

THE ISRAELI ACCOUNT

BY JEFF
MCCONNELL
AND
RICHARD
HIGGINS

In October of last year, Uri Simchoni, then Israel's chief military attache in Washington, sat in the White House situation room with US intelligence officials. Hours earlier, the Palestinian hijackers of the *Achille Lauro* cruise ship had taken off in an EgyptAir plane to apparent freedom. Simchoni gave the Americans key information that enabled US warplanes to intercept and bring the plane down in Sicily.

The next month, Jonathan Jay Pollard, a Navy counterterrorism analyst, was arrested for passing US military secrets to Israel, in what became the most public intelligence scandal ever to come between the two countries. Pollard, 32, is scheduled to be sentenced next month. Although Israel continues to shrug it off as a "rogue operation," the Pollard case has sparked debate in both countries over the extent of past and present Israeli operations in the United States.

Such examples of cooperation and conflict run throughout US-Israeli relations. They are especially evident in the ordinarily hidden realm of intelligence-gathering, and nowhere more so than in what the Central Intelligence Agency calls its "Israeli account." For 35 years, the Israeli account has been the main channel through which the CIA and the Israeli intelligence service, known as Mossad, have exchanged classified data on Soviet espionage activities, Arab states, and other matters of mutual concern.

But past and present CIA officers say the account has another side. "Everything in the relationship between intelligence services is like a double-edged sword," Stephen C. Miller, who handled the Israeli account for almost two decades, said in a rare interview a few weeks before his death this past spring. "On the one hand, there is the friendly aspect. But on the other, there is the counterintelligence aspect — in which you try to get as much as you can and keep others from getting things from you."

This is the story of the Israeli account. Pieced together from six months of interviews with dozens of current and former government officials, most of whom would not allow their names to be used, it is a story that has unfolded almost entirely outside the public view. It is a drama in which the CIA's counterintelligence efforts have, at times, overshadowed its friendly cooperation with Israel.

Understanding this helps makes sense of the debate over Israeli espionage in the United States. Like any drama, this story is in some ways about the strong personalities involved. But more often, it reflects larger matters: strengths and weaknesses in US-Israeli ties, objectivity in American perception of Israel, and a possible shift in the nature of the United States' intelligence relationship with Israel.

US SECURITY CONCERNS DATE BACK TO THE VERY BEGINNINGS of the CIA's relationship with Israel. For almost 25 years, that relationship came under the aegis of James Jesus Angleton, the agency's legendary chief of counterintelligence from the late 1940s until 1974. A veteran of the wartime Office of Strategic Services, Angleton led the postwar remnants of the spy organization in Italy while he was only in his late 20s. Working with the Jewish underground, he helped Jewish refugees emigrate to Palestine. Those efforts would give him a special stature among Israelis for years to come.

Three years after the war, Angleton returned to Washington from Italy and quickly took charge of counterintelligence in the CIA, the organization that evolved out of the OSS. His counterintelligence staff was responsible for protecting CIA operations from detection.

Within the huge bureaucracy, Angleton was the quintessential independent operator whose blend of charm and forcefulness won him great respect — and power. In late 1951, Angleton established a formal liaison with Israeli intelligence and set up the Israeli account within the counterintelligence staff. He was motivated in part, sources say, by the belief that the Mossad, the Israeli intelligence service, could provide a rich lode of information about Soviet operations.

Initially, Angleton handled the account personally in Washington. His first Israeli counterpart was Teddy Kollek, then a minister at the Israeli Embassy, now mayor of Jerusalem. Kollek was enormously

impressed with Angleton. "Jim is by no means an ordinary person," Kollek wrote in his autobiography. "He is an original thinker."

The Israeli account quickly became a separate, forbidden territory to those who did not work on it at the CIA. This may not have always been so. One former CIA officer tells a story, perhaps apocryphal, of the early days of the account. For a time, this man says, the work of the staff handling Israeli operations was out in the open, just like that involving any other country.

