

The Kings of Garbage, or, The ADL Spied on Me and All I Got Was This Lousy Index Card

By Mark Ames • March 10, 2014 • 12:00 PM

In 1993 the Anti-Defamation League was accused of espionage, illegal surveillance, theft, and the treasonous sale of classified information to a foreign government. I was one of their victims.

Last year marked the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Anti-Defamation League and the B'nai B'rith. The theme of the celebration was "Imagine a World Without Hate."

2013 also marked the 20th anniversary of another key episode in ADL history, but it's not the sort of milestone National Director Abe Foxman will want you to remember. In 1993 it was alleged that the League had been involved in a grotesque rap sheet of covert activities, including espionage, illegal surveillance, theft, and the treasonous sale of classified information to a foreign government. It's a hell of a tale, and not just for its cartoonish cast of characters: a corrupt police officer, a bungling "fact finder," and a McCarthyite from Indianapolis.



I have no choice but to remember the story. In 1993 I received a letter in the mail. It informed me that I was the victim of an illegal spy ring involving members of the ADL and a San Francisco Police Department intelligence detective called Tom Gerard. The letter came with an index card that included my full name, driver's license, the license-plate number on my shitty old Subaru hatchback, and the Mission District addresses of my apartment and the leftie bookstore where I worked, near Guerrero and 20th Street. My file had been marked "Pinko," one of five categories that the ADL spymaster used to flag the group's targets.

At that period I was already at a low point. My stepfather spent most of that year dying of a malignant brain tumor. It was a gruesome, agonizing death, and I put off moving to Moscow to help my mother get through it. That alone was so stressful that we both wound up losing our minds in the process. In the grip of that ordeal, learning that the ADL had spied on me seemed like just one more torment in a personal hell.

But I was not alone. Police had seized thousands of index cards like mine in raids on the ADL's San Francisco office, and in searches of the homes and storage facilities of the organization's key figures. According to newspaper reports of the time, 12,000 Americans and 950 groups were victims of the now-forgotten scandal.

The list of victims reads like a Who's Who of the Liberal Establishment: NAACP, ACLU, Greenpeace, ACT UP!, National Lawyers Guild, Mother Jones founder Adam Hochschild, reporters from the *Los Angeles Times* and KQED public television, and scores of local labor unions including the United Auto Workers and Cesar Chavez's United Farm Workers. The ADL operatives even spied on a handful of U.S. Congressmen, all Democrats, including Nancy Pelosi, Senator Alan Cranston, Pete McClosky, Mervyn Dymally, and Ron Dellums of Oakland, head of the House Armed Services Committee. Many prominent Jews were also spied on, including Dr. Yigal Arens, the son of former Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Arens.

A Creative Definition of Anti-Semitism

Dr. Arens, who runs an information technology program at the University of Southern California, was targeted because he supported a two-state solution in Israel and the occupied territories. He told [reporters](#), "The ADL believes that anyone who is an Arab American ... or speaks politically against Israel is at least a closet anti-Semite."

Dr. Arens was, if anything, understating the case. What the ADL understood by the phrase "against Israel" was to become disturbingly clear as the investigation proceeded.

When I opened that letter, I could not have been accused of "speaking politically against Israel." I'm a Jew, for Christ's sake! And back then I was also a Republican, still holding on to at least some of my childhood Zionism. But none of that mattered. As I quickly discovered—a sickening discovery that killed whatever Zionism I still felt—the

reason the ADL had set its spies on me was because, while a student at Berkeley in the '80s, I'd protested against apartheid.

Protesting South African apartheid in the 1980s was practically a middle-class duty in the Bay Area. Even yuppies and mainstream Republicans supported the protest movement. It was an easy choice. No one in their right mind wanted to be associated with the Jim Crow/George Wallace faces in those old black-and-white newsreels.

So why would Israel cozy up to the vilest regime since the Third Reich? One clue can be found in a speech given in 1987 by Eliahu Lankin, Israel's former ambassador to South Africa, at Tel Aviv University. In it, he [warned](#) that South African blacks "want to gain control over the white majority just like the Arabs here want to gain control over us. And we, too, like the white minority in South Africa, must act to prevent them from taking us over." Then there was the looming specter of divestment. In 1986, thanks to a massive and sustained student-protest movement, University of California Regents were forced to divest \$3 billion from investments related to South Africa. Some within the ADL apparently believed the same tactic could be used by U.S. opponents of Israel's policies toward the Palestinians. Decades later, these concerns would prove to be well-founded.

