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## **Israel and the Intifada: Year Three**

# **Conversations with Victor Ostrovsky: The Man Who Blew the Whistle on Mossad**

***By Mary Barrett***

It was nearly 10 pm on a cold Canadian night early this fall when Victor Ostrovsky and his wife heard a knock at the door of their home in a quiet suburb of Ottawa. Ostrovsky had last seen the two men from Mossad who were now standing on his doorstep six years earlier, just before he passed through Ben Gurion Airport in Israel, seeking to flee before security people there learned that he was already "out" of Israel's foreign intelligence service.

Now, on Sept. 5, 1990, there they were, the commander of the Mossad school and the commander of Ostrovsky's training class. They had come, traveling under who knew what names, to give Ostrovsky "one last chance." His book, *By Way of Deception: The Making and Unmaking of a Mossad Officer*, was about to go to press in Canada. They warned him to halt its publication "for his own good." There was no missing their meaning. Then they offered him money, lots of it. The bitter with the sweet.

Victor Ostrovsky, an earthy Canadian whose buoyant good humor only partially masks native intelligence and a strong streak of idealism, was not surprised by the visit. He knew that if he told the story of what had happened to him after he emigrated to Israel and joined the Mossad they would come after him. He knew also that this was only the beginning.

I asked Ostrovsky if he still had friends on the inside, and if there were others who would walk away one day in outrage, as he had, to tell their stories.

"I can tell you one thing," he said. "If I live a year, I won't be the only one to come out. That's why they want me back. Because they know that if a year passes and I'm still alive, somebody else will come too."

Ostrovsky knew what "for his own good" meant. Speaking to network journalist Sam Donaldson on American television, the greying Isser Harel, first head of Mossad, had compared the damage Ostrovsky had done to Israel to that of Mordechai Vanunu, the Israeli technician who revealed Israel's nuclear capabilities to the London Times.

Vanunu was abducted, drugged and returned to Israel even before the Times could publish all of his revelations. Now serving a life sentence in solitary confinement in Israel, Vanunu was lured into Mossad hands by a woman operative named Cindy.

Ten days after Ostrovsky sent his visitors away disappointed, he came across a personal ad addressed to him, "wherever you are," in an Israeli newspaper he habitually reads in Canada. Like a love letter from a black widow spider, the ad assured him the writer would visit him soon. It was signed "Cindy."

Ostrovsky was not swayed by his old Mossad colleagues' carrots and sticks, nor by the terrifying implication of "Cindy's" note. So lawyers for the state of Israel persuaded a judge in Ottawa to issue a restraining order preventing his Canadian publishers from taking Ostrovsky's book to press, and muzzling Ostrovsky in the bargain.

Because the Israeli government was initially unaware of the book's planned simultaneous publication in the US by St. Martin's Press, it was Sept. 12 before a team of lawyers from the New York firm of Skadden, Arps, Meagher & From, representing the Israeli government, arrived at 1 am at the Fifth Avenue home of New York State Supreme Court Judge Michael J. Dontzin. They had come to demand an injunction preventing the distribution of *By Way of Deception*, already printed and in the hands of book distributors.

The lawyers claimed that Ostrovsky had violated an agreement he had signed with the Israeli government, that he had revealed "classified, certified information," and that the book "would disseminate extremely confidential information" which would "endanger the lives of various people in the employ of the state of Israel." Justice Dontzin granted the injunction.

# An "Unthinkable" Ruling

When day dawned and the papers were served, publishers around the country reeled at the implications of such a ruling. A specialist in First Amendment issues, attorney Richard Winfield of Rogers and Wells, described the ruling as "without precedent and egregious." Lawyer Linda Steiman, who represents the Freedom to Read Committee, said the ruling was particularly troubling because there was little or no evidence of any threat to Israeli security of lives. Noted First Amendment lawyer Floyd Abrams of Cahill, Gordon and Reindell called Dontzin's ruling an "aberration," adding: "This the first time any foreign state has sought or obtained a prior restraint against the publication of a book . . . The book is already out and around town. Under these conditions, this ruling is literally unthinkable."

St. Martin's Press took the matter before a four-judge panel of the New York Appellate Division immediately and Dontzin's unprecedented action was promptly vacated. In its statement, the panel commented that with 17,000 books already shipped, "any grant of injunctive relief . . . would be ineffective." Roy Gainsberg, president of St. Martin's Press, called it "a victory for a free press, " and noted that "orders have increased dramatically."

