superfluous lines of inquiry and amass and correlate data at a speed and scale beyond human capability. But before it could be sold, according to Ben-Menashe, Rafi Eitan needed to add one further element. Ben-Menashe later claimed he was asked to organize the insertion of a "trapdoor," a built-in chip that, unknown to any purchaser, would allow Rafi Eitan to know what information was being sought. Ben-Menashe

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sell it directly to Jordan was impossible because normal business links between both countries were still some years away. Instead, Earl Brian's company, Hadron, made the deal. When the company's computer experts installed the program in Amman's military headquarters, they discovered the Jordanians had a French-designed system to track the movements of PLO leaders. Promis was secretly wired into the French system. In Tel Aviv, Rafi Eitan soon saw results as the trapdoor showed which PLO leaders the Jordanians were tracking.

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The next stage was to prepare the sales pitch for Promis. Yasser Arafat was selected as the ideal example. The PLO chairman was renowned for being security-conscious; he constantly changed his plans, never slept in the same bed two nights in succession, altered his mealtimes at the last moment. Whenever Arafat moved, the details were entered on a secure PLO computer. But Promis could hack into its defenses to discover what aliases and false passports he was using. Promis could obtain his phone bills and check the numbers called. It would then crosscheck those with other calls made from those numbers. In that way, Promis would have a "picture" of Arafat's communications. On a trip he would inform the local security authorities of his presence, and steps would be taken to provide

protection. Promis could obtain the details by interdicting police computers. Wherever he went, Yasser Arafat would be unable to hide from Promis. Rafi Eitan realized that neither Earl Brian nor his company had the resources to market Promis globally. That would require someone with superb international contacts, boundless energy, and proven negotiating skills. There was only one man Rafi Eitan knew who had those requirements: Robert Maxwell. Maxwell needed little convincing and, in his usual ebullient manner when there was a deal to be profited from, said he had a computer company through which to sell Promis. Degem Computers Limited was based in Tel Aviv and was already playing a useful role in Mossad's activities. Maxwell had allowed Mossad operatives, posing as Degem employees, to use the company's suboffices in Central and South America. Now Maxwell saw an opportunity not only to make a healthy profit from marketing Promis through Degem, but to further establish his own importance to Mossad and ultimately Israel.

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On board the aircraft as it left London on that December night in 1988 were eight members of the U.S. intelligence community returning from duty in the Middle East. Four of them were CIA field officers, led by Matthew Gannon. Also on board were U.S. Army major Charles McKee and his small team of experts in hostage rescue. They had been in the Middle East to explore the possibility of freeing the Western hostages still held in Beirut. Though the Lockerbie disaster investigation was under the jurisdiction of a Scottish team, CIA agents were on the scene when McKee's still closed and miraculously intact suitcase was located. It was taken away from the scene for a short time by a man believed to be a CIA officer, though he would never be positively identified. Later the suitcase was returned to the Scottish investigation team, who logged its contents under "empty." No one queried what had happened to McKee's belongings, let alone why he had been traveling with an empty suitcase. But at the time, no one suspected that the CIA officer might have removed from the suitcase data that explained why Pan Am 103 had been destroyed. Gannon's luggage was never accounted for—giving rise to the belief that the actual bomb had been placed in his suitcase. No satisfactory explanation would ever emerge as to how or why a CIA officer was carrying a bomb in his suitcase.

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The PBS investigative television program Frontline subsequently claimed to have solved the cause of the disaster. Pan Am 103 had begun its journey in Frankfurt, where U.S.-bound passengers from the Middle East transferred on to Flight 103. Among them were Gannon and his CIA team, who had traveled on an Air Malta flight to make the connection. Their baggage was similar to thousands of suitcases that passed through the hands of Frankfurt baggage handlers every day. One of them was in the pay of terrorists. Somewhere in the airport baggage bays the handler had concealed a suitcase already containing the bomb. His instruction was to spot a matching suitcase coming off a connecting flight, and substitute his suitcase, and then let it continue on into the hold of Pan Am 103. It was a plausible theory—but only one of many advanced to explain the bombing. Understandably desperate to show the destruction of Pan Am 103 had been an act of terrorism for which it could not be culpable, the airline's insurers hired a New York firm of private investigators called Interfor. The company had been founded in 1979 by an Israeli, Yuval Aviv, who had immigrated to the United States the previous year. Aviv claimed to be a former desk officer with Mossad—a claim the service would deny. Nevertheless, Aviv had satisfied the insurers he had the right connections to unearth the truth. When they received his report, they could only have been stunned. Aviv had concluded that the attack had been planned and executed "by a rogue CIA group, based in Germany, who were providing protection to a drug operation which transported drugs from the Middle East to the U.S. via Frankfurt. The CIA did nothing to break up the operation because the traffickers were also helping them send weapons to Iran as part of the arms-for-hostages negotiations. The method of drug smuggling was quite simple. One person would check a piece of luggage on the flight, and an accomplice working in the baggage area would switch it with a piece of identical luggage containing the narcotics. On the fatal night, a Syrian terrorist, aware of how the drug operation worked, had switched a suitcase with one containing the bomb. His reason was to kill the U.S. intelligence operatives whom Syria had discovered would join the