One day, however, staff members arrived at CIA headquarters to find that their files, their desks, and everything else had vanished, and that they were to be transferred to other sections. Only later did they learn, according to the story, that Angleton had taken over.

The CIA's Clandestine Services, which carries out espionage and other covert operations, consists of separate staffs — of which the counterintelligence staff is one — and a collection of geographical divisions. The geographical divisions are further divided into branches, and the branches into desks. Each country in which the CIA has an interest is assigned a separate desk, and each desk is said to handle its own country "account."

Under Angleton, the Near East division of the CIA's Clandestine Services had a desk to handle each country — except Israel. Israel was, in effect, Angleton's special domain inside the agency and thus nominally a part of his counterintelligence staff. There was no direct contact between CIA officers handling Israel and others responsible for other Mideast countries — a situation that later fed suspicions that Angleton treated Israel favorably.

Secrecy was the essence of the Israeli account. By its nature, Angleton's counterintelligence staff was one of the CIA's most secretive components. Adding to the secrecy, Angleton held the Israeli account "in his hip pocket," according to a former colleague.

Angleton himself kept a low profile, essentially invisible outside the agency and little known even to CIA colleagues.

To help with operations concerning Israel, Angleton brought in Stephen Millett, a former OSS colleague who was even more invisible than Angleton. Charles Rockwell, Millett's brother-in-law and a Cambridge resident, recalls the day Millett met his family in 1960. "My father asked him what he did for a living. 'I can't tell you,' was Steve's reply."

Throughout the 1950s and '60s, Millett traveled widely, handling sensitive matters for Angleton. Israel was only one of those matters. According to a former member of the counterintelligence staff, Millett was in regular contact with Jay Lovestone, the longtime head of the international wing of the AFL-CIO, who is called "a link man" to the CIA in John Ranelagh's recent book *The Agency*. Angleton had a number of agents in Europe, working independently of the Western Europe division, and Millett was responsible for many of them.

But Israel was a primary responsibility, and some colleagues say that for many years the Israeli account was basically a two-man operation, with only Angleton and Millett (and perhaps Bertha Dasenberg, Angleton's secretary) knowing its full story.

In the 1950s, the assumption grew at the CIA that Angleton's interests were Israel's interests, and that the CIA had adopted a hands-off attitude toward Angleton and Israel. Several of Angleton's colleagues, however, dispute this. "Angleton certainly wasn't going off as a rogue elephant," says a former high CIA official who oversaw Angleton's work. Sam Pappich, who handled many cases related to Israel as the FBI's liaison with the CIA from 1950

to 1970, says: "All I can say is, show me a case where Angleton was taken in or overly sympathetic to Israel."

Several former CIA people say they assumed that Angleton was sympathetic toward Israel because he valued his contacts in the Israeli government and wanted them to continue, and because he wanted the state to remain noncommunist. Few, however, are able to cite specific cases where Angleton was actually taken in or overly sympathetic.

One case that did emerge involves the US response to the attack on Egypt in 1956 by Israel, France, and Britain, known as the Suez crisis. According to Robert Amory, then the CIA's deputy director of intelligence, Washington first learned of the imminent invasion when a US military attache in Tel Aviv reported that his jeep driver, a severely disabled Israeli citizen, had been called to active duty. Amory concluded that a general mobilization was in effect and that an attack would occur soon, probably two days after the Jewish Sabbath. He recalls that he went to notify CIA director Allen Dulles and that Angleton walked in soon after Dulles and Amory began talking about the matter. Amory and Angleton strongly disagreed over Amory's prediction, with Angleton insisting that his Israeli contacts had just told him there would be no attack on Egypt. Exasperated, Amory recalls that he finally insisted to Dulles: "Either you trust my people and me, or you trust this co-opted Israeli agent!"