For his part, Ostrovsky went into hiding, sleeping in a different home every night.

By Way of Deception, co-authored by Canadian writer Claire Hoy, provides an exceptional glimpse into the Mossad, ranging from its philosophy and training procedures to its methodology and field techniques. As Ostrovsky presents it, the Mossad is an immoral organization operating without oversight. He is outraged at the damage it does to the people in whose name it functions. Ostrovsky claims that Israel is spying on its friends, including the US. He says that Israel had foreknowledge of the car bombing that cost the lives of the 241 US servicemen in Beirut in 1983, but withheld from the US vital details that could have prevented it. Mossad's rationale, according to Ostrovsky, was that it was to Israel's advantage to have Americans angry at any and all Arabs.

Ostrovsky's book illustrates the corruption intrinsic in any autonomous government intelligence agency. As an insider, Ostrovsky explains how the Mossad works and why its failings are symptomatic of much that is wrong with Israel. Perhaps most important, his example reminds us that no matter how great the danger in speaking out, there are always a few people who are willing to risk their lives for principle.

Unable to believe the Mossad could be so stupid as to publicize such a book by seeking to prevent its publication in the US and Canada, some readers suspect the book is planned disinformation on the part of the Israeli government. But reading the book and listening to its author lends reality to the conclusion that, unlike other literary attempts to shield, glorify or even to scold the intelligence agency, this is the real thing.

In early October, Ostrovsky returned to his home. In several conversations with the writer, beginning in Oct. 5, he spoke candidly. When I asked if he minded being taped he said fatalistically, "If you are going to say something you should allow people to use it. Otherwise don't say it. Usually you can trace where things come from. So if somebody knows something and he says it, and he doesn't want to be quoted, he's making a mistake. The people who want it not to be quoted will know how to find him."

In a culture where newspapers are filled with quotations from "informed sources who declined to be named," it was a pleasure to record such Ostrovsky statements as the following:

## On the Record

*Can you tell me when you decided to write the book and what was the determining factor?*

The thing is I held it in my belly for quite a while. Actually, when I left, I didn't know how to get out with the stuff. I tried to talk to people inside while I was there. Nobody would listen . . . I was considered quite a problem. That was the reason they wanted to send me as a liaison to the southern Lebanese army. So, I figured I better leave fast.

*Did you leave with materials?*

I took my attache case [but] I didn't take that many documents. So there were several pieces of paper that I had with me, and my diary.

*And they didn't look at this when you left the country?*

No. It was quite funny because when I left the people in security knew me, but they didn't know I was "out" already. Actually they did a security exercise on some of the new security people in the airport using me as bait. They took the guy's passport who was next to me, and then took my passport and gave it to him, and asked us both if we could pretend like everything's okay to see if the guys will actually notice it. And they did. And, of course, I was worried. I thought that this was a trick to say that I was trying to get out with a false passport or something. But nothing happened. It was just an exercise. Actually, I laughed about it quite a bit on the way...

*So it was already in your mind to do this?*

Well, no . . . I was thinking of doing something that would be fiction . . . But then I realized that if you do fiction, people will regard it as fiction. I could have had an agreement with Claire [Hoy, his co-author] that nobody would know who I am, and he would just say it was somebody from the Mossad. But, you see . . . the Mossad would know who I am. And [Claire] would lose credibility because it would be like some kind of vengeance or

something. We didn't know that the government was going to come out and say 'He worked for us; he was in the Mossad,' which is basically what they did. So I had to give whatever possible credibility I could, not expecting that they will do such a thing. I gave them more credit than they deserve apparently. The actual decision to do it was about two years after I left. I felt things were getting worse and worse, in Israel, not getting better. The intifada broke out. The way of behavior in Israel just became worse...

*So what do you foresee will come out of this book?*

First of all, you see, they are already starting to admit things that they didn't admit before. What they are doing now is they are after the Mossad for hiring me.