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flight." Aviv's report claimed McKee had learned about the "CIA rogue team," which had worked under the code name of COREA, and that its

members also had close ties to another of those mysterious figures who had found his niche on the fringes of the intelligence world. Monzer Al-Kassar had built a reputation as an arms dealer in Europe, including supplying Colonel Oliver North with weapons for him to pass on to the Nicaraguan Contras in 1985–86. Al-Kassar also had links to the Abu Nidal organization, and his family connections were equally dubious. Ali Issa Duba, head of Syrian intelligence, was his brother-in-law, and Al-Kassar's wife was a relative of the Syrian president. Aviv's report claimed Al-Kassar had found in COREA a ready partner for the drug-smuggling operation. This had been going on for several months before the destruction of Pam Am 103. The report further claimed McKee had discovered the scam while pursuing his own contacts in the Middle East underworld in an attempt to find a way to rescue the Beirut hostages. Aviv stated in his report that "McKee planned to bring back to the U.S. proof of the rogue intelligence team's connection to Al-Kassar." In 1994, Joel Bainerman, the publisher of an Israeli intelligence report and whose analyses have also appeared in *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, and *Britain's Financial Times*, wrote: "Twenty-four hours before the flight, Mossad tipped off the German BKA that there could be a plan to plant a bomb on flight 103. The BKA passed on their tip to the COREA CIA team working out of Frankfurt who said they would take care of everything." Pan Am's attorney, Gregory Buhler, subpoenaed the FBI, CIA, FAA, DEA, NSC, and NSA to reveal what they knew, but, he later claimed, "the government quashed the subpoenas on grounds of national security." Neither the Frontline program makers, Yuval Aviv, nor Joel Bainerman had been able to provide satisfactory answers to troubling questions. If there was a cover-up to COREA's activities, how high did it extend within the CIA? Who had authorized it? Had that person or persons ordered the removal of embarrassing data from within McKee's suitcase? Why had the German BKA police agency tipped off the COREA unit? Was it purely by chance? Or had it been motivated by a decision that the activities of COREA had become unacceptably dangerous for others...

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Two days after the crash, Ari Ben-Menashe emerged from a post office in downtown Santiago, Chile. He was accompanied by two of the bodyguards he now felt it important to have to protect him. Suddenly: "The window I was walking past shattered. Then something

smashed into the metal custom-built briefcase I was carrying. The two bodyguards and I dived to the floor, realizing someone was shooting at us." Stanton was the next to believe her life was in danger. According to Edelist, his intelligence contacts had told him she "became a recluse, underwent plastic surgery, and changed her appearance." Increasingly, Mossad believed the CIA had murdered Nir. According to Ari Ben-Menashe, "Israeli intelligence has always believed it was a well-executed CIA operation. Nir's death ensured there would be no embarrassment for Reagan and Bush at the trial of Oliver North." Support for this theory came from a U.S. Navy commander who had accompanied Nir to Tehran on the fruiterer's mission to free the Beirut hostages. The commander's story revolved around his claim that Nir had met with George Bush, then vice president, on July 29, 1986, at the King David Hotel in Jerusalem, to brief him about the ongoing sale of U.S. arms via Israel to Iran. According to the writer Joel Bainerman, "Nir was secretly taping the entire conversation. And this provided him with evidence linking Bush to the arms-for-hostages deal. At the meeting were McKee and Gannon, who would die in the Pan Am flight over Lockerbie." Bainerman would describe a visit the commander had made to CIA headquarters in Langley, where he had met Oliver North some months before the colonel faced trial. In the writer's words, the commander asked North "what had happened to Nir. North told him that Nir was killed because he threatened to go public with the recording of the Jerusalem meeting." Journalists who have tried to question North on the matter have been brushed aside. Bush's aides have over the years maintained a similar attitude: anything the former president of the United States has to say on Irangate has already been stated.

Note:

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From the day bin Laden's suicide bombers partly destroyed the World Trade Center in 1993, Mossad had placed him at the top of its own list of most wanted terrorists. Its deep-cover field agents in Yemen, Saudi Arabia, and Afghanistan had all picked up "whispers in the wind" that bin Laden was planning "something big," said one report. Another spoke of a "strong rumor bin Laden is planning a Hiroshima type attack." Still another revealed a flight simulator being used in an al-Qaeda training camp near Kabul. Then came the even more alarming news that bin Laden had been trying to obtain chemical and nuclear

weapons. While Mossad analysts tried, in the words of one (to this author), to “connect the dots,” the reports were also passed on through the long-established back channel to the CIA. The Pentagon was asked to evaluate the threat of an air strike. One of its analysts, Marvin Cetron, wrote, “Coming down the Potomac, you could make a left turn at the Washington Monument and take out the White House.” A full three years before the September attacks, a commission chaired by Vice President Al Gore had produced a report that urged substantially more spending on airport security. Other reports, again based on input from Mossad, followed. All were ignored, first by the Clinton White House and then by Clinton’s successor, President George W. Bush. When he protested, Marvin Cetron was told by a Pentagon official, “Look, we can’t manage a crisis until it is a crisis.” There was a feeling in Washington that Mossad was once more crying wolf, that it had a vested interest in promoting Islamic fundamentalism as a threat because it feared its terrorists and wanted to persuade the United States that it also faced a similar threat.

