

Ex-Analyst Pollard Pleads Guilty to Spying for Israel

By Joe Pichrallo
Washington Post Staff Writer

Jonathan Jay Pollard, a former civilian Navy counterintelligence analyst, pleaded guilty yesterday to participating in an espionage conspiracy directed by Israeli officials in which Pollard was promised more than \$300,000 for delivering suitcases full of U.S. military secrets, according to federal prosecutors.

Pollard routinely obtained secret documents from the Navy and U.S. intelligence agencies for more than a year and dropped the data off at a Washington apartment that his Israeli contacts had equipped with photocopying machines, according to documents filed by prosecutors in U.S. District Court.

The operation, prosecutors said, was managed in this country first by an Israeli Air Force colonel and later by a science consul at Israel's New York consulate, and was directed from Israel by Rafael (Rafi) Eitan, a former terrorism adviser to two Israeli prime ministers.

At yesterday's court proceeding before U.S. District Court Judge Aubrey E. Robinson, Pollard and his wife, Anne Henderson-Pollard, pleaded guilty as part of an agreement worked out in extensive negotiations between their lawyers and federal prosecutors. Pollard, who has been in custody without bond since his arrest Nov. 21, and his wife, who was released on bond in late February, are cooperating with federal officials in the continuing investigation.

Pollard, 31, pleaded guilty to conspiring to provide U.S. military secrets to Israel, a crime that carries a maximum penalty of life in prison and a \$250,000 fine. Prosecutors said that they have agreed not to ask for a life sentence but that they will ask Robinson to impose a "substantial" prison sentence. No sentencing date has been set.

Henderson-Pollard, 26, pleaded guilty to two felony charges: conspiring to receive embezzled government property and being an accessory after the fact to possessing secret U.S. military documents.

She could receive up to 10 years in prison and a fine of \$500,000. Her attorney, James Hibey, told reporters yesterday that the charges against her show that she did not provide any U.S. secrets to Israel or any other foreign country.

The Israeli government has repeatedly said that top Israeli officials were unaware of the Pollard operation and have described it as a "renegade" unit that functioned outside normal Israeli intelligence channels.

Named as unindicted coconspirators in the indictment of Pollard were four Israelis: Eitan; Israeli Air Force Col. Aviem (Avi) Sella, allegedly Pollard's initial contact; Joseph (Yossi) Yagur, a former science consul at Israel's New York City consulate who allegedly replaced Sella as Pollard's control agent, and Irit Erb, a former secretary in the Israeli Embassy in Washington.

A U.S. official said that the Justice Department is considering whether formal charges will be filed against Eitan and the other unindicted coconspirators.

Richard Hibey, Pollard's attorney, told reporters after yesterday's court proceeding that his client "is a person who is totally committed to America. He also believes in the Israeli state."

The arrest of Pollard, who was taken into custody outside the Israeli Embassy in Upper Northwest after he and his wife unsuccessfully sought asylum there, provoked an uproar both here and in Israel and temporarily strained U.S. relations with the Jewish state, a close ally in the Middle East.

The incident proved embarrassing for the government of Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres because Israel and the United States have an agreement not to conduct espionage operations against each other.

In Jerusalem yesterday, a spokesman for the Foreign Ministry declined to comment on the details brought out in court yesterday, say-

ing that "we cannot comment on [the] contents because the matter is sub judice [before the court] and sentences are awaited."

The spokesman repeated earlier statements that Israel continues "to cooperate fully" with the United States.

U.S. officials familiar with the Pollard case said the new information developed by investigators, much of it resulting from details provided by Pollard, raises questions about whether Israel has in fact fully cooperated or whether it tried to cover up crucial facts about the extent of the Pollard operation.

One U.S. law enforcement official said yesterday that the account that Eitan and other Israeli officials implicated in the spying operation provided when they were interviewed by U.S. investigators in Israel last year was significantly different from facts subsequently established by prosecutors and the FBI and made public in court yesterday.

"There were a substantial number of differences," the official said. "It was like night and day."