*Who is going after the Mossad?*

Everybody in Israel. You see, I get all the papers from Israel, so I am quite informed as far as that's concerned. So what they are doing is blaming me. Like, 'we got the wrong guy for the job'. . . They needed a scapegoat. So already, the Shabak, which is the internal security, said that they recommended not to accept me, but Mossad decided to take me anyway... The psychiatrists in the Mossad said they said to kick me out, but the commanders didn't want to. So now it's down to two guys . . . They were the commander of the Mossad school and commander of my course. One was Oren Riff and the other was Arelah, or Aharon Sherf. They are the two who came to my door. Of course the government didn't admit that they sent anybody, but now, because of all the internal struggles that are going on, everybody's blaming everybody else, saying it's not their fault. Here in the Jerusalem Post from today [Oct. 5], it says Israeli Attorney General Yosef Harish confirmed that he had been consulted by the relevant authorities before the requests were made to the Canadian and US courts to stop publication. Then it says, "Israeli authorities said they had made the attempt to gain time in order to buy off the author or publisher." So now they are admitting that they tried to buy it off. But, they are still calling me greedy, even though I wouldn't sell.

*Maybe they figured you had a better deal.*

Their offer was very good. They said whatever your costs were, and whatever are your projected profits. That could have been anything. So how come I'm greedy? I could have taken the money and everything would have been okay... They want it both ways, I guess. But that's the way they run things.

*Some people are saying that you're still part of the Mossad, and others that you are part of the CIA. What are you part of?*

I'll tell you what I'm part of. I'm part of the Israel that's still silent. It's a part of Israel that sees Palestinians as people. As people that are being oppressed—for a long time. And as a Jew I can't stand it. Okay? That's what I stand for. That's where I come from. I have no connection to the CIA, certainly not to the Mossad.

*I was amazed by the training that you described, in which you used the police and even Israeli citizens to study how to trick, how to deceive.*

Yes. And everybody is saying it can't be that you know so much. Yet everybody who's saying it has never been there, so how do they know what I know? I can understand if somebody that's inside the Mossad can come out and write another book, and say, 'My book is true, yours isn't.' You could argue. But you get a guy like [Yossi] Melman [an Israeli journalist who, with Dan Raviv, wrote a book about the Mossad called *Every Spy a Prince*], who's so mad that his book is not selling as well as ours, apparently... This is a guy who had been fed information from the LAP [Lohamah Psichlogit—Mossad's psychological warfare department] from the day he was born, and he comes to me and says that my book is wrong. How does he know? I mean... you can say you don't agree with me. You think I'm a Satan because I wrote the book... I'm the worst Israeli ever. I should be hung. I'm a traitor. Fine. I'll agree with that. I'll accept that, okay? But don't come and tell me that you know it's wrong when you don't know.

People are saying, how can you know about those private conversations that went on? If you look at the story you will see. For example, in the nuclear affair. What they said before... the Mossad bugged the apartment, we don't know. But once it was bugged, everything they said was in transcripts. And we received those transcripts while we were learning how to take care of that sort of an operation. So I read everything they said, that's how I know.

*From interviewing Yossi Melman and from reading his book I gather that he has very good connections with the Israeli government. In his book he points out that some 20 years ago there were three journalists who were very close to the government who went to Germany and interviewed the families of people who were nuclear scientists in Egypt. They were doing it for the government, asking personal questions, taking pictures, checking out surroundings, doing intelligence work. When they came back they wrote articles saying what the government suggested they say...*

Which is not new...

*Then he identifies one of the three as Samuel Segev who wrote the excellent book on the Iran-Contra affair [The Iranian Triangle]. When I interviewed Melman I asked who were the other two. By the end of the conversation, it appeared to me, although he did not say so, that he might be one of them.*

I don't know. I can't say that. I just can tell you one thing. If you look at the charts in the book you will see that there is a department called LAP which is psychological warfare. But that department oversees a committee which is called the editors' committee, which decides what will go and what will not go into Israeli papers. So the tie is direct. They have various strategic magazines in the world that they put out as if they are, say, a British strategic magazine or an American strategic magazine, put out by the British or the Americans. And actually they contain information fed them by the Israeli government, or the Mossad, in order to get their opinion across.

*Melman seems to be very angry about you...*

He's mad because of a few things. You see, what happened was this. He thought he got information from the Israeli government. Somebody said look, we've made a few boo-boos so what do we do. Let's make it look like, you know, somebody's going to slap us on the hand. Let's make it a gentle slap. Let's get somebody we know who will write a book that will be a bestseller, if possible, and we'll let it out and this way we'll get clean, you know? Like here we are, we're admitting it.