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By the time Efraim Halevy had come into office, dutifully read the files on terrorism threats, and seen the reaction to Mossad’s warnings, he had decided that, in the words of one of his senior officers, “there was no point in pushing against a bolted door.” In Washington, the impending debacle of intelligence ignored had led, not for the first time, to a rupture between the FBI and the CIA. Both agencies had concrete evidence that al-Qaeda was an increasing threat: one of its operatives had been stopped at the last moment from flying a hijacked plane into the Eiffel Tower in Paris. Credible intelligence had emerged at Langley that bin Laden was planning to launch an air strike against the economic summit in Italy earlier in 2001. But the sense of paralysis and denial, compounded by the growing turf war between the FBI and the CIA, had continued to hold the U.S. intelligence community in its grip. It would take the events of September 11 to break that hold. In

Note:

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The details were remarkable in their consistency. Two “art students” in St Louis had been caught “diagramming the inside of a Drug

Enforcement Agency building." In another federal building in Dallas, another pair had been stopped doing the same thing. In several cities, other "art students" had shown up at the homes of senior federal officials—men with unlisted addresses, known as "black addresses" in the U.S. intelligence community. In other cities—Phoenix and San Diego were two—the "students" had been found in possession of photographs of federal agents and their unmarked cars. All the reports said that the students had given their address as the "University of Jerusalem" or the "Bezalei Academy of Arts" in the city. The FBI had asked the State Department to have the United States embassy in Israel run a check. It reported that no "University of Jerusalem" existed. The nearest was the city's Hebrew University, and it had no record of the "students." The Bezalei Academy was genuine. But the dates of birth, passport numbers, and in some cases military registration numbers of the "art students" were not listed on the academy's enrollment list, or lists of those who had attended up to ten years before. While this information was being obtained, FBI agents in Washington had traced the cell phones the mysterious "students" were carrying. All had been purchased by an Israeli diplomat in Washington who had now returned to Israel. The news caused consternation in FBI headquarters. Robert Mueller, then the bureau's director, called for a meeting with George Tenet. Uppermost in their minds was whether they were facing another spying operation by Mossad. But would an agency that had made its name for unrivaled planning and stealth have mounted one that, on the surface at least, was so amateurish? Tenet placed a call to Halevy, who denied that any operation was going on. He was lying. The operation had been his brainchild. Stung by the refusal—and this was months before the September 11 attacks—to take heed of Mossad's warnings that al-Qaeda was a growing threat within the United States, Halevy had decided to test how vigilant were American defenses. Students from their final year at the Mossad training school on the outskirts of Tel Aviv had been selected to go to America. It would not be the first time that Mossad had used its students for this purpose; it gave them valuable field experience, and anything they acquired could be useful to Mossad.

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As the FBI began its investigation, the inevitable happened: the news leaked. Soon a number of reporters were trying to pin down the story.

Much of their initial reporting was wide of the mark. The “art students” were described as “Middle Easterners” and “speaking Arabic.” They were identified as members of an unnamed terrorist group. Then the Fox News channel entered the arena. It assigned a hardworking reporter, Carl Cameron, to the story. He picked up the first hint that this could be a Mossad-generated operation. That provoked an immediate response from the vast and powerful Jewish lobby in Washington, whose tentacles reach out across America. The American-Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) is a leading political lobby, able to penetrate Congress, the intelligence community, and the White House. The Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs (JINSA) has equally powerful connections. The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) and the Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America (CAMERA) are strident watchdogs over what the media publish about Israeli affairs. The moment Cameron went on air on the Fox network to announce he had uncovered “a possible espionage and surveillance operation by Israelis against al-Qaeda operatives in the U.S.,” the combined resources of the Jewish lobby directed their fire against him. But even as they launched their first volley, Cameron was saying in a second report that “many of the Israelis had failed polygraph tests when asked about their alleged surveillance activities in the United States.” In Paris, *Le Monde*, France’s newspaper of record, reported that “a vast Israeli spy network had been dismantled in the United States, the largest operation of its kind since 1985 when Jonathan Pollard was caught selling top secrets to Mossad.” With renewed ferocity, the Jewish lobby set to work. The Israeli embassy predictably reiterated what it said to all such allegations: “No American official or intelligence agency has complained to us about this. The story is nonsense. Israel does not spy on the United States.” The Israel lobby excoriated Carl Cameron for his exposé. Representatives of JINSA, the ADL, and CAMERA argued that the Fox report “cited only unnamed sources and provided no direct evidence.” CAMERA’s associate director, Alex Safian, said “it was having ‘conversations’ with representatives of Fox News regarding Cameron’s piece.” Safian also questioned Cameron’s “motives” in running the story. “I think Fox has always been fair to Israel in its reporting. I think it’s just Cameron who has something, personally, about Israel. He was brought up in the Middle East. Maybe that has something to do with it. Maybe he’s very sympathetic to the Arab side. One could ask.” The implication was that Carl Cameron was a bigot; Safian would later make the same allegation about the entire editorial staff at *Le Monde*.

