

# FBI Memo: Israelis Hampering Probe

## *Agency Investigates Jewish Defense League Role in Bombings*

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The Israeli government has failed to cooperate with a U.S. investigation of Jewish Defense League (JDL) members and associates suspected in a series of bombings and terrorist incidents in this country, according to an internal Federal Bureau of Investigation memo.

The memo, sent earlier this year by assistant FBI director Floyd Clark to executive assistant director Oliver B. (Buck) Revell, said several key suspects in the investigation have fled to Israel, where they have sought asylum in Kiryat Arba, a large Jewish settlement on the Israeli-occupied West Bank. It describes Kiryat Arba as a "haven for right-wing Jewish extremist elements."

The memo was first disclosed in this week's edition of *The Village Voice*.

"Numerous leads have been forwarded through FBI [headquarters] to the Israeli Secret Intelligence Service in Washington, D.C. Response to these leads is crucial for the solution of the 25 terrorist incidents and other criminal activity perpetrated by the JDL," the memo said.

It said the FBI had requested "telephone subscriber information, criminal background information, arrest records, prison contacts, associates, residence status and travel documentations . . ."

"The Terrorism Section has had numerous meetings with [Israeli] representatives in Washington, D.C., during which our concerns

relative to their handling of our requests were raised. Although these discussions have sometimes resulted in a temporary flurry of activity on their part, no sustained improvement in the flow of information has been realized," it said.

Yossi Gal, a spokesman for the Israeli Embassy here, said he had no immediate comment on the FBI memo.

The FBI refused to comment directly on the memo, saying that bureau relationships with foreign intelligence services "must be maintained in a confidential manner . . . to insure a free exchange of meaningful intelligence."

Complaints about Israel's inadequate cooperation in another criminal investigation arose earlier this year in the case of Jonathan Jay Pollard, a U.S. Navy intelligence analyst convicted of spying for the Israelis and sentenced to life in prison. The Justice Department recently informed the Israelis that it intends to withdraw the immunity of three key figures in the case, including Rafi Eitan, a former Israeli government adviser on terrorism.

Federal sources said the FBI has been hampered in the JDL case because many suspects have U.S.-Israeli citizenship, allowing them to travel at will between the two countries, sometimes using their Hebrew names.

Gregory O'Connell, an assistant U.S. attorney in Brooklyn working on the investigation, said that "targets of our investigation have traveled to and from Israel." He declined to say whether investigators believe they are still in Israel.

O'Connell said his office and a

Justice Department terrorism task force are conducting "an active investigation" of whether JDL members were involved in the fatal explosion in Santa Ana, Calif., that killed Alexander Odeh, a regional director of the Arab American Anti-Discrimination Committee, and two other bombings in 1985. He said the probe also includes other unsolved terrorist bombings in earlier years.

Federal sources said that many of the suspects have been tied to Rabbi Meir Kahane, who founded the JDL in 1968 in Brooklyn. Kahane stepped down from his JDL position in 1984 after winning a seat in the Israeli Knesset (parliament). The suspects are believed to be involved not only with the JDL, as current or former members, but also with Kahane's violently anti-Arab Kach Party.

Asked whether Kahane's activities are under investigation, O'Connell would say only, "Kahane founded the JDL. You often encounter connections between Kahane and persons and events under investigation, sometimes remote and sometimes less than remote."

The other 1985 assaults under investigation involve the bombing of a Paterson, N.J., house in which an alleged Nazi war criminal was killed, and the bombing of a Brentwood, N.Y., house owned by an alleged Nazi concentration camp guard, in which a passerby lost a leg.

FBI papers say that from 1981 through 1986, 24 terrorist incidents in the United States have been attributed to Jewish extremist groups, with 17 laid to the JDL.