

A glimpse into the newly published book "Target Tehran"

Target israel

How Israel is Using Sabotage, Cyberwarfare, Assassination and Secret Diplomacy to Stop a Nuclear Iran and Create a New Middle East?

Israeli authors confess that Israel has extensively used cyber warfare, targeted assassinations, and sabotage against Iran, with the cooperation of the United States, to counter the Islamic Republic of Iran's nuclear knowledge development. Another topic of discussion is the Abraham Accord and how Israel is trying to advance the "Change" project in the Middle East by engaging with the leaders of regional countries and inducing "Iranophobia". The current article provides a summary of key sections of the book.



The emergence of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman was also significant. He was accessible, energetic, and open to modernizing Saudi Arabia, including its relations with Israel. Cohen established a relationship with bin Salman, leading to secret meetings and discussions. Bin Salman's actions, such as the detention of hundreds of Saudi elites at the Ritz-Carlton hotel and the killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, raised international concerns about cooperation with Saudi Arabia. In contrast, Israel continued its efforts to normalize relations with Gulf Arab countries, with the expectation that the UAE would be the first to do so, followed by Saudi Arabia.

Israel's historical fear of Iran

■ Ariel Sharon, the Prime Minister of Israel at the time, appointed Meir Dagan as the head of Mossad, Israel's intelligence agency, in 2002. Sharon believed that Israel needed more aggressive actions to counter the nuclear threat from Iran and wanted a leader for Mossad who would use the agency for operations, not just for gathering information.

■ While Ephraim Halevy, the former head of Mossad, had taken actions to counter Iran's nuclear program, Sharon saw him more as a diplomat than a leader focused on operations. Dagan's approach was characterized by his inclination for bold actions, and he was known for his statements about his expertise in "separating Arab heads from their bodies." Despite his tough exterior, Dagan was an intellectual who had interests in arts such as painting and music. His leadership style was described as assertive, making him a powerful figure in Israel's intelligence.

■ Sharon, the Prime Minister of Israel, instructed Mossad to infiltrate Iran's nuclear program while simultaneously strengthening its relations with Gulf Arab countries, which shared concerns about Iran. This effort began in the early 2000s and was facilitated by David Meidan.

■ Sharon's goal as Prime Minister of Israel was to enhance relations with Gulf Arab countries that shared concerns about Iran. Under the leadership of David Meidan, Mossad initiated secret contacts with the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and others. The initial relations were between intelligence agencies, but direct channels were later established.

■ Trade and defense relations between Israel and the United Arab Emirates, including the supply of Israeli security equipment, were cautiously developed. In the 1980s and 1990s, unofficial relations between Mossad and Saudi Arabian intelligence agencies began.

■ Meir Dagan, the Mossad director, had personal channels for communicating with Arab leaders, especially King Abdullah II of Jordan. Israel and Jordan had close relations between their intelligence agencies. Gulf Arab countries preferred that someone else take specific actions to disrupt Iran's nuclear program, and Israel was willing to do so.

■ Meir Dagan pursued a policy of pressure on Iran to create conditions for regime change. Financial sanctions such as UN Security Council Resolutions 1737 and 1747 in 2006-2007 were part of this strategy. Dagan believed that these sanctions, by cutting off European trade and imposing costs on Iran, would harm the country.

American-Israeli intelligence cooperation

■ Trump and Netanyahu held their first official meeting in January 2017, where they discussed Iran as a top priority and emphasized the need for unparalleled intelligence sharing and coordinated operations against Iran between the United States and Israel.

■ Mike Pompeo, the Director of the CIA, and Yossi Cohen, the head of Mossad, established a close and personal pro-

fessional relationship with strong cooperation between their agencies. They visited each other's agencies and established direct communication for operational collaboration. This relationship was so close that Pompeo participated in a secret farewell ceremony for Cohen upon his retirement from Mossad, even though Pompeo was no longer in the government at that time.

Intervention and Sabotage in Iran for Destabilization

■ Dagan supported student democracy movements and ethnic minorities in Iran, believing that Iran's economy was weakening and causing a crisis among its leadership. He doubted the existence of a moderate faction within Iran's leadership and believed that both hardliners and reformists sought Israel's destruction.

■ The Green Movement protests in Iran in 2009 created an opportunity for change but were not fully capitalized upon. Western intelligence agencies could not effectively exploit the vulnerable regime during the protests. Israel and Gulf Arab countries intensified their intelligence contacts due to the Iranian threat. Reports suggest that Saudi Arabia allowed Israeli jets to use its airspace for potential strikes on Iran. Opposition within the security establishments of Israel and the United States prevented immediate military action, at least temporarily.

■ Cohen was recruited by Mossad during his studies in England. His Jewish upbringing influenced his strong commitment to Israel and its security. He was considered an intelligent officer and was proficient in multiple languages. Under Cohen's leadership, Iran became Mossad's top priority. He secured a larger budget for the agency, primarily to acquire technology and development related to countering Iran's nuclear program. Cohen also focused on creating common ground with Saudi Arabia, laying the groundwork for future cooperation.

■ The decision to target Iran's nuclear archive was made in January 2016, two years before the operation itself. Netanyahu and Cohen believed that gaining access to the nuclear archive would weaken the nuclear deal and provide grounds for resuming covert actions. The former head of Mossad, Tamir Pardo, was

aware of the existence of these archives but did not know their location. Netanyahu's controversial speech in Congress further strained relations between Israel and the United States.

■ For this operation, Mossad decided to send Israeli commandos due to the high risk of arrest and execution in public. Mossad had established relationships with various Iranian opposition groups and minority ethnic groups, including the People's Mujahedin, a Marxist-Islamic group.

■ Despite months of surveillance, Mossad lacked critical information about the operational details and decided to infiltrate an Israeli agent into Tehran. A female Mossad officer with proficiency in Persian and an engineering degree was chosen for this mission, accompanied by a male partner to avoid suspicion. The agent visited the vicinity of the archive several times, collecting valuable information that allowed Mossad to proceed with the project.

■ The operation to steal Iran's nuclear archive was the result of over two years of planning and preparation, involving hundreds of Mossad personnel, including intelligence officers, cryptanalysts, hackers, linguists, and technology experts. The decision to execute this operation was made after Netanyahu informed President Trump during a meeting at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

■ The Natanz attack was a strategic move that occurred before negotiations to revive the nuclear deal. Mossad's actions, orchestrated by Cohen, aimed to target Iran's facilities, weaken Iran's negotiating position, and disrupt its nuclear program. However, despite Israel's sophisticated sabotage campaigns, Iran has consistently improved its nuclear facilities following these attacks.