For example, two U.S. officials said that Eitan and the other Israelis interviewed never disclosed Sella's role or the fact that a bank account had been set up for Pollard in Switzerland. Prosecutors said that Eitan and others promised to pay Pollard \$30,000 a year for 10 years in addition to giving him monthly cash payments, which started out at \$1,500 and were later increased to \$2,500 a month. Pollard received more than \$45,000, prosecutors said.

A senior Israeli official said in Jerusalem late yesterday that the government would make Sella available for questioning by U.S. law enforcement officials.

The Israeli official also sought to minimize the significance of Sella's role as a liaison with Pollard.

"The fact that a liaison was identified—and, of course [Pollard] had to have a liaison—doesn't make it a widespread network," the official said.

U.S. Attorney Joseph E. diGenova, in a news conference after yesterday's plea, declined to respond to repeated questions about whether investigators believe the Pollard operation was officially authorized by the Israeli government.

"We are not rendering an assessment as to ultimate responsibility," diGenova said. "The investigation is continuing as to those named [in the court documents] as well as others unnamed or unknown at this time."

According to sources, there has been a debate throughout the case between Justice Department officials, who were eager to make public the full extent of the operation, and State Department officials concerned about the case's impact on the crucial relationship between the United States and Israel.

Yesterday, diGenova said "the final judgment" on charges and the information contained in the public court documents was made by his office and Justice Department officials.

Sources familiar with the case said a major reason the case was able to be fully developed was that FBI agents moved in and arrested Pollard at the Israeli Embassy after he attempted to flee.

Said one law enforcement official: "Once the arrest occurred, there was no stopping [the investigation]. It was public."

Sources said that U.S. officials are still conducting an internal review to assess fully the damage

caused by the reams of information Pollard provided the Israelis.

The court documents provide only vague clues as to the information provided by Pollard and in general described the data as "scientific, technical, and military information." The items turned over included unspecified intelligence publications and satellite photos, prosecutors said.

Foreign diplomatic sources said last year that the classified information the Israelis received included technical assessments of radar and other electronic equipment used by Egypt, Saudi Arabia and possibly Jordan to monitor Middle East military activities.

In a 1984 meeting in which Eitan and others explained to Pollard the type of information they were seeking, according to prosecutors, Eitan told Pollard that "the government of Israel sought this specific classified information in order to identify and assess threats to Israel's security."

In a separate meeting, according to prosecutors, science consul Yagur told Pollard that secret documents Pollard already had delivered "had been utilized by various branches of the Israeli military."

Pollard, who was employed at the Naval Investigative Service's Anti-Terrorist Alert Center in Suitland while he was spying, had a top secret security clearance and had access not only to confidential Navy intelligence data but also information compiled by the Defense Intelligence Agency and other U.S. government agencies, prosecutors said.

Also, they said, Pollard was able to walk out of his Navy office complex with documents he was not authorized to have because he had a "courier card" that enabled him to leave his office without being searched.

It has not been disclosed how Pollard's activities were uncovered.

According to the indictment and outline of evidence filed by prosecutors, the espionage operation developed this way:

In the spring of 1984, Pollard asked an unidentified acquaintance

to introduce him to Sella, then a graduate student at New York University. Pollard told Sella he wanted to spy for Israel and Sella agreed to set up the operation after he asked and received from Pollard examples of the classified information Pollard could obtain.

Sella told Pollard he would arrange for Pollard to be paid for the data, coached Pollard on a "cover" story to explain how he could have money above his government salary—about \$33,000 a year—and taught him other intelligence techniques, including a code system based on the Hebrew alphabet that Sella used to contact Pollard at pay telephones.

In the fall of 1984, at Sella's direction, Pollard and his wife went to Paris where Pollard met Eitan and Yagur, who was to take over as Pollard's control agent.

In a subsequent trip to Israel in the fall of 1985, Yagur told Pollard of the bank account that was opened on his behalf in the name of "Danny Cohen." Yagur also showed Pollard an Israeli passport, with Pollard's picture, in the name of "Danny Cohen." Yagur told Pollard that when Pollard settled in Israel he would live there under that name.