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"I'm speechless," said Cameron when he heard of Safian's statement. "I spent several years in Iran growing up because my father was an archaeologist there. That makes me anti-Israel?" Cameron, the chief Washington correspondent for Fox News, had never before been attacked for "biased" coverage. Michael Lind, a senior fellow at the New America Foundation—a think tank—and former executive editor of The National Interest, a journal, said: "Among foreign service officers, law enforcement, and military, there is an impression that you can't mess with Israel without suffering direct and indirect smears, such as being labeled an Arabist." While the attacks on Cameron and Le Monde were at full throttle, the "art students" were quietly deported to Israel for what the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service called "routine visa violations." No mainstream media outlet asked why the CIA, through its National Counterintelligence Executive, had been involved. Or why the FBI had established that the "students" had visited no fewer than thirty-six Defense Department facilities. Finally, as the "students" were flying out on El Al back to Tel Aviv, all traces of Cameron's reporting vanished from the Fox News Internet site. In its place ran a note. "This story no longer exists." A CIA spokesman said: "We've closed the book on it." Shortly afterward, Halevy's tenure at Mossad came to an end.

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Mossad agents already knew that in the months before the attacks on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon, it was from Pakistan that Osama bin Laden made three separate visits to Beijing. Each time he was accompanied by China's ambassador to that country and the head of Pakistan's powerful intelligence service, ISI. He had gone to organize a defense contract for the Taliban worth \$1 billion. "We now believe that during those visits he was apprised of the progress with the new explosives," a senior Mossad source in Tel Aviv told the author. He agreed that there "is a very strong possibility" al-Qaeda had been provided with a quantity of the explosive—a tiny portion of which had been given to the two British suicide bombers. This took terrorism into a new dimension. It was a judgment that was never far from Dagan's thoughts as he continued to lead Mossad into the new millennium.

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Dagan knew the reason for this harsh sentence was the forty-six-page affidavit Caspar Weinberger, then secretary of defense, had made for Pollard's trial in 1987. It was so secret that it had never been made public. Every attempt to do so had been blocked by federal lawyers in various Washington courts. In April 2004, the affidavit was still classified "Top Secret Sensitive Compartmented Information" (SCI). This is a restriction to protect the most sensitive data in the U.S. intelligence community. Dagan believed the affidavit contained crucial details about how Promis software—developed by the specialist Inslaw computer company in Washington and later stolen by Mossad—had been adapted to fit into the artificial intelligence on board U.S. nuclear submarines. The resulting capability was known as "over-the-horizon accuracy," enabling a submarine to hit targets far within the then Soviet Union and China. The Promis software could program details of the defenses around a target along with the advanced physics and mathematics needed to ensure a direct hit from huge distances. Dagan

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It was a sayan in Phoenix, Arizona, who discovered in the spring of 2004 that one of the most notorious figures in the history of the Catholic church, Archbishop Paul Marcinkus, had kept his undertaking never to divulge what he knew about Mossad's role in the disappearance of \$200 million. It had been sent to the Polish Solidarity movement by the Vatican Bank when Marcinkus had been its president. By the early 1980s, Marcinkus was implicated in massive financial scandals and a stunning list of other crimes, including "being involved in arms smuggling, trafficking in stolen gold, counterfeit currencies, and radioactive materials," according to an indictment lodged by the Rome public prosecutor in 1989. The charges were still on the open file in April 2004. Marcinkus was never interviewed or arrested. Pope John Paul II allowed him to remain in the Vatican so that he could be protected under the city's sovereign immunity, which had been granted to the Holy See in 1929 by Benito Mussolini. Then one night—the date remains one of the Vatican's many secrets—Marcinkus was quietly driven out of the Vatican in a car bearing diplomatic plates. Next day he arrived in Chicago. From there he was

flown to Sun City, a satellite town in Phoenix. Close by lived another colorful character, Victor Ostrovsky. The former Mossad officer was a whistleblower. Like Ari Ben-Menashe, Ostrovsky had revealed many of Mossad's secrets in interviews. Both men in 2004 still lived comfortable lives. But Marcinkus, at eighty years of age, was living out his closing years in a modest white-painted cinder-block house close to a country club fairway in Sun City. Unlike the two Mossad officers, he had still kept the silence when he was known as God's banker and a confidant of popes—Paul VI, John Paul I, and John Paul II. The Polish pope, the supreme pontiff to the Catholic world, was the one man, apart from Marcinkus, who could answer the question: What was Mossad's role in the mystery of the missing \$200 million? The mystery can properly be said to have begun when another limousine arrived at the Vatican.