Amory says he believed that Dulles agreed with him. But two days later, as press reports of a possible Israeli attack on Egypt began to come in, Dulles conveyed Angleton's version to a special meeting called by President Dwight Eisenhower, according to documents recently uncovered at the Eisenhower Library in Abilene, Kansas. According to the minutes of that meeting, Dulles suggested that the troop movements could be simply a "probing action" and not an actual attack. "Which proves to me that sometime in

[between] Angleton got back to him and resold it," says Amory, who only recently learned the contents of the minutes, and who believes that Angleton was duped and not duplicitous. Angleton, who is in his late 60s and lives outside Washington, refuses to comment about any matters related to Israel.

Despite the lingering doubts about Angleton's posture toward Israel, former CIA employees say his unit took anything but a hands-off approach to that country. One intelligence veteran who saw CIA reports during the 1950s and 1960s says the United States conducted both "human and communications intelligence operations" against Israel. Human operations involve agents who collect information against a country without that country's knowledge; communications operations involve the interception of cable traffic and other electronic signals. In the beginning, this intelligence veteran says, these operations were comparable in scope to those directed at other countries.

In the interview this past spring, Angleton's deputy Stephen Millett acknowledged the existence of some US intelligence operations against Israel but said that they were fewer in number than those Israel mounted against the United States. There was less need for US operations against Israel than for Israeli efforts against this country, Millett said, and, in any case, conducting espionage operations inside Israel was difficult. "Israel is much smaller than the United States, its people more tightly knit. Everybody knows each other." This made human intelligence operations inside Israel difficult.

The United States apparently relied heavily on communications intelligence. According to a former government official who handled Israeli matters, the United States broke Israel's codes — the rules that govern the way messages are encrypted — soon after the country was created.

In Angleton's time, communications-intercept operations were coordinated among Angleton's Israeli desk, the National Security Agency, and the CIA's Division D, its liaison unit with the NSA. Two former employees of the NSA recall its "Hebrew desk," which they say was like the CIA's Israeli unit — secretive and physically separated from other units handling the Middle East.

While the United States was conducting its espionage operations, the Israelis were also mounting their own operations against the United States, outside their liaison with the CIA. As a result, the United States stepped up its counterintelligence efforts and took measures to protect the security of its communications. Those efforts — which included suppressing some reports for fear they would fall into Israeli hands — contributed to the US intelligence failure in the months before the Suez crisis in 1956.

The concern was not unfounded. Telephone taps were discovered in the home of the US military attache in Tel Aviv in 1956, according to a 1979 CIA counterintelligence staff report on Israeli espionage found by Iranian militants in the US Embassy in Tehran.

Stephen Koczak, a former foreign service officer assigned to Tel Aviv, says the situation was worse than that. According to Koczak, Donald John Sanne, the CIA's man in Israel from 1953 to 1956, informed his successor, Harold G. Williams, that the phones in the CIA station in the US Embassy in Israel were tapped. Koczak says that Sanne, in the months before leaving, also told his successor that Koczak and Williams were under surveillance by the Israelis.

But of even greater concern to the CIA and the State Department was the possibility of theft of diplomatic communications. Because the US Embassy in Tel Aviv refused to send cer-

tain messages out of fear these messages might find their way to the Israeli Embassy in Washington, events preceding the Suez crisis were inadequately reported, Koczak recalls. Foreign service officers sought to avoid controversy, and the CIA's men, Sanne and Williams, would not risk offending the State Department with their own differing reports.

There was particular concern over leaks from State Department intelligence, according to several sources. The CIA took an interest in such cases because State Department analysts, as consumers of CIA and NSA intelligence, were in a position to compromise the security of the entire intelligence community.

One set of allegations from the late 1950s involved Helmut Sonnenfeldt, a Soviet intelligence analyst for the State Department who later became a key National Security Council aide to Henry Kissinger and who is now a guest scholar at the Brookings Institution.