A recent book by *New York Times* editor Sasha Polakow-Suransky, [Unspoken Alliance: Israel's Secret Relationship With Apartheid South Africa](#)," traces the beginnings of Israel's friendship with apartheid South Africa back even further, to Israeli Defense Minister Shimon Peres' secret visit to Pretoria in 1974. This was a meeting that led to arms deals and agreements over intelligence sharing.

In 1976, South African Prime Minister B.J. Vorster was given the red-carpet treatment by Israel's Labor government leaders Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres. They gave him a guided tour of the Wailing Wall and the Holocaust Museum, despite the fact that Vorster had been a Nazi sympathizer in the '30s, and had even served as a commander in the *Ossewabrandwag*, a pro-Nazi militant group.

By 1986, the relationship between Israel and South Africa had grown so close that the ADL was regularly sharing confidential files with the South African Bureau of State Security, that country's version of the Gestapo. The files contained detailed information about Californians who opposed apartheid. Then there was the file on Representative Ron Dellums, who was the head of the House Armed Services Committee and an African-American from Oakland. After the scandal broke, an ADL employee [admitted to the Los Angeles Times](#) that spying on a black U.S. Congressman for a racist foreign government "was not the most political thing to do." 3

Israel, the ADL, and Arab-Americans

Israel today is a far cry from its genesis as a nation of ragtag Holocaust refugees. In the few decades after World War II, it has grown to become the Middle East's dominant military power. Some on the left see modern Israel as an expansionist military power bent on imposing Jewish-supremacist rule over conquered territory, favoring Jews and denying rights to native Palestinians.

The Washington Post has described the metamorphosis of the Anti-Defamation League in corresponding terms. Originally, the ADL was a proponent of broad civil rights. It fought for *Brown vs. Board of Education* and at one time devoted most of its published research to exposing fascism, anti-Semitism, and the radical right. Gradually, however, its sole purpose seemed to be to identify any criticism of Israel as anti-Semitism. It was a position that implicitly equated the purported interests of Israel with the interests of American Jews. Per the *Washington Post*:

In 1975, the ADL issued a report entitled 'Target U.S.A: The Arab Propaganda Offensive' that described how mainstream Arab-American groups were allied with non-Arab 'apologists' such as 'some church people, clergy and lay, a number of university-based intellectuals and scholars, plus elements in the liberal community....

Once this broad rationale took hold, the civil rights watchdog increasingly devoted its investigative apparatus to 'counteracting' what it calls 'anti-Israel' sentiment or 'the new antisemitism' in the United States.

In practice, this means the ADL keeps track of politically active Americans or groups that repeatedly criticize Israel or lobby for Palestinian rights.

A major part of the 1993 scandal over the ADL's criminal activity was the investigators' discovery of a large-scale surveillance war on the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC), the most mainstream Arab-American civil rights group of its time.

The ADC was founded in 1980 by former U.S. Senator James Abourezk of South Dakota, and as such it enjoyed a degree of credibility with the Establishment rare for an Arab-American civil rights group. Ironically, the ADC consciously modeled itself on the Anti-Defamation League, and sought to achieve the same degree of respectability and impact within the wider community as that enjoyed by the ADL.

But instead of welcoming the existence of the ADC as a fellow champion of civil liberties, the ADL reacted with a level of paranoid hysteria worthy of J. Edgar Hoover. According to an [affidavit](#) filed by San Francisco Police Inspector Ron Roth, the ADL compiled personal files on some 4,500 members of the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee, roughly 15 percent of the group's total membership at the time.

The ADL did not restrict its harassment of Arab-Americans to surveillance of the ADC. At least one Arab-American activist on whom the ADL kept a secret file, Mohammed Jarad, wound up arrested on a visit to the occupied territories. Jarad was subjected to enhanced interrogation techniques, forced to sign a confession written in Hebrew, and released without charge after six months, and allowed to return home to America. U.S. officials at the time [expressed](#) serious doubts about Jarad's signed confession.