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How he did so has remained secret. Now the extraordinary and, at times, bizarre story can be told of how the CIA and the Vatican Bank created that \$200 million secret fund for Solidarity. In 1983, the CIA maintained a well-developed slush fund to mount "no-questions-asked black operations" all over the world. Richard Brenneke, a mild-mannered man with the careful speech pattern of an accountant, was the senior CIA operative in charge of the agency's secret funding for those operations. He worked sixteen-hour days juggling covert funds in and out of Swiss banks, like Credit Suisse in Geneva, and sending them on complex transfers around the banking world. With the full authority of CIA director William Casey, Brenneke had started to use the Vatican Bank for money laundering. Casey had introduced Brenneke to Archbishop Paul Marcinkus. Brenneke had since made a number of visits to Marcinkus's office in a seventeenth-century tower inside the Vatican walls. "On a good day \$400 million was laundered," Brenneke recalled. A substantial portion of the money came from the CIA's ultrasecret operations. "Like other intelligence agencies, the CIA had established backdoor links with the mafia. The CIA, like the Vatican, had a very real fear Italy could fall into the hands of the Communists. The CIA saw the mafia as a bulwark against that happening. Consequently, the CIA took the view that the mafia's activities in Italy were to be tolerated if they helped to ensure that NATO member Italy did not fall into Moscow's hands at the polling booths," said David Yallop (to the author). By 1983, the CIA had

extended its secret links to international crime to include arming Iran and the contras in Nicaragua. Brenneke said: "Money from guns sold to the Iranians was used by the agency to buy drugs in South America. Cocaine was shipped back to the States and sold on to the mafia. That money was then used to buy weapons for the contras in Nicaragua. It got so out of hand I told President Reagan's national security adviser, Don Gregg. I was told to forget it." By then, Brenneke said, he had laundered \$10 billion. A considerable portion of the money came from the Gotti mafia family of New York. The Gotti family, like the Gambino and Colombo crime families, were devout Catholics. FBI intercepts show the bosses gave generously to the church. Another mafia chief, Salvatore "Lucky" Luciano, boasted of visiting the Vatican before his death. "By 1983 the Vatican Bank was being routinely used by the mafia to move money both into and out of Italy. The money came from drugs, prostitution, and a variety of other crimes that the Vatican officially condemned," said Yallop. Did the \$200 million earmarked for Solidarity come from the mafia? Twenty-one years would pass after that Fiat limousine drove on through the Arch of the Bells gateway before those and other questions would be asked.

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On that April evening in 1983, late though the hour was, the pope's then senior secretary Stanislaw Dzwisz and Marcinkus were waiting to be briefed. Marcinkus had recently been promoted by Pope John Paul to become governor of Vatican City. He was also now in charge of security for all the pontiff's foreign trips. The pope's former English-language secretary, Monsignor John Magee, now bishop of Clones in Ireland, provided a rare insight into Poggi: "He was imbued with well-founded confidence in his own abilities, his mission in life and his relationship with God." Settled in Dzwisz's office in the papal secretariat in the Apostolic Palace, Poggi told them that the outgoing United States ambassador to Poland, the soft-spoken Francis J. Meehan, had revealed that the Reagan administration was going to arrange the transfer of \$200 million to support Solidarity. The news came at the end of Poggi's twenty-third visit to Warsaw in the past two years. Each time he had stayed with Cardinal Josef Glemp, primate of Poland, availing himself of the lead-lined room and speaking in Latin. It made no difference. Mossad, Israel's secret intelligence service, had carried out a major coup only two months

before Poggi was briefing Marcinkus and Dzwisz. It had been set up by Nahum Admoni, the spymaster who had dined with Poggi in Paris and discussed church affairs. Then Mossad's director of operations, Rafi Eitan, had smooth-talked the U.S. Department of Justice and the developer of the software it prized above all else in its electronic arsenal to part with a copy. The software was Promis. Down the years Bill Hamilton, the president of Inslaw, would say of Rafi Eitan and the cool way he stole Promis: "Rafi fooled me. And he fooled a lot of others." Eitan, now in his seventies, admitted (to the author in 2004): "It was quite a coup. Yes, quite a coup." The Israelis deconstructed Promis and inserted a trapdoor in the software. Dr. Jerzy Milewski, the hardworking Polish Jew responsible for Solidarity's fund-raising, was persuaded by Eitan on a visit to Brussels to accept the doctored software "as a gift from Israel." Mossad had become the first intelligence service to penetrate the heart and soul of Solidarity.

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Sources at the Bank Lambert in Brussels insist it had no record of such a large payment coming into its coffers from the Vatican Bank. So where did it go? Enter now, not for the first time, one of the undisputed grand villains of financial chicanery—Robert Maxwell. The Israeli-doctored Promis software had been sold to General Wojciech Jaruzelski, Poland's Communist ruler, by Maxwell. It was to be used—and was—against Solidarity and anyone who supported Poland's then fledgling democratic opposition. But during his global sales drive for Promis, Maxwell had, in 1985—when the money transfer to help Solidarity had already taken place—sold Promis to Belgium's counterespionage service, the Sûreté de l'Etat. It gave Mossad a window into Belgium's intelligence operations—including financial operations by Semion Yukovich Mogilevich. At that time, still operating from his base in Budapest,

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Somewhere in that tangled web—the CIA, Marcinkus money laundering, Polish intelligence, Mossad, and Maxwell—lay the answer to that question asked publicly by the distinguished Richard Pipes. Where did the \$200 million for Solidarity go? The answer turned out to be staggeringly simple. Using Promis, the money had been intercepted by Mossad to finance its own black operations.

