

# Was 'Echelon' involved in Princess Diana's death?

by Jeffrey Steinberg

It is becoming more and more obvious that British, French, and American intelligence agencies know a great deal about the circumstances surrounding the deaths of Princess Diana and Dodi Fayed, in a mysterious Paris car crash, shortly after midnight on Sunday, Aug. 31, 1997. And, ongoing court actions in the United States, France, and Britain could, ultimately, force those agencies to make that information public, and thereby shed light on what may prove to have been the most significant political assassination of the last decade of the 20th century.

On Feb. 27, 2000, the London *Sunday Times* revealed that British and American surveillance agencies spied on Princess Diana, during the period leading up to her death. The article cited the super-sophisticated electronic surveillance system known as "Echelon," and quoted an unnamed former British spy, who charged that the Princess had been under constant electronic surveillance, for years. Furthermore, Wayne Madsen, a former U.S. Navy and National Security Agency (NSA) employee, told the *Sunday Times*, "Anybody who is politically active will eventually end up on the NSA's radar screen." He stated that "undisclosed materials held in U.S. government files on Princess Diana were collected because of her work with the international campaign to ban landmines."

## A thorn in the side of the House of Windsor

While Princess Diana's involvement in the campaign to ban landmines may have provided the British government an excuse to track her activities and communications, it was hardly the driving motive behind the illegal surveillance program.

From 1991, when her marriage to Prince Charles went sour, up to the moment of her death, the Princess was a thorn in the side of the House of Windsor, constantly exposing Queen Elizabeth II, her Royal Consort, Prince Philip, and their flawed offspring, Prince Charles, to public ridicule, as the world's wealthiest dysfunctional family. Following her November 1995 BBC television interview with Sir David Frost, in which she pronounced Prince Charles "unfit to be King," the Princess was the target of several high-profile death threats from circles loyal to the royals.

According to Mohamed Al-Fayed, the Egyptian-born

London billionaire, owner of the world-renowned Harrods department store and the Ritz Hotel in Paris, and the father of Dodi Fayed, at least one "smoking gun" document implicates Prince Philip in the effort to eliminate the Diana-Dodi problem. The document, cited on Al-Fayed's website ([www.alfayed.com](http://www.alfayed.com)), states that Prince Philip saw "a serious threat to the dynasty should [their] relationship endure," and quotes the Royal Consort saying, "Such an affair is racially and morally repugnant and no son of a Bedouin camel trader is fit for the mother of a future king."

Indeed, the Aug. 31 issue of the London *Sunday Mirror*, appearing only hours after the Paris crash, reported on a pending meeting of the House of Windsor's inner circle of advisers, the Way Ahead Group, at which the head of MI6 was to present the dossier on Diana and Dodi, that had been ordered by Prince Philip. Buckingham Palace never refuted the accuracy of the *Sunday Mirror* story.

## One good turn . . .

According to the Feb. 27 *Sunday Times* story, it was a fairly common practice among the participating governments in the worldwide Echelon system, to employ the resources of others to conduct illegal surveillance operations. *Sunday Times* writers Nick Fielding and Duncan Campbell cited one example, in which Canada's NSA equivalent was used to spy on two British cabinet ministers—on behalf of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. "[Mike] Frost, who retired in 1992 after 20 years' service, has also revealed that Canada's equivalent of GCHQ [Government Communications Headquarters] was used by Margaret Thatcher to monitor two cabinet colleagues. . . . The ultra-secret operation was conducted from an office at Macdonald House on Grosvenor Square, central London, which houses the Canadian high commission. According to Frost, Canadian spies were asked by GCHQ to undertake the operation because it was too politically sensitive for GCHQ to do itself. After spending three weeks tapping the ministers' communications, the Canadian officer who led the operation drove to GCHQ and handed over the tapes."

A former NSA contract employee, Margaret Newsham, told the *Sunday Times* about her similar experiences in the 1980s at Menwith Hill, a listening post in Yorkshire, England. "I was aware that massive security violations were taking place. If these systems were for combatting drugs or terrorism, that would be fine. But not for use in spying on individuals." She reported that the British GCHQ was used to spy on at least one U.S. Senator. "It was evident American constitutional laws had been broken," by the Echelon spying "buddy system," which involved the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.

Was the NSA brought in by MI6 and GCHQ to handle the tracking of Princess Diana, in order to similarly avoid the media blowback, if it were ever to come out that the British agencies had been spying on the Princess?

## Ongoing revelations

The new Echelon revelations complement two earlier reports of NSA involvement in monitoring the activities of Princess Diana, in the months before her death.

In November 1998, the online news service APB News received confirmation from the NSA, under the Freedom of Information Act, that the spy agency had 39 documents on Princess Diana, totalling 1,056 pages. Several of those documents were of NSA origin, and the rest originated with the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), and were shared with the NSA. The NSA categorically refused to do so any of its documents, claiming that to do so would jeopardize U.S. national security.

And, in the September 1999 inaugural issue of *Talk* magazine, writer Gerald Posner interviewed Al-Fayed, and also reported on the findings of his own investigation into the circumstances surrounding the deaths of Princess Diana and Dodi Fayed. He reported, "This spring in Washington, I listened to an innocuous portion of an undated conversation between Diana and de Lima," a reference to Lucia Flecha de Lima, whose husband was then Brazilian ambassador to the United States, who was one of the Princess's most trusted friends. Often, when the Princess visited Washington, she stayed with the Brazilians at their official residence. "The recording," Posner said, "was made available by an active U.S. intelligence asset, who says it was one of several collected by the National Security Agency. The NSA will not officially acknowledge the tapes' existence, but does admit to holding 39 classified documents about Diana."

The Posner story made another startling claim: That Henri Paul, the deputy director of security for Al-Fayed's Ritz Hotel in Paris, and the driver of the Mercedes in which Paul, the Princess, and Dodi Fayed were killed, had been closeted with French intelligence agents during the "missing" three hours when he was off-duty on the night of the crash. Paul had 12,560 francs in his pocket at the time of the crash (roughly \$2,300), and, according to Posner, the cash had been given to him by his French intelligence "handler."

Following the Paris crash, French investigators found that Paul maintained a string of secret accounts in several Paris banks, with hundreds of thousands of dollars on deposit. The funds, according to a variety of sources, came from Paul's work for a number of Western intelligence agencies, including the French DST, Britain's MI6, and the Israeli Mossad. Indeed, Posner reported that his own information about Paul's secret meeting with his French case officer on the night of Aug. 30, 1997, had been provided by a CIA officer stationed in Paris, and corroborated by the FBI legat at the U.S. Embassy in France. Yet, to this day, the French authorities claim that they have no idea where Paul spent those three "missing" off-duty hours on Aug. 30, 1997.

If Posner's claims are accurate, the NSA, the CIA, and the FBI are all in possession of vital details about the events leading up to the Paris crash. And, if the past is a prelude to

the future, Al-Fayed will not rest until he has explored every available avenue, to get at the truth of what happened in the Place de l'Alma tunnel, where the crash occurred.

Indeed, at the same time that the Posner interview was appearing in *Talk* magazine, and the French magistrates were issuing a terse cover-up report on their two-year probe, BBC Radio 4's "Today" program was offering proof of Al-Fayed's dedication to finding the truth. On Sept. 17, 1999, in a 14-minute interview, Al-Fayed leveled a string of new charges at MI6 and the British royal family. Asserting that his son and Princess Diana were murdered, on orders from the British monarchy, Al-Fayed said that Princess Diana "had hell for 20 years, especially from Prince Philip." He told BBC that both British and American intelligence agencies were monitoring all of the cell phone and radio transmissions from Diana and Dodi, during their vacation together off the coast of Sardinia, just before the couple flew to Paris on Aug. 30, 1997. The recent revelations about the use of "Echelon" to track Princess Diana corroborate those earlier Al-Fayed charges.

Al-Fayed also told BBC that Paul had been on the payroll of MI6 for three years, at the time of his death.

"Where is Henri Paul's record in MI6 [for the] three years he was paid, on the payroll?" Al-Fayed asked. "If Tony Blair put an independent inquiry with a legal representative appointed by me to really open the files of MI6 and MI5, and see the massive campaign against me, and the way they have plotted to kill my son, and who has given them instructions . . . I will carry on until I find the truth. I will find it in France, also in the United States—I am trying to get the CIA and American intelligence. I have mounted a tremendous legal campaign over there. I am still here and people have to understand that what happened to Diana and my son is murder, and I am not going to keep quiet until I have found the truth."

## Legal action

Indeed, on Feb. 5, 1999, attorneys for Al-Fayed had obtained an order from U.S. District Court Judge Henry Kennedy, in Washington, D.C., instructing the CIA and the DIA to release file material that could shed light on the circumstances leading to the crash. One week earlier, a U.S. District Judge in Maryland, Frederic Smalkin, had refused to issue a similar order to the NSA. Despite Kennedy's ruling, neither the Pentagon nor the CIA have yet to produce any documents. Judge Kennedy had initially given the government agencies a deadline of Feb. 12, 1999 to turn over the material.

Why are the CIA, the NSA, and the DIA so desperate to prevent the release of the secret files on Princess Diana? Is it a garden-variety instance of American spy agencies fighting tooth and nail to protect "sources, methods, and procedures"? Or, is there a smoking gun in those U.S. government documents that could shed crucial light on what happened in Paris on Aug. 31, 1997?

If the actions of the U.S. Department of Justice are any

indication, American agencies know more than they are admitting about the death of the "People's Princess."

### The DOJ and the LeWinter fiasco

In April 1998, the FBI and CIA joined with the Austrian police in busting up a \$20 million extortion scheme against Al-Fayed. On April 24, 1998, Austrian police arrested a one-time CIA informant, Oswald LeWinter, at a Vienna hotel, as he attempted to extract \$20 million from John Macnamara, the security chief for Harrods, in return for bogus "CIA documents" that LeWinter and company claimed proved that MI6, on behalf of the royal family, had planned to assassinate Princess Diana and Dodi Fayed.

The arrests were the result of tight coordination among Al-Fayed, Macnamara, the U.S. Justice Department, the FBI, the CIA, and the Austrian authorities. At DOJ request, Al-Fayed had transferred \$25,000 to a New Mexico bank account, to finance LeWinter's travel to Vienna for the exchange. At least three other individuals, all American citizens, had been identified as co-conspirators with LeWinter in the scheme. One, Keith Fler, was a prominent Hollywood entertainment industry attorney whose credentials as a highly respected member of the California bar had initially been a key feature of the fraudulent documents scheme.

Sources close to the case have confirmed to *EIR* that Justice Department attorneys, including Lisa Prager of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia, had vowed to pursue the entire network of would-be extortionists, and that the wire transfer of the \$25,000 alone constituted a serious felony that would be prosecuted to the hilt.

Things apparently changed dramatically, following the arrest of LeWinter in Vienna. His identity had been previously unknown, along with his former ties to the CIA. When that "complication" became apparent, according to sources close to the case, the DOJ suddenly lost all interest in prosecuting the U.S.-based co-conspirators, including Fler, and another purported ex-CIA stringer, Pat McMillan, who had accompanied LeWinter to Vienna.

*EIR* has been told that the LeWinter and McMillan links to U.S. agencies, while no longer active, could have provided an aperture for accessing the overall U.S. intelligence files on the Diana affair, and that this would have had devastating consequences for America's spy cousins at MI6 and GCHQ.

Al-Fayed intends to tenaciously pursue all of the unanswered questions and buried intelligence files. And, his efforts are hardly in vain. Recently, a British court allowed application for a judicial review of the Coroner's decision that Al-Fayed is not an "interested party," in the official Royal Coroners inquest into the death of Princess Diana. Buckingham Palace had argued that the official British government probes of the causes of death for Dodi Fayed and Princess Diana should be handled separately, and that Al-Fayed had no right to access the inquest of the Princess of Wales. That matter now will be reviewed by the Courts.

## Will the 'jihadis' topple Pakistan's Musharraf?

by Ramtanu Maitra

The recent visit by U.S. President Clinton to Islamabad, amidst unprecedented security arrangements, gave a glimpse of how precarious is the military regime of Gen. Pervez Musharraf. Under the circumstances, Pakistan's Chief Executive is in no position to meet Clinton's terse demands, which include stopping infiltration of the *jihad* terrorists into the Indian-held part of Kashmir and lowering tension along the Line of Control in Kashmir; preventing the growth of Islamic fundamentalism within Pakistan; halting aid to the Taliban in Afghanistan; and bringing back democracy (which Musharraf terminated in a bloodless coup on Oct. 12, 1999) in Pakistan.

When the American President left for Oman after his five-hour stopover in Islamabad, General Musharraf began a damage-control operation. He went to Southeast Asia seeking moral and financial support. Although he was well received in Malaysia and Indonesia, the two Muslim-majority nations in the region, Musharraf was reminded by both that their polite reception was not an endorsement of military rule. Like the United States, they would also like to see democracy restored in Pakistan. On Kashmir, both nations expressed neutrality.

### No room for maneuver

In Pakistan, attempts are being made to meet some of the U.S. demands. To begin with, Islamabad, for the first time, offered to hold bilateral talks with India at "any time, any place, and any level" to resolve the Kashmir dispute. New Delhi, now more belligerent than ever, rejected the offer outright, citing Pakistan's continuing anti-India propaganda and the support that Islamabad continues to lend to the *jihadis* in Kashmir. For emphasis, the Indians used a helicopter-gunship for the first time against the terrorists in the Indian-held part of Kashmir. India has also increased its defense budget by 28%, and is buying arms and ammunition by the shipload.

Islamabad has tried to open a back-channel to resume talks with New Delhi. It has not succeeded so far, but when it does, it can rest assured that the price that the Indians will ask for a settlement on Kashmir will be too high to pay. But, then, what possible solution over Kashmir can Musharraf dictate to the *jihadis*? Nothing but the entirety of Kashmir would satisfy them. And India will not hand over all of Kashmir to Pakistan, and Pakistan cannot militarily annex it. So, the only option left for Musharraf is to continue with the infiltration