So they got these two guys and they wrote the book and it was published in England and it did not make a noise at all. It was called *The Imperfect Spies*. And nobody heard about it. It was difficult to get, and stores took just a few copies, and that was it. Then it went to the States, renamed *Every Spy a Prince*, and somehow it got into The New York Times and it started selling. I think it hit number 8 or 7 and then I think number 5 and then suddenly, out of the blue, came my book, and it's an insider's look, and it makes them look pale. So they became mad. They say, hey, he's cutting away at our sales. We almost look like brown noses.

*Let me ask you about a claim he's made on television that Gerald Bull [the international arms dealer who was assassinated in Brussels] was an Israeli agent working for the Mossad...*

It's nonsense... If you read [Melman's] book carefully you notice that he's confusing... operations of the Mossad with one of the Shabak, and then with the police... Unless you were in it you don't really know the difference. He's calling people agents that are really case officers, and there's a really big difference between an agent and a case officer. I'm insulted when somebody calls me an agent. The job of the case officer is to recruit an agent. The agent is the enemy. So that's one of the reasons he got really mad at the book. And then he says that I've gone too far. I mean, the use of friends has gone too far. Like in Denmark. Rather than having people arrested, keep them working for you although they are damaging the country they are in. That's going too far. I think that when the French policeman died because nobody said that Carlos was armed, that is going too far. I think when you are working in the States, a country which is feeding you, that is going too far. So he's telling me I went too far because I put some names of people in the book? But they are people who are not in the field anymore. The biggest ride of an Israeli who's been in the Mossad, once he gets out or once he's not in the field, is saying I used to work for the Mossad or I am working in the Mossad, you know? But, for the guys who are in the field, I put in names that can't be identified. And no agent can be identified from my book.

*Your book, your narrative contains considerable information about things that happened after you left the Mossad. How did you get that material?*

If you're talking about stuff like the rabbi [Moshe Levinger] who shot the Arab, that's open information. From the day I leave, we are talking narrative information. On the guy [Amiram Nir] who died in Mexico, that is an assumption. I haven't been there. This is the way the

Mossad can operate. [Ostrovsky's book suggests that Nir's death in a plane crash, just before he was to have testified about Oliver North's activities, was faked, and that he may still be alive.] I think it needs to be researched.

What I'm really asking you is... do you still have a contact or contacts inside the Mossad?

I can't say that. I can't say such a thing . . . You have to realize one thing. There is a lot of information that is in the open media from after the time I left. There are a lot of political opinions that I had after I left that I had before. I was regarded as a leftist. But what is a leftist in Israel? You see, it's not a communist or a socialist. A leftist is what you call in the States a liberal. It means someone who believes in human rights. For example, I'm totally uncommunist. I'm a capitalist to the bone. I don't believe in the socialist system. But I'm a leftist.

*There are certain parallels that can be drawn between you and Mordechai Vanunu...*

Yes, they want me too. Actually there was a letter, a small business card-size ad on the 19th of this month in the Israeli paper. It was handwritten, but you know, it was printed. And I have it and it says, 'To Ostrovsky, Victor: have a happy new year, in brackets, wherever you are. I will come and visit you soon. Cindy' . . . The paper is *Ma'ariv*, from the 19th of this month [September] on page four. They know I read that paper. You see, they don't understand where they are wrong. They do not understand that they took on themselves something they can't win [to deny statehood to the Palestinians]. And we proved it. We, the Jewish people proved that once a nation has been formed, you can't deny them the right to exist. You can't! It's a political stupidity to try to do it. And how can you hold people for so long oppressed. It just can't be done.

And they are saying to me that I signed a contract that I won't talk—and therefore I'm terrible. But [the Mossad] signed a contract with the Danes saying they won't operate in Denmark. They signed a contract with the Belgians saying let's have a place to put our headquarters, we won't work in Belgium... and yet they are working. They signed a contract with the Americans saying we won't work in the States and they are working there. They signed contracts with people around the world promising a thousand things and they are not keeping them. They promised things to the government of Israel and they are not keeping them. They promised the Sinhalese that they would only train them, and they trained the Tamils. [The Sinhalese and the Tamils are ethnic groups battling in Sri Lanka.] They promised the world that they won't make a nuclear bomb and they are working with South Africa on it. So what are they talking about? I signed a contract? Please!

It's almost like the contract... you remember the Devil and Daniel Webster? It's the same contract except I don't have a Daniel Webster.