In early 1959, soon after returning to CIA headquarters from his tour of duty in Tel Aviv, Harold Williams contacted Koczak, who had returned to the United States from Israel the year before. According to Koczak, Williams told him that besides the security breaches that had troubled the two in Tel Aviv, there were other leaks of information, that the Israeli government had the leaked information, and that one of his problems was communicating information to Washington.

Williams told Koczak that some breaches of security concerned the US intervention in Lebanon in July 1958. Koczak recalled an incident he had observed around that time. Koczak had been invited to a party at the home of an Israeli whom he had known while in Tel Aviv and who was then assigned to Washington. Most of the others invited were Israelis. Since Koczak was then with the German division of State Department intelligence, he was re-

quired to obtain prior clearance from his department to socialize with foreigners, and he did so. "These were personal as well as official friends with whom I had dealt," Koczak said later. "I sympathized with their problems, and they knew my friendly feelings."

At the party he saw Sonnenfeldt, who worked with him

in the intelligence bureau. There, Koczak alleges, he watched Sonnenfeldt disclose to a group of Israelis information from classified CIA and State Department cables detailing sensitive discussions between US and Lebanese officials on arrangements for the landing of US troops.

Koczak made this allegation in sworn testimony to Congress in 1973 and reaffirmed and elaborated on it in recent interviews. "It became clear to me then," Koczak told Congress, "that this was . . . part of the whole problem as to why the

American embassy in Israel felt so totally insecure [and] why the information went back so fast [to the Israelis]." Koczak later found out, he says, that Sonnenfeldt did not have prior clearance for attending the party and even failed to report his meeting with foreigners after the fact.

Reached in Washington last month, Sonnenfeldt denied Koczak's allegations, as he did when they were first made public in 1973. He said that they had been investigated thoroughly and that they had had no impact on his subsequent career.

Koczak says he told his story to Williams, who was alarmed and took it back to CIA headquarters. According to two sources, one investigation of Sonnenfeldt, conducted by the FBI and the Justice Department at the behest of the CIA, commenced but was suspended when the CIA and State Department balked at declassifying the allegedly compromised cables, as they would have needed to do for any public hearing.

Other such episodes involving the CIA and the State Department were cited in interviews. The counterintelligence staff's secret 1979 study on Israeli intelligence listed "collection of information on secret US policy and decisions" as second among Israel's intelligence priorities.

By the 1960s the Israeli account had changed in subtle ways. No longer a two-man operation, it had taken over an office down the hall from Angleton's. But Angleton's "hip pocket" approach is said to have continued, even after Millett left and was replaced by Harold Williams.

Despite the independence in Tel Aviv that had impressed Koczak, Williams "was not totally 'in' on the [Israeli] thing when he was in Washington," a CIA friend of Williams says. "Hal did a good job in managing day-to-day affairs, but he realized that he was held at arms' length by Angleton. Whether he cared, I don't know."

The counterintelligence aspect persisted as well, and despite the expanded offices, the account was kept small and compartmented. Even inside the counterintelligence staff, there was strict secrecy. One source recalls that the Israeli files, located in the Israel office, were one of several "special collections" in counterintelligence with restricted access. The central registry was filled with a number of "blind cards"; each contained no more than a name and an instruction that directed researchers to one of these collections. Access to information in the Israeli files was thus carefully monitored.

By this time, a security measure allowing only non-Jews to work on Israeli matters had been applied to the CIA's analysis and covert operations components. Jesse Leaf, a Jewish analyst who headed the Iran desk during the late 1960s and early 1970s, says that even though his university training had been in Israeli politics, the CIA would never have put him on the Israeli desk.

The concern went beyond security. "They didn't want judgments totally prejudiced in favor of Israel," says Leaf. Asked if this would have been a concern in his case, he says, "Probably, yes. But there is no objectivity in the agency anyhow."