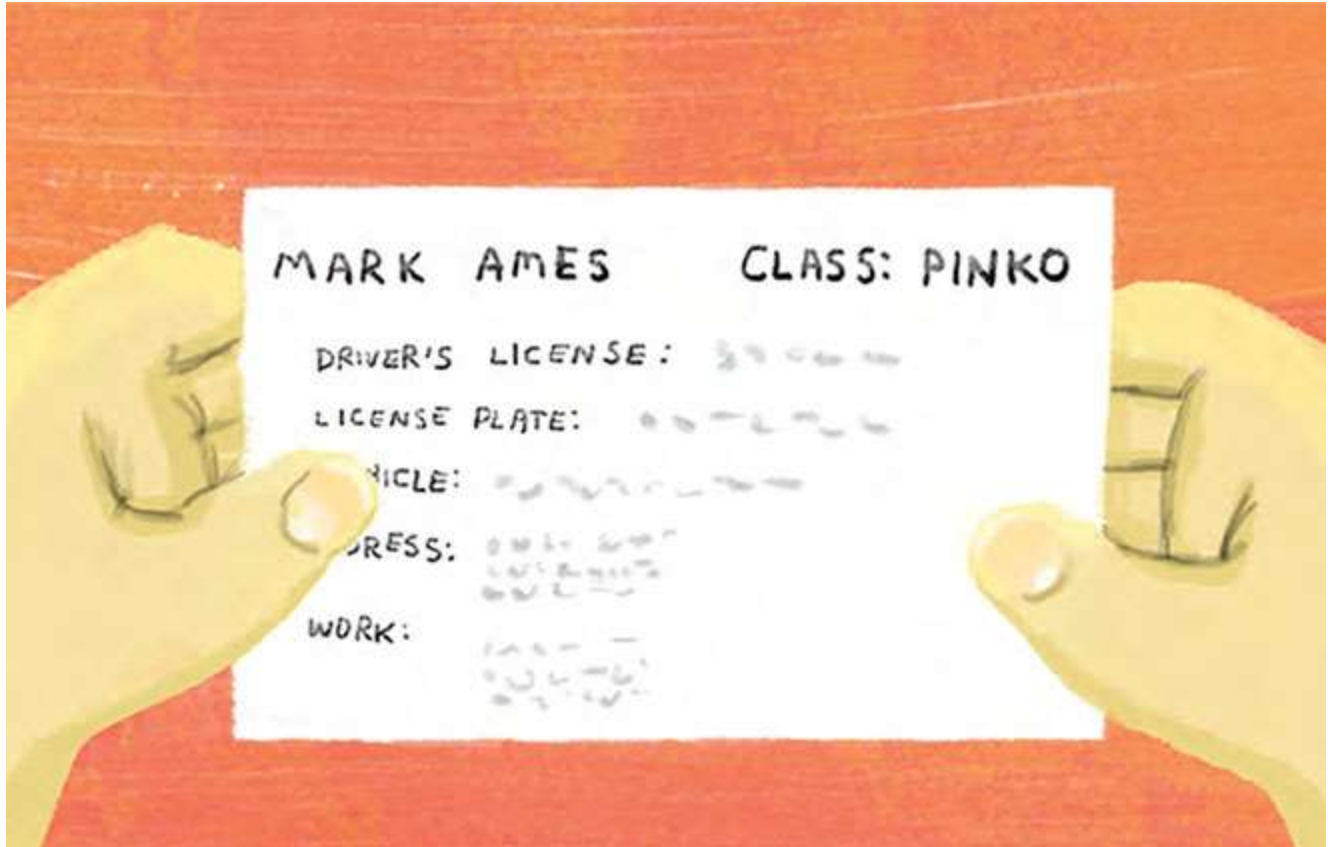
The ADL spy ring also helped trigger the 1987 arrests of eight Los Angeles Muslims—seven Palestinian men and one Kenyan woman—who were falsely accused of supporting terrorism and ordered expelled from the United States. SWAT teams broke into the defendants' homes, detained them without charge or trial, and subjected the group, known as the "Los Angeles Eight," to an ordeal that only ended in 2007, when a Los Angeles judge finally dismissed all charges and denounced the case as "a festering wound on the body of respondents and an embarrassment to the rule of law."

When the Los Angeles Eight were first arrested in 1987, the ADL proudly boasted to reporters of its role in passing intelligence on the group to the authorities. Later, when the case was widely seen as a travesty of justice, the ADL backtracked and claimed they had nothing to do with it.

ADL'S CENTENNIAL YEAR: IMAGINE A WORLD WITHOUT HATE

The theme for our Centennial is Imagine a World Without Hate—a dream we hope to make a reality.

ADL is dedicated to making our country a more inclusive home for all; where being different is not a liability, and diversity is a cherished strength.



Number One Investigator Roy E. Bullock

One of the Jewish civil rights' group's most important and best-protected employees was not a Jew but a native of Indianapolis who looked like a bloated John Wayne Gacy. This strange figure, who coordinated the ADL's activities in San Francisco while posing as an art dealer in the Castro District, was Roy E. Bullock.

As a teenager growing up in the hysteria and paranoia of Senator McCarthy's anti-Communist witch hunts, Bullock dreamed of joining J. Edgar's team as an FBI snitch. Bullock later said he was inspired by his hero Herbert Philbrick, whose bestselling 1952 memoir, [I Led Three Lives: Citizen, 'Communist,' Counterspy](#) was turned into a movie and hit TV series.