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In the past, the intelligence service had used its doctored version of the software to access foreign bank accounts held by Israeli millionaires that they hoped had been discreetly transferred out of a country strapped for cash. Mossad had not only seized the sums, but had also summoned the hapless millionaires to a meeting. They were told that they would be levied a "fine" for their breach of the country's strict currency regulations. To refuse would mean a trial and certain imprisonment. "They all paid," Rafi Eitan said (to the author) with undisguised satisfaction. In March 2004, William Hamilton, president of Inslaw, told the author that using Promis would "make it a relatively simple operation for Mossad to have stolen the money." A copy of the software had also ended up in the hands of Osama bin Laden. It had been stolen by Robert Hanssen, a senior FBI computer specialist who was a longtime key spy in the bureau. He is now serving a life sentence for espionage. By then the KGB had sold it to bin Laden for a reported \$2 million. *

Note:

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From their first meeting the two spy chiefs had formed an immediate bond. Goss had listened as Dagan had explained how he had inherited a Mossad where morale was low and its reputation seriously damaged, and how he revitalized it by the simple expedient of being a hands-on director. Since coming to office Dagan had made close to fifty trips overseas. Goss had spoken about his own stint with the CIA in the 1960s, the time of the Cuban missile crisis, and attempts to assassinate Fidel Castro with a poisoned cigar or a booby-trapped seashell when the Cuban leader went diving. Goss explained that ill health had finally made him give up a career with the Directorate of Operations that was responsible for all spying missions. He had entered politics, winning a seat for the Republicans in Florida. But he had never lost touch with the global intelligence world. In London, Paris, and other European capitals, he had kept alive a network that would serve him well in his new post.

Note:

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In al-Qaeda hideouts in the jungle, evidence had been found that over three thousand American-based companies, many in the high-tech industry, had been penetrated by the organization buying stocks. U.S. Treasury officials calculated that in 2004 the terror group had invested over a billion U.S. dollars. The shares had been acquired through investment brokerages in Asia, Malta, and Poland, payment having first been processed through banks in Saudi Arabia and Lebanon. FBI director Robert Mueller had assigned 167 senior agents to try and unravel the complicated financial structure that now gave al-Qaeda a growing presence in the global financial markets. David Szady, the FBI assistant director for counterintelligence, had called the situation "a most grave and present danger. It could undermine the national security and economic advantage of the United States" (to the author). At the center of al-Qaeda's money-laundering activities was the software program, Promis, developed by the Washington-based specialist company, Inslaw, and subsequently obtained by Israel. A copy of the software had later found its way into the hands of Osama bin Laden. It had originally been stolen from the FBI by Robert Hanssen, a long-time KGB spy in the agency. He had passed it on to the KGB, and its agents had then sold it to bin Laden. While in Washington, al-Qaeda's tangled financial web was slowly being untangled, in Latin America Mossad had established how the terror group's operatives entered the continent through Honduras and Venezuela. The CSIS had high-speed trawlers based in Cuba capable of running the terrorists across the Caribbean to the virtually unguarded coastline of both countries.

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Officers were involved in drug smuggling, kidnapping, extortion, and killings. But most alarming of all were the links between al-Qaeda and the country's Popular Revolutionary Army, EPR. They had been discovered in documents during antiterrorist operations by the CIA in Pakistan to try and locate Osama bin Laden. Copies had been passed on to Mossad at the instigation of Porter Goss. As well as confirming al-Qaeda ties with the substantial student population of Muslims on Dominica and the large number of Arabs living on Peru's border with Chile, the documents revealed that EPR had a key role in helping al-Qaeda operatives enter the United States through the busiest land crossing in the world, Tijuana. Mossad analysts believed the documents were authored by Ayman al-Zawahiri, al-Qaeda's leading

strategist. His psychoprofile in the Mossad archives included the observation that his few pleasures included watching videos of the attacks of 9/11. Since then he was reported to have made several visits to Latin America. Manuel was eager to know if Mexico's Center for Investigation

Note:

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Critical to the Kiel operation had been keeping secret that among the thirty-five Israeli naval officers and ratings for each submarine were five specialist technicians who would be responsible for firing the nuclear weapons each submarine would carry if the order was given. These armaments would be fitted when the boats reached Haifa. The three Dolphins left Kiel and headed for Haifa where specially prepared pens awaited them. For the next six weeks they were fitted with an adapted version of the Promis software that had been developed by Inslaw, the specialist Washington-based company. The software would allow each submarine to locate and destroy a target up to one thousand miles away. Promis was also programmed to probe defenses around a target and calculate the complex mathematics that would ensure a direct hit. After the software had been installed, each submarine was equipped with twenty-four cruise missiles. Fitted with nuclear warheads, each missile would have a destructive power greater than the Hiroshima bomb. Test firings, using dummy warheads, had been successfully carried out in the Indian Ocean. Now, on that March day in 2005, the three Dolphins were directed to take up station on the seabed in the Persian Gulf and target Iran's nuclear facilities.