*You mentioned in the book that Nir has said that both he and Oliver North supervised counterterrorist operations in 1985 and 1986. Can you explain that?*



This is part of the commentary that Claire wrote from sources that he had. Claire is also an investigative reporter. There are a lot of things he got. For instance it is mentioned in the book that Bush was at a hotel in Jerusalem meeting with Nir. I didn't know that. Claire found that. Everything Claire got was cross-referenced. The stories of operations were mine. Normally everybody knows the tip of the iceberg. I don't know the top of the iceberg. I just know what's under the water.

*You mentioned that LAKAM [Lishka le Kishrei Mada, the Defense Ministry's Scientific Affairs Liaison Bureau which handled Jonathan Pollard] was in fact not dissolved. What is it called now and where is it?*

It may have been given another name, but we continued to call it LAKAM when we sent things there. Actually, if I'm not mistaken, they are changed the number of the building rather than move the offices. It's cheaper. They are pragmatic.

*Has the Mossad ever assassinated anyone in the United States?*

I don't think so. Assassination is a different story. For assassination you need a signature of the prime minister because you can't hide it under the carpet.

*Was there an order signed by Shamir to assassinate Gerald Bull?*

If the Mossad did that, yes but I don't believe the Mossad would have done that.

*You don't believe the Mossad assassinated Bull?*

No... Have you seen those pipes assembled into a cannon? Those particular pipes?

No.

Well, neither have I. And until they do put them together, I don't believe it's a cannon.

*I think it may have been intended to put a satellite into space.*

When you want a cannon to shoot something that far it's also a very big and immobile target. So why do it? I wouldn't be surprised if somebody tried to put it together and it just wouldn't turn out to be a cannon. I know Bull's theories. I am sure Bull had a way to build a cannon, and that was his intention. He had one in Canada, but that doesn't prove that was a cannon.

*What has that got to do with the assassination of Bull?*

Because I don't see any reason to kill him.

*Perhaps because he was associated with the companies selling Iraq war materials.*

Yes, but he was associated also with Israel earlier. It's not good enough. The pictures around it are not good enough for it to be conclusive that [the pipes were] his. It could have been a bad deal. Somebody could have done it because of money.

## A Later Interview

*In a later interview we came back to this subject.*

*About Gerald Bull, we talked last time about the tubes, and you said it was not clear to you what they were for...*

Yes, for example, if I had found the tubes [as British customs agent did], I would have come out and done this tremendous show of 'I got it, I got it.' The first thing I would have done was place them in a big warehouse, bring the media and try to put it together to prove that what I said was true. Otherwise I'm just trying to keep some oil pipes from reaching Iraq. I see it in a different way . . . I can speculate that somebody had been planning the whole situation to raise the ugly face of Hussain long before what happened now, maybe to make sure the public is ready to accept the new "terrible man." You remember, if you look back, Nasser [former president of Egypt] used to be that. Then it was Qassim [former president of Iraq]. Then it was Assad [the current president of Syria]. Then it was Qaddafi [president of Libya]. You always have to keep this guy, you know, somebody up there as this terrible person. I know that a lot of times the Mossad likes somebody else to do their job. So I'm saying to myself, wait a minute. If you remember this list that I just mentioned they are all Arab leaders. They were all enemies of one country. And most of them were helped to be knocked down by another. So isn't this a pattern?

It's just strange. Everything being found suddenly. The switches were caught. Do you remember who was the one who tried to buy atomic switches before? But you will notice there are two types that people were caught trying to buy. Several years ago it was Israelis who tried to buy these switches. Ideas come up from past experiences many times. Another situation: If you look at newspapers from Israel four months ago, you will read that Hussain has gas, he has missiles. But we know for sure he hasn't the capability to connect the two. Why are they giving out gas masks now? They know he can't do it. But, if you notice, there is another tendency, If you look back... when I left [Israel] the bad guy was Assad, 'Assad the terrible.' Now he's the ally. If you remember the history of Assad, you know Assad never crossed the red line. Any time Israel and Syria drew red lines, he never crossed them.

If you look at Hussain, he's got the missiles but he hasn't got the capability [to use them with poison gas], according to Israeli intelligence that was published in Israel.

# The Jerusalem Post

*But I have an article from the Jerusalem Post from the fall of 1989 which says that Iraq does have the capability.*

But the *Jerusalem Post* is a newspaper for American consumption. There's a difference between *Yedioth* and *Ma'ariv* and the *Jerusalem Post*. If you look at it you will see that the president of Israel said last week that the Israeli press that is going abroad is not a regular press of information. It is the press with a mission. That is quoting him.

*Where was that quoted?*

That was also in *Yedioth Aharonoth*, from this holiday, from Succoth on this Wednesday [Oct. 3]. Hold on. I will read you the exact quote. 'It is an Israeli newspaper for Israelis abroad.' The headline reads, 'There's a new magazine in the English language. [And continues] President Chaim Herzog called for the media not just to talk about the special Alia—the coming of Jews to Israel—from the Soviet Union, but also to try and rally the Jewish world for this cause. In a lecture that the president gave in the Hyatt hotel in Jerusalem on the eve of the new English-language newspaper, the *Jerusalem Post*, the president said that the Hebrew paper is a medium with a mission that goes beyond the regular reaction to news and events. The new newspaper edited by Hirsh Goodman is coming out by the investments by Jewish people abroad.

So when you read a paper in English like the *Jerusalem Post* you have to bring into consideration it's a paper with a mission. It's a right-wing paper, purchased last, I think, by Blake. All you have to do if you want to sell a paper today in Israel is say it's going to be radical left-wing, and then the right comes and buys it. Actually they have another article in *Yedioth Aharonoth*. They have a two-page article about [US journalist Patrick] Buchanan, calling him an 18-karat anti-Semite. They say, 'he was the first to use the Ostrovsky affair to send poison arrows to Jerusalem.'

*This very rich stuff, you know, very rich prose.*

Yes. The Israeli press is starting to look more and more like the Arab press. Rather than write the truth you can write nice prose.

## The Next Day—Boom!

And another thing, if you look at the Israeli press over the last three or four years, you will see that if there is a report that there are some negotiations, or one of the hostages might be released, or there are talks with Shi'ites, a meeting in Beirut—and you will see that

every time that happens, the next day the Israeli air force has bombed a Shi'ite base in Lebanon.

It's beautiful. You hear that, and the next day—Boom! Now if you notice in the last week or so there is some negotiation that the French were going to meet Hussain and maybe some tension would be relieved. The next day Israel gives out gas masks. And on the American television show of Geraldo Rivera, Bibi [Benjamin] Netanyahu, the ambassador of Israel, says 'Israel is the safest country in the world. Tomorrow I am going to the beaches where thousands will be. All this war talk is far beyond us. It has nothing to do with us.' He is with the Foreign Ministry. So why the hell is he giving out gas masks?

*I don't think they've given them out in the West Bank.*

No. Those guys have to buy them. Once they finish giving them out to Israelis, Palestinians will be able to purchase them.

*I understand they are concerned the Palestinians will use them during demonstrations.*

A military man was asked about that on Geraldo and he answered, 'If they think they can protect themselves with a gas mask, they still have a lot to learn.' This show was from Jerusalem last Thursday [Oct. 4]. I only saw half of it. My wife called me while I was reading my book onto tape, and say they are talking about your book. If you see it, you will notice the audience is all very blonde.

*Why?*

They brought a lot of students and other people to make the background "good" for the show. It's an old practice.

But [about Bull], all I know is what I have heard... I don't know how he actually got taken out. Do you know?

*According to what I have read, as he was unlocking the door to his girlfriend's apartment in a hotel in Brussels, someone stepped up to him with a silencer-equipped automatic weapon and fired two shots into the back of his neck and three into his upper chest...*

What gun was it? Because if it's a 9-mm you don't need a silencer at that distance, How do they know it had a silencer?

*The gun was left on the floor. It was 7.65 mm.*

That's a caliber used in the Israeli military. That is a Belgian type of weapon made by Fabrique Nationale, FN. It takes a standard FN bullet. it was not a 7.62?

*7.65 is what has been reported. Another point of interest is that his neighbors were an old Jewish couple who had been there for some months. After Bull's death they never returned to their apartment and have not been located.*

Do the authorities know their former residence?

*I don't know the answer to that.*

That's very interesting. I never heard that. That sounds like a *sayanim*, the local Jewish helpers that are used . . . And they disappeared? How old is old?