Philbrick was one of many FBI snitches and informants who were turned into celebrities during the McCarthy era. These men were Roy Bullock's role models. He wanted to join their ranks, and in 1954, while working as a lowly errand-boy for the Indianapolis Police Department, Bullock's wish came true: The FBI asked Bullock to "volunteer" as an informant spying on university student leftists.

Decades later, Bullock explained to FBI investigators: "I was fascinated with Herbert Philbrick and so I thought I would try to infiltrate the Communist Party. In 1957, I went

to the Sixth World Youth and Student Festival in Moscow with the American delegation. I gave the FBI a full report on it when I returned, along with some photos I took of some Soviet military vehicles.”

In 1960, the Anti-Defamation League made Bullock their full-time undercover employee and moved him out to Orange County, the epicenter of emerging radical right movements like the John Birch Society and the Minutemen. As a codename, the ADL called Bullock “Elmer Fink.” To further cover their tracks, from 1960 through 1992 Bullock’s salary was funneled through a prominent Beverly Hills attorney named Bruce Hochman. A leader in the Jewish community, Hochman was a strange choice for an ADL bagman—he was close to Al Gore and Republican Pete Wilson, and his clients included notorious Nevada casino and underworld figures, including crime boss Meyer Lansky and Mustang Ranch founder-turned-fugitive Joe Conforte. Hochman was also considered one of the top tax attorneys in the country, and he was picked by Senator Wilson to recommend judicial appointments.

In the late 1970s, the ADL moved Bullock north, this time to their office in San Francisco. By placing such a pivotal member in the epicenter of America’s left-wing activism, the ADL demonstrated the same right-ward trend observed at that time in Israel and within America’s pro-Israel advocacy world.

In San Francisco, Bullock was given his own desk and a roster of duties which included “maintaining intelligence files by adding new documents and shredding old files.” For cover, Bullock set up a small art dealership in the Castro District called “East West Traders.”

Bullock reported directly to the ADL’s San Francisco Executive Director Richard Hirschhuat and also to Irwin Suall, the ADL’s chief spymaster in their New York headquarters. A memo written by Suall in 1992, and later discovered by FBI investigators, described Roy Bullock as the ADL’s “number one investigator.” And yet, after the spy scandal broke, the ADL claimed it had only an “informal” relationship with Bullock and neither knew about nor had any responsibility for the spying activities of their “number one investigator.”

Having established himself in San Francisco, Bullock wasted little time infiltrating the Bay Area’s left-wing groups, far-right groups (such as existed), anti-apartheid groups, and peace groups opposed to Reagan’s dirty wars in Central America. Above all, Roy Bullock focused on infiltrating and subverting Arab-American organizations like the ADC and the National Association of Arab-Americans (NAAA).

Albert Mokhiber, who was executive director of the ADC when the scandal broke, remembered Bullock well: “[He was] one of our most vocal members. In fact, we have pictures of him carrying banners in support of Palestinian human rights, and we printed one of them in our most recent newsletter. He portrayed himself as someone sincerely

interested in Arab civil rights and someone dedicated to the principles of our organization, and everyone believed him to be so.”

In addition to infiltrating meetings and building up files on persons of interest, Bullock tried hatching dirty tricks plots to smear the ADC. One tactic Bullock used was to infiltrate neo-Nazi meetings, distribute ADC pamphlets and attempt to recruit neo-Nazis into the ADC.

Dr. Osama Doumani, a former University of California-Berkeley anthropology professor who headed the ADC’s San Francisco office when Bullock infiltrated the group, told *The Washington Post*:

He would come to my office and he would hug me in a comradely fashion and volunteer for work. He wanted to have a presence whenever we had something important.

In 1987, the ADL sent Bullock to Washington, D.C., for the annual gathering of the NAAA, instructing Bullock to find out who the Arab group’s major donors were. Bullock claimed he didn’t succeed in penetrating their financial records, but he was so successful at earning the Arab group’s trust that he was picked to head the NAAA delegation that met privately with Representative Nancy Pelosi in her Capitol Hill office.

Bullock had nothing but contempt for those who trusted him. “I’m one of a kind,” he later [bragged](#) to police investigators. “They live in a dark, restricted world of their own fervent imaginations. You say you agree and they fall all over you. You don’t have to say much.”

In 1985, Alex Odeh, a Christian Palestinian, was murdered in Santa Ana. The crime remains unsolved.