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Manacled and hooded in one of the compound's railroad freight trucks, subjected to sleep deprivation and long periods of amplified "white noise," denied air-conditioning during the intense heat of the day and warmth for the icy cold of the night, injected with drugs to weaken his resistance, coupled with physical violence and threats of summary execution—techniques later exposed by Amnesty International—Khalid Sheikh Mohammed began to reveal details of America's Hiroshima. It called for the detonation of seven tactical nuclear devices in seven cities simultaneously. The cities were New York, Washington, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Seattle, Chicago, and

Boston. Each device would be capable of creating an explosion of ten kilotons. The planning for the multiple explosions was still in its early stages, and the operation would ultimately require smuggling into the United States the nuclear devices in seaborne cargo containers. Every year around eighteen thousand container ships arrive at U.S. ports; only a small percentage are thoroughly checked. To check all would require manpower far beyond what is available and would have serious consequences for America's commerce. It was at this stage, in May 2003, that Mossad became directly involved. A set of the captured documents and the first interrogation transcripts had been passed to Mossad as part of the close collaboration established between Porter Goss and Meir Dagan. In return Mossad had provided the CIA with electrifying news. Abdul Qadeer Khan had, in April 2003, met with bin Laden. The scientist had flown to Peshawar in the Northwest Province and had been driven through the towering mountains and across the Pakistan border into the hard, unforgiving, and desolate land of eastern Afghanistan. With Khan had gone one of the six nuclear scientists Mossad had been tracking. His name was Murad Qasim and he was the leading expert in the intricacies of centrifugal technology in the Khan Laboratories. Now, a month later in mid-May, Qasim was among Khan's guests at his weekend house overlooking a lake outside Rawalpindi on the north plane of the Punjab. The area was a conservationist paradise. Posing as fishermen, a Mossad yaholomin team had set up surveillance near the house. Direction mikes had been disguised as rods. Five years had passed since Khan had successfully detonated Pakistan's first nuclear bomb at the test site beneath the Baluchistan Desert. In the intervening years he had continued to sell nuclear technology to Iran and North Korea. Besides Murad Qasim, Mossad had identified five of his colleagues who had also traveled there; Muhammad Zubair, Bashiruddin Mahmood, Saeed Akhther, Imtaz Baig, and Waheed Nasir. All were senior managers at the Khan Laboratories. On that weekend in May, they completed the guest list at Khan's retreat by the lake.

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Now the eavesdropping Mossad team heard Mahmood tell Khan and his guests that his own contacts in Pakistan intelligence had warned him that the CIA knew about their own role in America's Hiroshima after their names had surfaced in the documents discovered with Khalid Sheikh Mohammed's capture. Mossad's long-rooted suspicions

had been confirmed: Mahmood had gone to Kandahar not to discuss with bin Laden the making of a relatively simple “dirty bomb” but to pledge the services of himself and the five other scientists around Khan’s table. Next day, even as Meir Dagan was sending Porter Goss details of what the yaholomin unit had recorded, all six scientists had left Pakistan. Khan subsequently resolutely denied any knowledge of his staff being involved in the plot to launch nuclear strikes against America.

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Part of what Amit once likened to a “theology of death” (to the author) is based on an eighty-page manual written in 1953 by a scientist, Dr. Sidney Gottlieb, who at the time was head of the CIA’s Technical Services Division. The manual has remained to this day in the midrasa, the Mossad training school, and is used as part of the two-year course for its agents. From them came the kidon. Rafi Eitan, a former Mossad operation chief, told the author, “Only a handful show the requirements; a total coldness once committed, and afterwards no regrets.”

Note:

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The bomb maker had been high on the list of terrorists to be “rendered” by the CIA Counterterrorist Intelligence Centers (CTIC) at Langley. Originally created in the mid-1990s by the Clinton administration, it had rapidly expanded after the 9/11 attacks to counter the threat of Islamic terrorism and overcome CIA difficulties in obtaining convictions against terrorists. Further expansion followed the end of the war with Iraq when a number of meetings took place in London and Washington, chaired by both countries’ intelligence chiefs, to decide how to best deal with the large number of captured suspected terrorists. Mossad had a seat at the table. Out of those meetings came the creation of a purpose-built interrogation center at the U.S. base at Bagram in the charge of forty CTIC men and women, including doctors trained in the use of psychotropic drugs. Many were familiar with the use of mind-bending chemicals that had been developed for the notorious CIA MK-ULTRA program in the 1960s. Mossad’s own interrogators were given full access to the captives. Intelligence they acquired was shared with CTIC. Bagram quickly became crowded with captured Taliban and foreign mercenaries. In

the first weeks, two died during interrogation and several were left permanently physically incapacitated. But the center was soon overflowing with prisoners. At a meeting in London in April 2002 chaired by John Scarlett at the offices of the Joint Intelligence Committee and attended by CTIC officers and at which Meir Dagan was also an observer, it was decided that Bagram was not able to operate efficiently under such conditions. Even when detainees were transferred on the so-called Guantánamo Express to Cuba, the freight car cells at Bagram quickly filled up with new prisoners. Could another site—possibly several—be found? Scarlett had served in Moscow as an MI6 officer and recalled the existence of interrogation centers throughout the Soviet Union: he said the worst had been those run by the KGB in Uzbekistan, Moldova, and Poland. They could well serve CTIC's purpose. Scarlett knew two senior officers of Polish military intelligence who had worked with GROM, a specialist Polish intelligence unit in Iraq. They were invited to London to meet senior members of MI6 who had worked in Eastern Europe. George Tenet, now in the dying months of his tenure, sent several senior officials to attend. The Poles confirmed the KGB interrogation centers remained intact and were used by local security services to question criminals. Because