There were disputes between the CIA and other government branches when the CIA blocked the appointments of American Jewish military attaches to the US Embassy in Tel Aviv. "The ambassador would accuse us of anti-Semitism," a former CIA officer recalls, "but we would say, 'Appointing this man would be unfair to you, Mr. Ambassador, to him, and to his country.'" If the appointment went through, the former officer says, the CIA believed the attaché's credibility, his loyalty, and his own peace of mind would be jeopardized.

Former CIA director William Colby says that these security measures were taken to facilitate liaison with Mossad and Arab intelligence services. "The idea was that . . . you had to assure each side that its information wasn't going to the other side — in other words, the Arabs weren't getting the benefit of information about the Israelis and vice versa," Colby says.

A former US diplomat in Tel Aviv says the CIA man there gave a different account. "He said [the Israeli operation] was kept small to prevent penetration or pressure from American Zionists."

One Angleton associate also disputes Colby's version. "What Arab intelligence services?" he asks. "I've never heard of any. Colby was being discreet." Acknowledging that such a statement might be construed as anti-Semitic, he says, "The Israel desk was compartmented to keep Israelis [Mossad liaison officers] from wandering through the halls of CIA."

A former CIA officer argues that these arrangements were to the benefit of the Israelis as well as the other parties concerned. He illustrates his point with the example of one US ambassador to Israel who became so supportive of

Zionist causes and so identified with support for Israel in the minds of his superiors in Washington that his advice on matters pertaining to Israel came to be disregarded, losing Israel an effective advocate. "But you could never convince the Israelis of this," he adds.

It was under Williams' tenure as head of the Israeli desk that the CIA launched its most sensitive investigation of Israel ever: an inquiry to determine if the Jewish state had acquired nuclear weapons. By early 1967, according to William Dale, then the second-ranking US diplomat in Tel Aviv, the embassy had concluded that Israel "had or would in the very near future have" them. The CIA's investigation was kept secret, however, from the embassy and most of the rest of the government.

Some of the CIA's information came from Jewish Americans who, after visiting Israel, came to believe that Israel was developing weapons that required a supply of highly enriched uranium, according to sources who studied the matter in the late 1970s. Dale recalls that two Jewish Americans, one a scientist, once came to the embassy in Tel Aviv to report their dismay at what they had seen in Israel and their dismay over Israeli requests that they not tell US officials. These two Americans, Dale recalls, said Israelis had told them that "their first loyalty, as Jews, [should be] to Israel."

According to several sources, sensitive instruments were secretly sent to Israel to test air, soil, and water samples around Israel's nuclear reactor at Dimona, not far from the southern end of the Dead Sea, where the CIA believed that the weapons program was based. Physical evidence of the material was reportedly obtained.

In early 1968, the CIA concluded that Israel had gone nuclear. The mystery was where Israel had obtained the highly enriched uranium, since Israel was not known to be able to produce it. Attention focused on the Nuclear Equipment and Materials Corporation, or NUMEC, of Apollo, Pennsylvania, a manufacturer of highly enriched uranium that had a curious history of poor record keeping, lax security, missing uranium, and close ties to Israel.

"The clear consensus in CIA was [that] NUMEC material had been . . . used by the Israelis in fabricating weapons," Carl Duckett, then the agency's deputy director for science and technology, told ABC News five years ago. "I believe that all my senior analysts agreed with me."

The CIA asked the Justice Department to investigate NUMEC for a variety of reasons, according to sources. One involved the intelligence question of whether uranium had in fact been diverted to Israel. Another was the counterintelligence question: If uranium had been diverted to Israel, who in NUMEC or the US government had committed a security violation?

There was a third concern. Angleton's staff was worried "that this was something they didn't know about, and that this lack of knowledge could be dangerous," says a source who later inter-

viewed Angleton in connection with an investigation into CIA handling of the NUMEC affair. "They believed that information could be compromised to the Soviets if they did not control it."

There was even suspicion within the CIA, based in part on FBI electronic intercepts, that a high official of the Atomic Energy Commission had aided the Israelis. The suspicions were never proved. But the matter was taken seriously. If such a story were true and would have come out,

says one Angleton colleague, it would have put pressure on the Arabs and greatly contributed to instability throughout the Middle East. Moreover, he adds, "the Soviets would be able to prove the US gave Israel the bomb."