In the United States, Pollard would deliver classified documents every two weeks to the apartment of Erb, the former Israeli Embassy secretary, and the information would be photocopied in another apartment in her building.

Pollard made his last delivery to Erb on Nov. 15. Three days later, the FBI agents and Navy investigators confronted him at work.

On Nov. 21, after being advised by the Israeli Embassy's security officer to "shake" his FBI surveillance, Pollard and his wife drove to the embassy to seek asylum. But they were turned away, and Pollard was arrested by FBI agents who had followed him to the embassy.

Correspondent William Claiborne contributed to this report from Israel.

POLLARD SPY CASE CHRONOLOGY

- **Sept. 19, 1979:** Jonathan Jay Pollard is hired as intelligence research specialist by U.S. Navy Field Operations Intelligence Office. He holds that position within various Navy divisions until June 1984.
- **Early 1984:** Pollard tells an unidentified associate that he is interested in meeting an Israeli military officer with whom the associate is acquainted.
- **Summer 1984:** Pollard meets the officer, Aviem (Avi) Sella, and agrees to pass classified documents to Sella and other Israeli representatives. During the summer they have further meetings at which Pollard passes documents to Sella.
- **June 1984:** Pollard is assigned as watch officer for Anti-Terrorist Alert Center, Threat Analysis Division, Naval Investigative Service (NIS).
- **Late summer 1984:** Sella tells Pollard he is returning to Israel and that Pollard will be assigned a new "handler."
- **October 1984:** Pollard becomes an intelligence research specialist in the Anti-Terrorist Alert Center. He holds a high-level security clearance and analyzes intelligence data about potential terrorist threats in the Caribbean and continental United States.
- **November 1984:** Pollard and his wife Anne Henderson-Pollard travel to Paris at Sella's direction for two days of meetings with Rafi Eitan, identified as the head of the operation; Joseph (Yossi) Yagur, science consul at the Israeli Embassy in Washington, and Sella.
- **After November 1984:** Pollard removes documents from his office about three times weekly using a "courier card" that permits him to avoid being searched. He delivers the documents to Yagur or Irit Erb, an Israeli citizen who worked at the Israeli Embassy, at an apartment in Washington every two weeks.
- **Spring 1985:** Pollard's "handlers" give him a raise, from \$1,500 monthly to \$2,500.
- **Summer 1985:** Pollard gives his wife five documents, marked "secret," about the Chinese Embassy's structure and key diplomats, to help her prepare a presentation to embassy officials for her public relations firm.
- **Nov. 15:** Pollard delivers suitcase of classified documents to Erb's apartment for copying.
- **Nov. 17:** When Pollard returns to retrieve the documents, Erb does not come to the door, "an unusual occurrence which made Pollard nervous."
- **Nov. 18:** FBI and NIS agents stop Pollard in the parking lot of the NIS facility at Suitland and question him. During the interview, Pollard telephones his wife and mentions a code word, "cactus," to alert her to remove classified documents from their apartment. Anne Henderson-Pollard removes a suitcase containing classified documents from their apartment and meets with Sella, with whom they had previously arranged to have dinner. She tells him Pollard is in trouble.
- **Nov. 19:** Pollard, at Sella's instruction, calls Yagur, seeking help. Yagur tells Pollard to stall for time.
- **Nov. 20:** Irit Erb leaves the United States.
- **Nov. 21:** The Pollards unsuccessfully seek asylum at the Israeli Embassy. Jonathan Pollard is arrested.
- **Nov. 22:** Anne Henderson-Pollard is arrested. Yagur leaves the United States.
- **June 4, 1986:** Jonathan Pollard pleads guilty to conspiring to provide U.S. military secrets to the Israelis, and Anne Henderson-Pollard pleads guilty to conspiring to receive embezzled government property and being an accessory after the fact to possessing secret military documents.

SOURCE: U.S. GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS