

God's order to kill the Americans, and plunder their money, and whenever they find it."

The signatories were:

Sheikh Osama Bin Laden, the Saudi moneybags who financed the training of the Afghan mujahideen beginning in 1980, and who deployed them to blow up the U.S. military barracks in Dharhan, Saudi Arabia, in 1996. Bin Laden currently resides in Afghanistan, but maintains a lavish mansion in London.

Ayman al Zawahiri, Amir of the Islamic Group responsible for the November 1997 massacre in Luxor, Egypt. Residence: Switzerland.

Abu Yasser Rifai Ahmad Taha, leader of the Islamic Group. Residence: London.

Fazul Rahman, the Amir of the Jihad Movement of Bangladesh.

Sheikh Mir Hamza, secretary of Jamiat ul Ulema e Pakistan.

The CIA memorandum

The two *fatwas* were the subject of CIA testimony on Feb. 23 before the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Terrorism. Sen. John Kyl (R-Ariz.), the chairman of the committee, held hearings on the danger of terrorism in the United States. At his request, the CIA Counterterrorism Center sent the subcommittee a memorandum, entitled "*Fatwas* or Religious Rulings by Militant Islamic Groups against the United States." The memorandum stated that "a coalition of Islamic groups in London, and terrorist financier Usama Bin Laden, have issued separate *fatwas*, or religious rulings, calling for attacks on U.S. persons and interests worldwide, and on those of U.S. allies." It added that "both *fatwas* call for attacks to continue until U.S. forces 'retreat' from Saudi Arabia and Jerusalem. The *fatwa* from the groups in London also calls for attacks until sanctions on Iraq are lifted." The memorandum stressed, "These *fatwas* are the first from these groups that explicitly justify attacks on American civilians anywhere in the world. Both groups have hinted in the past that civilians are legitimate targets, but this is the first religious ruling sanctifying such attacks."

The memorandum continued, identifying once again the fact that the groups are based in London: "While the religious clerics who issued these rulings are not named, the two groups consider the *fatwas* to be legitimate. The group in London made reference to unnamed religious authorities in Lebanon, Jordan, and 'Palestine.'"

A *fatwa* is usually issued by a public and recognizable high Islamic authority representing a major Islamic institution in a leading Muslim country. *EIR* has not found any such Islamic authority which has ever made such a *fatwa*. Therefore, the only remaining sources for these *fatwas* are British: probably "Imam" Eric Avebury, or "Sheikh" George Galoway.

Swiss police catch Mossad in dirty tricks

by Dean Andromidas

On Feb. 26, Switzerland's Federal Prosecutor's Office announced that it had arrested an agent of the Israeli Mossad and had issued arrest warrants for four others. While the Swiss authorities acknowledge that the Israelis are to be charged with espionage, they have not confirmed widely circulating reports that the Iranian Embassy was the target of the Mossad's operations. The Mossad agent was arrested on Feb. 19, only hours before UN Secretary General Kofi Annan departed from New York for his 11th-hour diplomatic mission to Iraq, to avert a war. Were the Israeli agents planning a major provocation that would ignite the Middle East conflagration, which the British have been planning for the last several weeks? Perhaps the assassination of an Iranian diplomat?

In a press conference in the Swiss capital, Bern, Federal Prosecutor Carla Del Ponte said that the arrest took place in the early hours of Feb. 19, after police, alerted by a suspicious neighbor, discovered five men illegally attempting to eavesdrop on a private residence in Bern. The Swiss authorities have officially stated that police stopped the five men outside the residence. One was taken into custody and the names of the others taken. When the police discovered that they were all Mossad agents, arrest warrants were issued for the other four.

Although Del Ponte said that the Mossad target was not a diplomat, and the Swiss Foreign Ministry denied news reports in both Israel and Europe that the target was Iranian interests, she did say, "We have enough elements to prove that Mossad is involved. We also have a confirmation" of this.

Swiss Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Yasmine Chatila told Reuters in Bern, "Our government vigorously protests against this attack on Swiss sovereignty and international law by a member of the Israeli secret agency. This is an unacceptable event. We expect Israel to apologize."

In Israel, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu confirmed the arrest of an Israeli citizen in Switzerland, and said Israel was dealing with the case through diplomatic channels.

Various intelligence sources point to the ominous nature of this affair. One Bern-based source with close ties to Iran, told *EIR* that Iranian diplomatic sources informed him that the Iranian Embassy was the target of the Mossad surveillance. Others speculate that the target could have been an individual, who later could be exposed as an arms dealer trying to sell technology for "weapons of mass destruction."

It is widely reported in the Israeli press, but not confirmed by the government, that the Swiss arrest was the real reason that Mossad chief Gen. Danny Yatom announced his resignation on Feb. 23—three days before the Swiss announced the breakup of the Mossad operation. But why he resigned, is not as important as the fact that his resignation could further Netanyahu's plans to install his own man as Mossad chief. Whoever replaces Yatom, could very well serve to consolidate Netanyahu's plan to seize control of the Israeli security establishment, and by so doing, gain control over the Israeli nuclear button.

Netanyahu has been trying to replace Yatom, an appointee of peace accord architect Shimon Peres, for months. Officially, Yatom resigned as a result of the report from the government-appointed commission to investigate the Mossad's failed attempt to assassinate Hamas leader Khaled Mashaal in Amman, Jordan. That bungled attempt, frustrated by Jordanian police, was seen as an unpardonable outrage, not only by Jordanians and the rest of the international community, but also within Israel. It was widely believed in Israel that Netanyahu set up the investigatory commission in order to whitewash his own role and scapegoat Yatom. It certainly is typical of Netanyahu's method, to turn one of his own disastrous failures to his advantage.

Why dump Danny Yatom?

Danny Yatom was named chief of the Mossad by then-Prime Minister Peres, shortly before his government narrowly lost the elections to Netanyahu in 1996. Yatom, a retired career military officer, was close to Peres, and had also been the personal military adviser to Peres's predecessor, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who was assassinated on Nov. 4, 1995. Peres appointed Yatom in order to reorganize the Mossad, to better cohere with the thrust of the peace process, since it was well known that the most hawkish factions, many of whom opposed the Oslo peace accords, dominated the organization. The reorganization took on added urgency after Rabin's murder by ultra-right-wing fanatics, who obviously enjoyed links with both international and Israel intelligence services.

As Mossad chief, Yatom launched the investigation that led to the November 1996 arrest of Yahuda Gil, who, for 20 years, had been pocketing thousands of dollars that were supposed to pay off a high-level Syrian military officer, whom Gil claimed was his informant. The informant never existed, but Gil manufactured intelligence from him: false information which nearly led to a Syrian-Israeli military conflict. Gil was linked with ultra-right Mossad factions, and especially former Mossad chief Shabtai Shavit, who is now among Netanyahu's favorites to replace Yatom.

Yatom stood in the way of Netanyahu's plans to establish a new, American-modelled National Security Council, to oversee all Israeli intelligence operations.

Netanyahu is expected to name a new chief as early as the first week of March. The choices do not bode well for peace. At the top of the list is Brig. Gen. Meir Dagan (reserve), Netanyahu's adviser on terrorism, an assassination specialist who shares Netanyahu's extreme views. Dagan has been closely associated with Infrastructure Minister Gen. Ariel Sharon, who uses his post to give backing to the fanatical settlers movement, and who, as Defense Minister in 1982, crafted the disastrous invasion of Lebanon.

Next is Shabtai Shavit, who stepped down two years ago as Mossad chief, and is close to Netanyahu. In late February, Netanyahu appointed him as emissary to Jordan's King Hussein. As Mossad chief, he promoted ultra-right factions throughout the organization, including Yahuda Gil, as one of his operatives.

A third choice is Efraim Halevy, a former deputy Mossad head. Although considered close to the Prime Minister, he served for many years as secret emissary to Jordan's King Hussein, prior to the signing of the Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty.

The fourth is Uri Saguy, a former Israeli Defense Forces intelligence chief. Although he worked closely with Rabin, he is also said to be "liked" by Netanyahu. Politically on the right, Saguy retired from the IDF after failing to be appointed as deputy chief of staff. The *Jerusalem Post* recently reported that Saguy had met privately with Netanyahu, and it is plausible that he will be appointed to a senior post.

Other candidates include several senior active duty military officers who currently hold operational and other high positions. The naming of any one of them would intersect a series of changes in the military leadership expected over the next weeks. Netanyahu wants to use these leadership changes to enhance his own direct influence in military-security decision-making. Netanyahu has been maneuvering to get Maj. Gen. Shaul Mofaz, currently one of the deputy chiefs of staff, appointed to a top military post. Mofaz shares many of Netanyahu's extreme views.

Another choice, from the Army, is Ilan Biran, the Director General of the Defense Ministry. Biran is reportedly Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai's secret candidate for Armed Forces Chief of Staff, to replace Lt. Gen. Amnon Lipkin-Shahak, whose term is expiring. Also in the running is Gen. Amiram Levine, Army commander for the Northern Operational Command. Netanyahu mentioned his name several months ago for a possible senior Mossad post. He served with Netanyahu in the Sayeret Matcal, an Israeli commando unit.

Two others possible candidates are Maj. Gen. Matan Vilna'i, who is currently a Deputy Chief of the General Staff, and Gen. Doron Rubinfeld (reserves), a former head of IDF training. Opponents of Netanyahu's insanities prefer to see General Vilna'i tapped for Armed Forces Chief of Staff. If Netanyahu moves him to the Mossad, it could open the way for Mofaz to be appointed to the top military post.