Aiding Williams with these issues and later succeeding him was John Hadden, whose work on NUMEC has been commended by Richard Helms, then director of the CIA, and others who worked with Hadden. One source recalls a memo prepared by Hadden, "a 5-foot memo on NUMEC that just kept getting added to." Says another colleague, "Hadden was disturbed because of what he thought was the free hand the Israelis had in the US." Contacted at his home in Maine, Hadden refused to discuss matters related to the CIA.

But others interviewed say Hadden and his colleagues came to suspect that the Mossad had a number of "cells" around the country for collecting scientific and technological intelligence. These "cells" were thought to be run from Israel and insulated from one another in case any one was discovered.

According to congressional investigators familiar with the case, one theory at the CIA, never proved, was that Zalman Shapiro, NUMEC's founder and former president, was a key player in such a cell. Although there are no documented cases of Shapiro passing any classified information to Israel, he toured the United States soliciting and receiving information from scientists friendly to Israel, according to FBI documents and other sources. The FBI reportedly monitored a meeting of scientists at Shapiro's home in Pittsburgh at which a suspected

Israeli agent asked the scientists to get certain information. Recently released FBI documents on the NUMEC investigation reveal that in September 1968, Shapiro met with a delegation of Israeli officials, including Rafael Eitan, a high Mossad officer. Eitan was reported last year to have headed LEKEM, the scientific intelligence unit in the Israeli government that handled Pollard, the Navy analyst convicted of spying for Israel earlier this year.

Reached at his home outside Pittsburgh, Shapiro challenged the CIA theory. "Where did I tour?" he asked. "What information did I send and receive?" He said he had had a meeting "with a scientific counselor" but would not identify the subject discussed because he did not "want to help terrorists." He said he did not recall meeting Eitan but stressed that he would not have known Eitan's background and that the FBI documents make clear that if he did meet such a person, "it was not done surreptitiously."

"Do you think if there was any truth to any of this stuff that I'd be walking the streets?" he asked.

Israeli scientific attaches also came under suspicion of being Mossad agents using their posts as a cover. One such attaché, Avraham Hermoni, was reported to have been in contact with NUMEC officials and to have accompanied Eitan on his 1968 visit to NUMEC.

Despite circumstantial evidence, no violations of the law were proved. FBI investigations into the activities of NUMEC, Shapiro, and the alleged "cells" are said to have ended by 1971.

Government investigators who later talked to Hadden and his colleagues paint a portrait of disappointment within the CIA over the FBI's investigation. The CIA felt that the FBI took a law-enforcement approach to the investigation instead of a more preventive, counterintelligence approach. "The FBI is a national police force," one CIA participant is said to have complained. "We have no domestic counterintelligence."

And despite their high regard for Sam Papich, the FBI

liaison man, there was a strong feeling among CIA officers and others working with them that FBI director J. Edgar Hoover had caved in to political pressures in waiting until 1968 to investigate NUMEC and later in concluding the investigation without indictments. Says one former CIA officer, "There were political limitations on how far the FBI could go."

In 1972 Hadden left the CIA. Former colleagues say that Hadden was more involved in the inner workings of the Israeli account than Harold Williams had been. Still, some things were apparently kept even from him. Two former associates say he had "crises of confidence" with Angleton from time to time, although other sources, including investigators who interviewed Angleton and Hadden about NUMEC, say that the two had high regard for each other.

The next year CIA veteran William Colby took over as director of the agency. Angleton's tendency to conceal his Israeli contacts from everyone else, even those who worked with him, contributed to an early decision by Colby to seek changes in the Israeli account. In his autobiography, *Honorable Men*, Colby wrote: "The segregation of the CIA's contacts with Israel, which inevitably accompanied Angleton's secretive management style, from its officers working in the Middle East as a whole and to a considerable extent the analysts, was impossible at a time when the Middle East had become one of the crucial foreign-policy problems of the United States.