Odeh was the regional executive director of the ADC’s Western region, and one of Senator Abourezk’s favorite lieutenants. Eight years after Odeh was murdered by a bomb planted in his office, his colleagues were shocked by the news that Roy Bullock—who had worked closely with Odeh right up to his murder—had been spying on Odeh on behalf of the ADL all along. Odeh trusted Bullock enough to grant him almost unrestricted access to Odeh’s office in Santa Ana, California, where the deadly bomb was planted.

In the aftermath of Alex Odeh’s murder, the SFPD appointed an intelligence officer to act as liaison to San Francisco’s Arab-American community. A rash of bombings was sweeping the U.S., targeting Arab-Americans and other perceived enemies of Jews.

Dr. Doumani recalled the terror that gripped California’s Arab-American community at that time: “I feared starting my car. I would always wait until it was completely warmed up before I brought my 8-year-old daughter and 6-month-old son out of the house.”

But in spite of the atmosphere of fear, the community found some comfort in the fact that they had their SFPD liaison to protect them.

Tom Gerard: Roy Bullock's Partner-in-Crime

Alex Odeh was murdered in Santa Ana, California, Roy Bullock claimed he was very close with Alex and that he even had access to the office.... Tom Gerard was a bomb expert, and Alex was killed by a bomb. I'll be very honest with you. We've raised these concerns with the FBI.

—Albert Mokhiber, president of the Arab-American Anti Discrimination Committee, May 22, 1993

If Roy Bullock represented the Anti-Defamation League's seedy (and bloated) underbelly, then his partner in criminal espionage, Officer Tom Gerard of the SFPD, represented the Jewish civil rights group's dark side, the ethical wasteland where the ADL now roamed. A pact with Gerard was as close to a pact with the devil as a Jewish human rights group could get.

The partnership between Bullock and Gerard was forged in the ADL's San Francisco office in 1986, when Regional Executive Director Richard Hirschhaut brought Gerard in and introduced him to Bullock. Later, the ADL would try to claim they had absolutely no relationship with Gerard or any knowledge of his and Bullock's illegal spy ring. However, an FBI search uncovered a private memo by Bullock outlining how the ADL arranged Bullock's partnership with the SFPD Intelligence Unit detective—a memo that Bullock later claimed was a "fib."

In another "confidential" memo, the ADL's Richard Hirschhaut boasted about Tom Gerard's effectiveness to chief spymaster Irwin Suall, [noting](#) that the SFPD police mole provided "a significant amount of information" on "the activities of specific Arab organizations and individuals in the Bay Area."

In 1991, the ADL's Washington office even gifted Tom Gerard with an all-expenses-paid junket to Israel to meet with top Israeli military, intelligence and political figures.

"We were the kings of garbage," Gerard [said of his partnership with Roy Bullock](#). "I love garbage. Garbage doesn't lie."

Gerard wasn't joking: Much of their work involved burrowing through other people's trash. An FBI report quoted in the *Los Angeles Times* explained how they spied on one Palestinian group:

Bullock would write reports based on what he found in the trash, and would share the reports with Gerard. Bullock also gave the trash to Gerard for Gerard to examine. Gerard would later return the trash to Bullock.

Bullock was also fond of garbage. During questioning by the SFPD, Bullock said he “couldn’t resist” going through various organizations’ trash. Inspector Roth remarked that Bullock’s attraction to trash “sounds like a cop going by a donut shop.”

Shortly after Bullock and Gerard were introduced at the ADL office, the two men began sharing their intelligence files and breaking privacy laws. Bullock gave Gerard names of groups and individuals that he was spying on for the ADL. Then, Gerard obtained their confidential DMV and police records—including rap sheets, fingerprints, and anything else in intelligence files. Finally, Gerard illegally handed this information to Bullock.

A few years later, in 1990, San Francisco officially disbanded its police intelligence unit and ordered its files destroyed. Instead, Police Detective Tom Gerard handed those files over to Roy Bullock. Illegally stolen police intelligence files that the public assumed had been destroyed were now part of the Anti-Defamation League’s secret files.

Gerard also arranged for Roy Bullock to moonlight as a paid FBI informant. That gave Bullock and Gerard access to FBI assets and classified material.

Shortly after they began working together, Bullock and Gerard were introduced to a South African intelligence agent known mysteriously as “Humphries” and agreed to spy on American anti-apartheid protesters for them.

Spying for a foreign intelligence entity is illegal in the same way that treason is illegal. So it’s hardly surprising that the accused—Roy Bullock, Tom Gerard, the Anti-Defamation League—tried shifting the blame to everyone but themselves, evading questions and changing their stories several times. Roy Bullock initially told FBI interrogators that it was his superiors in the ADL who put him in touch with the South African intelligence agents. Later, he changed his story and blamed Tom Gerard. Gerard naturally blamed Bullock, and the Anti-Defamation League blamed both of them, adding that they’d never met Gerard and barely knew who Bullock was, and took no responsibility for Bullock’s activities.