*I don't know that either.*

These are interesting things... It is very possible that these are the people who did it. That gives them access, knowledge and time. They could walk right up to him. One could walk up and stand to the side of him while he is unlocking, and the other one, let's say, is in the garbage room, which would be say, say, on the other side of the hall, holding the gun and holding another thing with him. Then the first person would him so he's going to turn going to turn his back to the other one who's going to shoot him. The other one comes right up to him, shoots him in the back. He knows the people, so why worry. And they both just leave. Nobody would even notice them leaving the building because they live there. They go down the stairs and if somebody does come along and find them, they would start screaming, 'look what happened, look what happened.'

The gun is on the floor, there might be one glove that covers the entire... you know, when you shoot it leaves the marks on your hands, so you have a sleeve like a surgeon, but it goes all the way up to your elbow, so even on your jacket nothing's left. So that's it? Nobody looked for them... They are too old? Weren't they suspects? What about the police? Didn't they look for them?

*They were never found.*

That's interesting. That would be typical. There you have it. There is the planning, you have the carrying out of the operation... What about his girlfriend?

*Ball's wife kept the family establishment in Canada. She and all the children appeared at the funeral, but the girlfriend has dropped from sight.*

How long did he know her?

*I don't know.*

Do they have pictures of any of the neighbors?

*I don't know.*

Even a composite?

*I would think so. But not a lot of information has been forthcoming.*

I know that.

*Your scenario is an interesting one.*

It's a logical one. Before you told me what happened it didn't make sense. That's why I said before I didn't see any connection whatsoever, but once I see that kind of picture then it changes all around.

## The Bombing of Iraq's Osirak Plant

*It's been reported that when the French were building the Osirak nuclear reactor they planted explosives inside of the concrete and that when the Israeli planes were right over it that they were detonated by radio from Israel.*

I can tell you for sure that it was not done that way.

*How do you know?*

Because I studied the case and we went through it step by step. It was done with heavy bombs.

*With the reactor core four stories underground that would be difficult.*

No, the thing was to bring the dome down. All you needed was the core. You didn't need the actual structure. A lot of the structure was left, but it was the dome that came down and once it came down, that's it.

*If the core was four stories below ground with several levels of concrete, how could the planes have gone back and videotaped the core bursting apart and tumbling into the cooling pool?*

The plans came in three or four waves and they were photographing it as it was happening, one after the other. Look, I saw the film.

*Are you convinced?*

A hundred percent. I remember when they were crossing the river. I remember seeing the farmers working. It was just fantastic.

*What was their route? It says in the books that they went over hostile countries...*

They flew over Elat and over the southern tip of Jordan, over parts of Saudi Arabia. They crossed the Euphrates. Whatever kind of detection was available was no problem because they were using quite a bit of electronic interference.

*What do you do for a living now?*

Well, I paint. And my paintings are in the about 36 galleries in Ontario and Quebec.

*Have you been painting for long?*

Oh, yes. I have always been painting. I have painted since I was six. I had exhibitions in the army. Actually the building of the Mossad is quite littered with my art. The waiting room of the second-in-command of the navy has a big painting of mine... probably not hanging any more. They'd probably rather hang me there!

*Do you have any idea of what the Mossad is going to do to try and make you irrelevant?*

What they did was make the mistake of starting off by making me relevant. So right off the bat they started to change dates. When I was still gagged by the courts here, I said they wanted to buy time. Now they're admitting that they wanted to buy time. They started a smear campaign. They started changing facts and dates around. First they said I was only two years in the Mossad. Then they said six months in the Mossad, than five months. Next they were going to say they don't know me. it was a mistake... That's not Victor we are talking about!

They're trying to turn the clock back and discredit whatever credit they already gave me. That's their first effort. Their second effort is going to be to try to bring me back to Israel, and that will be for internal use to show the people of Israel 'Here, we brought him, we did it. The long arm of Israeli justice can reach wherever.'

*That Cindy is invincible...*

Ah, now, I have a very pretty wife that I like very much.

*So you and Salman Rushdie [author of The Satanic Verses] are being protected by the governments of the countries in which you love.*

No. I think I am protected by *being* Canadian. However, I think that if something were to happen to me the Canadians would come out of their quiet existence and make such a row that would surprise everybody.

*It seems right now your greatest protection is the success of your book.*

Yes, right now. But the publicity bubble will burst and stories about me will be wrapping fish.

*I'll try to send you copy of this one before it reaches the fish market.*

*Mary Barrett is a freelance journalist based in Boston.*