"So I resolved to move the Israeli account from the Counterintelligence Staff. . . . I hoped Angleton might take the hint and retire.

"But he dug in his heels, and marshaled every argument he could think of to urge that such an important contact not be handled in the normal bureaucratic machinery."

Initially, Colby yielded be-

cause, he says, he "feared that Angleton's professional integrity and personal intensity might have led him to take dire measures if I forced the issue."

But Colby became more adamant, he wrote, when he was "shocked" to learn after the Yom Kippur War in October 1973 that the CIA station in Israel was not allowed to communicate with stations in neighboring Arab countries. "I had come to the conclusion that I was not doing my job . . . unless I insisted that I, rather than Angleton, make the decisions about Israeli relations and counterintelligence."

Colby offered Angleton a "separate status," which included being a consultant on, but no longer in charge of, the liaison with Israel. Angleton turned him down and retired.

Colby succeeded in taking the Israeli account out of Angleton's hands, thereby getting rid of Angleton's secretive style, his "hip-pocket" approach to Israeli matters. However, with Angleton also went the elaborate security measures surrounding the account.

The Israeli desk was moved into the CIA's Near East Division, and officers responsible for Israel both at headquarters and abroad now freely communicate with their colleagues working on other countries. Sometimes the Mossad even conducts joint operations with CIA field officers in Mideast countries other than Israel — contacts that were unheard of under Angleton. Instead of compartmenting the Israeli account, the CIA has made it like every other unit in the division — separately responsible for its own security and counterintelligence. CIA ties with Arab states are protected not by compartmenting the account but by ad hoc rules that control the flow of information to Mossad liaison officers. Jewish employees of the US government now may work at the US embassy in Tel Aviv.

For the most part, the transition was made smoothly. "There was a less severe interruption than many who were in-

involved at the time worried there would be," said an officer who has worked on Israeli matters since Angleton's departure.

Yet the transition was not made without at least one possible disruption, reflected by differences of opinion over the recent Pollard case. Under Angleton, the essence of counterintelligence, according to one source, was institutional memory: "overview and continuity." The split over Pollard suggests that in the case of Israel, some of that continuity may have been lost.

Veterans such as Stephen Millett, with long experience on Israeli matters, emphasize that Pollard was "part of a pattern." They point out parallels to the past: that Rafael Eitan, Pollard's handler, visited NUMEC, that in both cases allegations were made about Israeli science attaches, and that Pollard stole classified US documents as others before him have been accused of doing.

By contrast, current CIA officers and recent retirees tend to call the Pollard case an aberration and to play down any links to the past. The changes Colby instituted seem to have led to a decrease in the CIA's concern with security measures against Israel as well as with the history of intelligence conflicts with that nation. They reflected a "reevaluation of the total relationship between the US and Israel . . . including the intelligence aspect," as a former CIA officer who handled Israeli matters during the Carter administration puts it. He and others suggest that the growing strategic links between the two countries since the early 1970s, including intelligence cooperation, have led many CIA officials to devalue — some would say overlook — the significance of intelligence conflicts with Israel. Indeed, President Reagan's "secret diplomatic initiative" with Iran, in which the CIA helped arrange arms shipments via Israel to Iran in exchange for efforts to help free American hostages in Lebanon, is but one example of how heav-

ily the United States now relies on cooperation with Israeli intelligence services to further its goals in the Middle East.

It is in this context, without continuity and overview, that the Pollard case can be viewed as a blunder, an aberration, or, as one former official recently involved with Israeli matters puts it, a "flash in the pan." •

JEFF McCONNELL, WHO LIVES IN SOMERVILLE, WRITES ABOUT NATIONAL SECURITY ISSUES. RICHARD HIGGINS IS A MEMBER OF THE GLOBE STAFF.