Ultimately, though, it doesn’t matter who initiated the contact between the South Africans and the ADL spy ring.

For one thing, the Anti-Defamation League had already been spying on American anti-apartheid campaigners, independent of their collaborative work for South African intelligence. Bullock told FBI investigators that he’d been infiltrating and collecting information on the Bay Area anti-apartheid movement for the ADL when he was introduced to the South Africans. Israel and South Africa were partners. Enemies of apartheid were enemies of the Anti-Defamation League, an attitude summed up by ADL national director Nathan Perlmutter’s [description](#) of Nelson Mandela and his African National Congress as “totalitarian, anti-humane, anti-democratic, anti-Israel, and anti-American.”

As far as Bullock was concerned, since he was already spying on local anti-apartheid groups for the ADL, reselling that same material to South African intelligence was just gravy. The South African spooks paid Bullock \$16,000 in cash, in hundred dollar bills stuffed into envelopes.

Bullock never showed anything approaching remorse for collaborating with the white-supremacist regime, nor did he express concern over what the apartheid Gestapo might have done with the names and information they had. He was, however, very concerned with protecting his reputation for honest dealing. When interviewed by investigators, he [emphasized](#) he'd split the South Africans' \$16,000 right down the middle with Gerard: "I may be gay, but I'm a straight arrow," Bullock quipped.

Gurvitz and the Stolen File

It is fitting, or ironic, that the person who finally brought down the ADL spy network was the only Jewish member of the three main players.

David Gurvitz was a law school dropout who joined the ADL's Los Angeles office in 1989 as a "fact-finder." Gurvitz quickly fell in with the ADL's West Coast spymaster, Roy Bullock, as well as Bullock's top asset, SFPD detective Tom Gerard. Unlike his new cohorts, Gurvitz was about as ruthless and street smart as a Mormon Barney Fife.

In the few years he worked for the ADL, Gurvitz was exposed to all sorts of ADL skullduggery, recklessness, violations of civil liberties, and illegal operations. Whatever sort of person Gurvitz had been before, just three years after he took the ADL job, he was a gangster who would literally kill for mo' money.

The chain of events that led to the spy ring's unmasking began in 1992, when the chief "fact-finder" in the ADL's Washington, D.C., office, Mira Boland, put in a request to David Gurvitz's Los Angeles chapter for "research material." Boland and ADL leader Abe Foxman were preparing an article about the Nation of Islam.

It sounds innocent enough, but the research file on Louis Farrakhan and his Nation of Islam's activities was the classified property of the FBI's San Francisco office. A copy of the file had mysteriously made its way from San Francisco—home to Bullock and Gerard—to the desk of their associate Gurvitz. For his part, Gurvitz said that he had found the stolen Farrakhan file in the ADL research library with a note pinned to it from one of his superiors. Thinking that entirely serendipitous, Gurvitz took the file and sent a copy to Mira Boland's office in Washington.

On August 19, 1992, an article co-authored by Mira Boland and Abe Foxman appeared in the Moonie-owned *Washington Times*. It was headlined "Fruit of Islam on US Tab?" The article contained explosive material on the Nation of Islam, including allegations that Libya's leader Muammar Qaddafi funneled money to the Nation of Islam via the scandal-plagued BCCI bank, an alliance between Farrakhan's group and a violent South

Chicago gang that allegedly offered to carry out the assassinations of Americans for Qaddafi, and also threats by the Nation of Islam to dismember FBI agents.

The FBI had already been investigating the files on the Nation of Islam stolen from their San Francisco office. After Foxman and Boland published their FBI-contraband-loaded attack on the Nation of Islam, FBI investigators had an easy time fingering the likely suspects: Roy Bullock, whom the FBI had only recently brought in as a paid informant, and Tom Gerard, the police officer who officially liaised with the FBI branch in San Francisco, and who had introduced Roy Bullock into the FBI's world.

To provide further evidence, the FBI placed taps on Bullock's and Gerard's phones. What was heard on those wiretapped phone calls must have blown the bureau's collective mind. Expecting to find proof of spying in San Francisco, and possibly Los Angeles, the FBI learned that the ADL was running a covert spy network in cities across the country, and that in each spy ring hub, they had local police officers doubling as ADL moles.