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On a sunny spring day the Gulfstream V and its unrecorded passengers flew across from Northolt to the Szczytno-Szymany base in northern Poland still blanketed by winter snow. After refueling, the aircraft flew south from there to Uzbekistan. Soon the executive jet was on a regular run, picking up detainees in Jakarta in Indonesia, Pakistan, and Bagram. One was the Yemeni microbiologist Jamil Qasim Saeed Mohammed, wanted by CTIC "in connection with the bombing of the USS Cole while the warship was at anchor off Aden." He was flown to Uzbekistan and his fate remains unknown. Another passenger had been Muhammad Saad Iqbal Madni, an Egyptian suspect who had worked with the British "shoe bomber" Richard Reid. He was rendered from Jakarta to Egypt. His fate also remains unknown.

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By December 2005, CTIC employed over one thousand people: field

officers, analysts, translators, and liaison officers with foreign intelligence services. Their closest relationship remained with Mossad: its own katas in Iran, Pakistan, Syria, and Afghanistan constantly provided updates of the movements of terrorist suspects on the CTIC list. The decision as to who would be rendered was made by CTIC in conjunction with CIA director Porter Goss. The decision on how rendition would be carried out had been fine-tuned. CTIC officers were now stationed in twenty-two countries around the globe to handle the arrests and transportation of suspects. They were usually arrested by the local security service and held in solitary confinement until they could be flown out to a designated “black site”—the CTIC description of the interrogation centers. The decision as to which site a suspect should be sent was made by the senior CTIC officer on the spot. “If a strong psychological interrogation with some physical force is required, a detainee is flown to Jordan. If a suspect is to be interrogated in between periods of strong physical force, he is sent to Egypt. For the most severe of torture for information, he is sent to Uzbekistan, where he is killed after he can reveal no more,” a senior Mossad officer told the author. Craig Murray, then a British ambassador in Uzbekistan, wrote in a memo to Jack Straw, Britain’s foreign secretary, in November 2004 (a copy of which the author has seen): “The CIA chief in this country acknowledged to me that torture of those rendered includes the boiling in vats of prisoners.” Murray was relieved of his post, labeled as “mentally unstable,” and finally dismissed from the diplomatic service. By December 2005, he had become one of the first to publicly reveal details of the rendition process. As a result he said he was threatened by Britain’s security services. But the flights continued with CTIC’s aircraft crisscrossing the world. The Gulfstream V had now been joined by a C-130 Hercules, a Casa Turboprop, a Gulfstream, and a Boeing 737. All were painted white and bore no markings. Some were also leased from the Premier Executive Transport Service. When contacted by the author, it declined to discuss the planes or the purpose for which they were used. A glimpse of what happened on board the aircraft came from two intelligence sources—one in London, the other in Washington. “The prisoners are shackled to their seats and are gagged and often drugged during their flights. CTIC officers travel with them to their interrogation country. The flight manifests contain no details of who they are. At a refueling stop, the aircraft window blinds are drawn. No local official is allowed on board. Fuel is paid for by a credit card the pilot carries. It is billed to CTIC,” the London source told the author. The Washington source added: “In countries like Uzbekistan, Soviet-

trained interrogators carry out the torturing. They have a list of '...

Note:

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By late December 2005, the torture flights had made more than two hundred flights in and out of Britain and close to four hundred through German airspace. Other flights had passed through Spanish airports and Shannon, Ireland's international airport. The logs kept by air traffic controllers in those countries listed more than seven hundred flights of CTIC aircraft. One of those who survived a flight was Kuwait-born Khaled al-Masri, who had become a German citizen. He had gone on holiday to Macedonia in 2003 when the local police took him off a bus and held him for three weeks in a windowless cell. One night he had been taken to Skopje airport and handed over to CTIC officers. Al-Masri claims this is what happened to him then. "I

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Just as the Holocaust has increasingly attracted its deniers, so the tragedy of 9/11 is indeed so shocking and incomprehensible that it has attracted a growing number of people to reject the simple truth: that al-Qaeda had announced its coming, weeks before—and that the clear warnings from Mossad had been largely discounted. In Tel Aviv a senior Mossad analyst told the author in September 2006: The Bush administration has given groups like the Scholars for [9/11] Truth credibility by doing so much of its work in secret and by giving the public so many fake stories. A good example is that President Bush finally admitted in September, nine months after he had solemnly denied it, terrorist suspects were being secretly held in interrogation centers outside the jurisdiction of the United States. The result is the paranoia of groups like the Scholars for Truth are fed by the arrogance of those around President Bush.

Note:
