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Yeshivat Ateret Yerushalayim

IN THE HEART OF THE OLD CITY OF JERUSALEM

Ha-Rav Shlomo Aviner on...

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Pollard – the Man who Knows too Much

[From "Be-Ahavah U-Be-Emunah – Parashat Emor 5768 – Translated by Rafael Blumberg]

Maybe somebody is ready to explain to me why Jonathan Pollard has been sitting in prison beyond any reasonable length of time? Why have spies many times as dangerous been released long before? Why should America behave that way vis-à-vis a country that is one of its "friends"?

Also, why was Pollard accused of handing over to Israel a list of all the spies of the United States operating in Russia, such that after that, forty American spies were caught or murdered, since there was a Russian spy operating within the Israeli espionage network? Yet later on, the two spies who betrayed America were caught, Ames and Hanson, and confessed. The proof of Pollard's innocence was sitting right there the whole time right under everyone's noses: the list of American agents in Russia was sitting in a safe, access to which was permitted only by special authorization known as "blue stripe clearance". The list could only be examined under the supervision of security agents, and Pollard had no "blue stripe clearance" (John Loftus, who served as the federal prosecutor in the American Justice Department).

And why, afterwards, did they once more falsely accuse him of handing over to the Russians the log of frequencies for uncovering short wave radio broadcasts, an accusation that fell through immediately, and they also admitted that this was inconsequential (Loftus)? And in

general, perhaps someone will explain to me why they are always spreading lies about him over there, that he is one of the most notorious spies in American history, for example, that he transferred classified information to Pakistan (?!)

And I know how to answer the questions for myself. They would prefer for him to disappear off the face of the earth, as they said, including the American ambassador in his visit to Israel, who said that Pollard actually deserves a death penalty.

Hence from day one they have been persecuting him to death. Yet what can you do? The fellow won't die. He won't die and he won't commit suicide. Apparently he is a very strong person. What is certain is that he has strong faith. He is a tower of strength. The very fact that he has survived, that he has remained alive and sane is a miracle, a miracle from heaven. Yet why are the Americans praying deep in their hearts. "Pollard! Die already!?" Apparently he knows too much. He knows too many dark secrets about people in high places.

The first example of a dark secret is the following: The Americans wanted to expel the Russians from Afghanistan. Towards that end, they asked the Saudis to draft an army of Muslim terrorists, and they provided salaries and weaponry through the Saudis. Yet after the Russians were expelled, Saudi Arabia continued providing salaries to that monster created by America, including Al Qaida and Bin Laden, in order for them to act against Israel, and it was they who carried out the attack on the Twin Towers! Since Pollard warned about this in advance, many people at the top in America are going to have to be held accountable, and it doesn't pay for them that Pollard should go free (Luftos).

A second example of a dark secret: The Soviet Union sent weapons shipments by sea to almost all the terror organizations in the Middle East. Pollard knew that American Intelligence had received orders, signed by the President, to share this information with Israel, but had not done so, and he, Pollard, passed on this information. This was very embarrassing for American Intelligence (Luftos).

A third example: In 1984, Pollard discerned a fleet of ships sailing back and forth between Greece and Yemen, where the P.L.O. had a main base, and he passed this information on to Israel, which warned Greece. Greece then confiscated the entire ship's hold – weaponry intended for the P.L.O. Yet the financing for the ship did not come from the P.L.O., but by orders of the American Vice President, as ransom money for Americans being held hostage

in Lebanon. Later on, the enormous scandal broke out that was called the "Iran Contra" Affair, the darkest, most secretive operation of our times, involving the sale of American weaponry to Iran, including weapons for the P.L.O. The American Secretary of State was put on trial, sentenced to twenty-four years in prison, but he received clemency from the President. This alone is enough of a pretext for keeping Pollard in prison forever.

A fourth example. In 2003, classified information was released in America, from which it emerges that America's proclamations against Iraqi manufacture of chemical weapons are only a fig leaf, and that they really are allowing the Iraqis to continue. Moreover, the U.S. was supporting them the whole time with funding for their purchase of chemicals, materials and technology. When Israel asked the United States about this, the U.S. denied it. Yet Pollard had passed on to Israel American satellite photos of Iraqi installations for the manufacture of chemical weapons. Parenthetically, production was with the assistance of German scientists, and, inter alia, with those same chemical materials that the Nazis used against us during the Holocaust... What is worse, the American company that supplied the chemical materials belonged to both the American Vice President and the Secretary of State. All of this is enough reason for America to want Pollard to sit forever in darkness and to die with his secrets, and we pray that he will go free, whereby a victory will be scored for justice.

Yet we are bothered by something worse, something that affects us and our country. Why did Jonathan endanger his career and his freedom by handing over to the State of Israel enormously important information about the development of biological, chemical and atomic weapons and ballistic missiles in Iraq, Iran, Libya and Syria, weapons meant to be used against us, and why did we bring his suffering upon him by throwing him out of the Israeli embassy where he was seeking refuge?

Moreover, why did it take thirteen years until he was recognized officially as our agent, and that only after a petition to the Supreme Court? And why was he then not added to the official list of our Defense Ministry, such that in his American prison he still has the status of a criminal, and he is treated accordingly? And perhaps someone is willing to explain to me why he and his wife do not receive any financial assistance here in this country, especially medical assistance for his wife, who is very ill? And if I am already asking, then I will also ask why the request for clemency, signed by 112 members of our Knesset, was never submitted to the American president? And why does every government official in this country listen to us politely, seeming to identify with us, and promise to examine the

materials handed over to him relating to Pollard, but never does a thing? Or he avoids the issue by saying, "You don't know what terrible things he did!" but he never shares the details. Why do they argue that we've got to work quietly – so quietly that he has been rotting in prison for twenty-three years?

I shall answer by myself. They'd prefer that he died, and then total silence would truly reign. Indeed, an Israeli agent was sent to him to convey to him that he would do well to commit suicide. Yet since he refused these orders, they relate to him as though he doesn't exist.

Such marvelous harmony reigns between Israel and America, with both of them proclaiming as one. Pollard! Please die! Yet the question remains. Why does the State of Israel want him to disappear off the face of the earth? That question we have already answered. He knows too much. He knows about high-placed Israeli government officials who collaborated with America and handed over the materials leading to his conviction, containing his fingerprints, etc., etc. They are even afraid that the truth will be exposed by the State Controller who is presently examining the episode, and they are fighting against him.

It is unpleasant for me to tell any more of this. It is easier for me to quote from an article by Rabbi Ya'akov Meidan, head of the Har Etzion Yeshiva. "Amongst the people with an influence today on the political system, there are three who are likely to be interested in Pollard taking his secret with him to the grave. One of them is the honorable President of Israel, Shimon Peres, who was Prime Minister at the time, and who with determination but a lack of sensitivity clung to the lie that Pollard acted of his own accord. Peres was the architect of the closing of all the files of those involved in the Pollard episode. "The second is Ehud Barak, who was then the head of Army Intelligences and was involved in Pollard's being put into operation. Later on, when he became Prime Minister, he paved the way for Clinton's renegeing on his promise to Netanyahu to grant Pollard clemency, and he replaced it with clemency for Barak's intimate Mark Rich. "The third is Rafi Eitan, a government minister from the Pensioners' Party, who eluded the long arm of American justice in that same episode, by dumping his guilt on the narrow shoulders of Pollard" (September, 2008).

I will just say one thing, that everyone knows. In 1987, a government investigation headed by Abba Eban presented its conclusions regarding who was the main person in Israel guilty in the Pollard case. For some reason, at that very moment, there were some people who

made sure that Abba Eban's political career came to an end, and indeed, since then, we have never heard another word about him. Look through the various history books.

Thus, we must decide once and for all if we are a sovereign state or a lowly American satellite; an honest, upright country or a tangle of base intrigues. Are we the disciples of Abraham and Moses or not? Do we want to fulfill "Do not stand idly by when your fellow's life is in danger" (Leviticus 19:16) or don't we? Are we following in the path of Jonathan, who risked his life for the sake of the Jewish People, and even now takes an interest, and lives and breathes and loves the people of Israel dwelling in Zion? Jonathan does not worry about himself, but only about the problems of the nation. He is truly a person concerned with the whole Jewish People.

We shall continue to protest and to struggle for him. We have risen to rebirth out of love and brotherhood, peace and friendship, not in order to return to the dark abyss of the past. Certainly not! We shall build our lives on the foundations of morality and justice, gratitude, mutual concern and brotherhood. That is what affords our country its right to exist.

For information about Pollard and the struggle: www.freepollard.org