As San Francisco Police Inspector Ron Roth concluded in his affidavit summary:

Based on the evidence, exhibits and facts in this affidavit, I believe that Roy Bullock and the ADL had numerous peace officers supplying them with confidential criminal and DMV information ... code named fact finders and field investigators. In Chicago there is an ex-police officer named CHI-3 (there are also references to CHI-1 and CHI-2 who apparently are not policemen. QED.). In St. Louis there is IRONSIDES. In Atlanta there is an Arab speaking man named FLIPPER.

The FBI also learned how casually the ADL spy ring abused the law. They had used Gerard's police access to gain confidential DMV records, and then shared those records not only with the Anti-Defamation League, but also with South African intelligence.

What began as an investigation into stolen classified material was turning into something much more serious: Illegal espionage on behalf of a foreign government, a crime that could be treated as treason.

The FBI wanted to keep the secret wiretaps going as long as possible. But then David Gurvitz got in the way.

Gurvitz and the Murder Plot

Gurvitz's problem was money. In 1992, he was still only earning \$21,000 as a full-time spy for the Anti-Defamation League. Pay was low, and yet Gurvitz's access to police resources (Gurvitz ran three LAPD moles of his own for the ADL) meant he was more powerful than probably anyone he knew. He was living above the law, but not enjoying any of the advantages of that power.

That's when Gurvitz decided he needed to take someone else's job. That someone else was his "fact-finder" counterpart at a rival Nazi-sniffing non-profit, the Simon Wiesenthal Holocaust Center in Los Angeles. Gurvitz learned that their fact-finder was paid substantially more than the ADL paid him. There was only one problem: Someone named Rick Eaton already had that cushy job. And Eaton was—and is—a star researcher.

As FBI wiretaps listened in, Gurvitz plotted with his mentor Bullock on how to remove Eaton. Bullock naturally suggested bringing Tom Gerard into the conversation, and Gerard—illegally—offered up the confidential DMV records on Eaton, which included his car's license plate number and his home address.

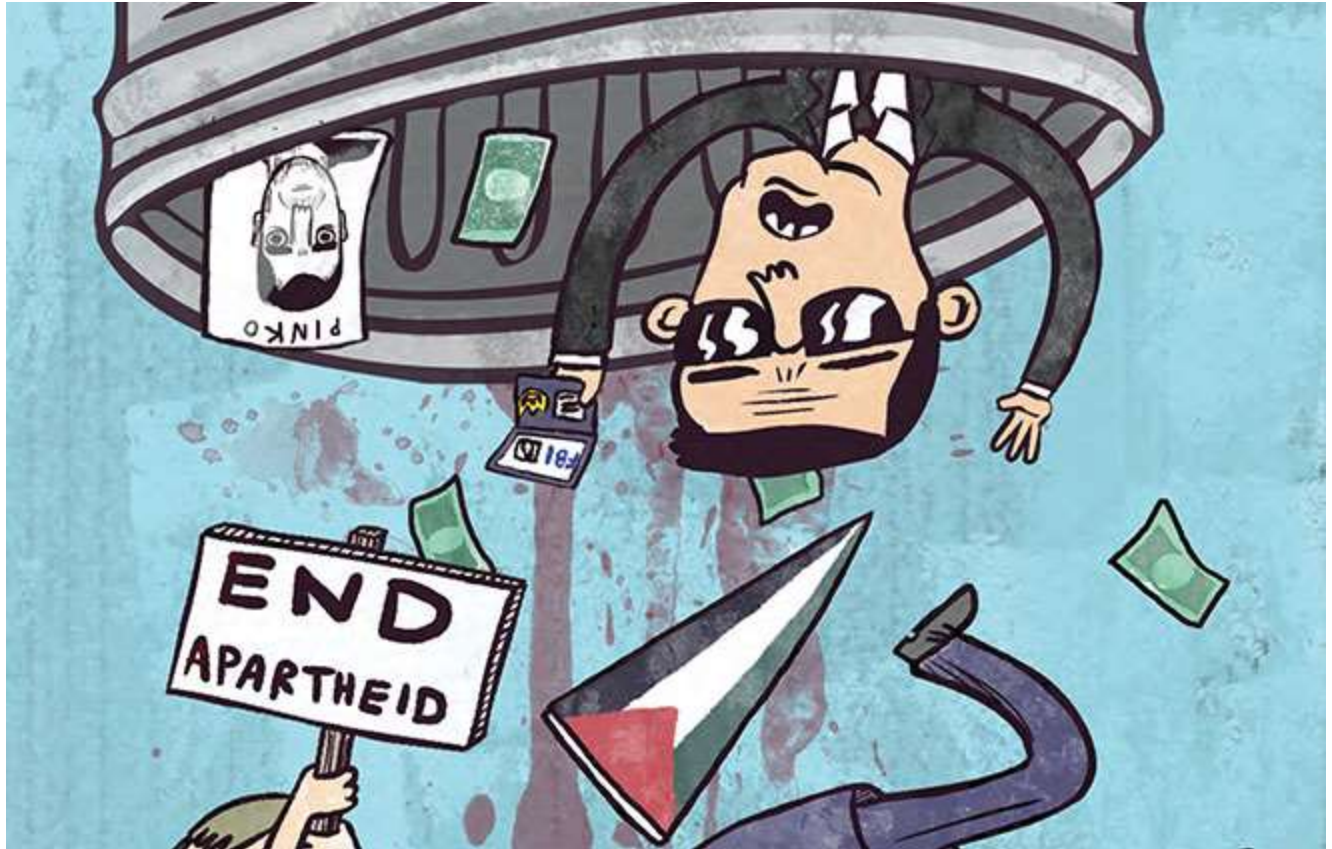
As the FBI wiretappers continued listening in for clues about the ADL's arrangement with South African intelligence, Bullock and Gurvitz talked about how Gurvitz's Wiesenthal Center rival was planning to go undercover and infiltrate a neo-Nazi skinhead group, the White Aryan Resistance. It just so happened that Roy Bullock ran a paid ADL informant inside the White Aryan Resistance, code-named "Scumbag."

