

The case of Edmond Safra

Banker Edmond Safra, a frequent figure in the *EIR* report, is typical of the *dramatis personae* who are more notorious today, than ten years ago. In 1986, we identified Safra as the “chief financial godfather of the Syrian Jewish community, now relocated to Brooklyn, New York.” In the mid-1980s, Safra won a court suit, and proceeded to donate \$1 million of his earnings to the ADL.

Since the issuance of the Sharon report, especially following the Nov. 4, 1995 assassination of Prime Minister Rabin, Safra has become a center of controversy in many nations. It is not to be excluded, that he will be finding himself in serious legal and related troubles in the not-distant future: Most explosive, was the revelation that Safra was the financial patron of the Rabbi Avraham Hecht, who uttered prayers for the death of Rabin, in the weeks before the assassination. For this, Safra has drawn opprobrium from Jews, in both the United States and Israel, and from others interested in peace in the Middle East.

Meanwhile, he is involved in a bitter legal fight in Israel, with former associate Jack Nasser. That, too, could land him in big trouble.

Safra’s activities are also in the middle of serious debate among U.S. law enforcement agencies, regulators, and Congressional oversight committees. The story is this: Safra’s Republic National Bank in New York City has historically worked closely with the New York Federal Reserve (see *EIR*, Feb. 6, 1996, “New York Fed Is in Bed with Safra and the Russian Mafia”). Largely through Safra’s bank, during 1994 and 1995, some \$40 billion, sold on seignorage basis, have been sold to Russian banks and their customers based in Moscow. Russia’s dollarized

gray- and black-market economy is largely in the hands of mafiosi and “former” KGB intelligence operatives and is characterized by tax fraud, usury, illegal export of raw materials, and the laundering of Western drug money, as well as the usual rackets of prostitution, extortion, etc. The matter is being debated in the U.S. House Banking Committee.

Safra’s problems also derive from a “spin-off” operation from his financial empire. A derivative of the Safra banking and financial empire, is the murky Union Bancaire Privée (UBP) of his former school-chum in Lebanon, Edgar de Picciotto. UBP has been under investigation in the United States, South Africa, and Switzerland, for money laundering. For the time being, UBP has been authorized to participate in a buy-up of a major Brazilian bank, Banco Excel. This case involved massive national debate in Brazil, with the De Picciotto and Safra clans coming into the spotlight, and with the friends of UBP accusing *EIR* of masterminding the anti-UBP campaign.

One part of the De Picciotto web, is a shadowy consulting firm based in Geneva and Paris, called Geopol. Geopol’s chief, Pierre Hafner, is currently in a Swiss jail. A Geopol board member, Hans Kopp, who has been at the center of a number of scandals in Switzerland, has recently been denied the right to practice law that country. The head of Geopol’s Paris office, one Laurent Murawiec, was formerly a correspondent for *EIR*. Interestingly, his break with *EIR* began, to a significant extent, when he raised hysterical objections to the Sharon report, and did everything in his power to impede and obstruct its circulation in Europe and the Middle East: More precisely, under the cover of such “objections,” Murawiec was looking over the cast of characters included in the report, as his potential future employers! Obviously not a very secure employment, in view of the fate met by his friends these days.

ting house of Buckingham Palace and of the cream of Britain’s aristocracy since the 1700s.” In late 1985, during a trip to London, Sharon stayed at Stein’s home.

Ultimately, the report documents, the “dark side” in Israeli politics dates back to the World War II use by William Stephenson, founder and head of the British Special Operations Executive (SOE), of criminals for intelligence purposes, in what was labelled, by Stephenson, “Operation Underworld.”

Another element in the picture, is that, in the United States, the “contact-points” for the Sharon apparatus have invariably been key figures in the U.S. “neo-conservative” movement. This is documented in the section of the report which details the case of Jonathan Jay Pollard, a U.S. Naval

Intelligence officer who stole sensitive secrets from the United States on behalf of Israeli intelligence, which were then passed on to the Soviets. The “neo-con” connections are usually centered around the Heritage Foundation, based in Washington. The Heritage Foundation was set up by such Margaret Thatcher intimates as the late Lord Keith Joseph, and is, to this day, a notorious outpost of the British Empire in the United States.

From Jack the Ripper to Ariel Sharon

Sharon’s British pedigree is further brought to light if we move from the British connections, to Sharon’s direct involvement in several of the British Empire’s most important destabilization operations in the Middle East. The best