That led to a brilliant idea. They decided to use "Scumbag" to rat Rick Eaton out to the skinheads while they were all on some white-power forest retreat. One thing would lead to another and, before you knew it, "Job vacancy: fact-finder urgently needed at the Simon Wiesenthal Holocaust Center." If the Wiesenthal researcher somehow slipped away from the skinheads alive, no problem. Thanks to Tom Gerard's DMV records, the skinheads would know where to find Eaton.

That really was the plan: They would use neo-Nazis to incapacitate (or kill) a rival anti-Nazi researcher and then steal that researcher's job.

FBI snoops didn't want a murder on their hands, so they cut their secret investigation into the spy ring short in order to warn Eaton that his life was in danger and that he should call off his plans to go undercover.

With that, Gurvitz became the first casualty—perhaps the only real casualty—of the investigation into the ADL spy ring. He was summarily fired from the ADL's office in Los Angeles, and became a highly cooperative "person of interest" in the ensuing FBI and police investigation.



The Investigation

During his first interrogation by the FBI, Tom Gerard was threatened with a “lifestyle change”—which is to say, prison—if he didn’t cooperate with the investigation. Gerard didn’t stick around for a second interrogation.

In November 1992, Gerard and his wife slipped away on a Philippines Airlines flight to Palawan Island. The Philippines had no extradition treaty with the United States and so, for six months, Gerard waited, taunting investigators while attempting to negotiate his safe return. It was during that period that he gave an interview to the *Los Angeles Times*, confessing his love of “garbage” and also hinting at his ability to embarrass the CIA if he was charged over the ADL spy ring:

Among the many passports and other fake identity papers that he used as an undercover CIA agent from 1982 through 1985 were five documents identifying him as Thomas P. Clouseau—as in Inspector Clouseau, the bumbling French detective in the Pink Panther films.

“I’m still surprised Central Cover staff at the agency let that one slip by,” Gerard said with a laugh. “A little joke on the agency.”

But the 50-year-old former spy and San Francisco police inspector is no longer playing games. He says he will blow the whistle on what he calls illegal CIA support of Central American death squads if he is indicted and tried for his suspected role in a growing California-based scandal over a nationwide intelligence network run largely on behalf of the Anti-Defamation League.

While Gerard cooled his heels in the Philippines waiting for the CIA to muscle the FBI into dropping their investigation, the ADL protected the real criminal operator at the center of the spy ring. Roy Bullock knew where all the skeletons were buried. After all, as Irwin Suall wrote in a 1992 memo, he was the League's "number one investigator."

In the spring of 1993, San Francisco authorities ramped up their investigation after raiding the ADL's offices and carting out some 10 full boxes of files. Three quarters of the material in those boxes consisted of confidential material illegally obtained. Contraband. The San Francisco District Attorney's office was talking fines that would run in the millions, and felony charges that could put Anti-Defamation League spies behind bars for years.

Apparently, though, the political establishment was in no mood to completely destroy the Anti-Defamation League. The District Attorney [made a deal with the ADL](#) to drop their action against Gerard if the ADL "agreed to a permanent injunction prohibiting ADL and Bullock from obtaining documents or other information they know could not legally be disclosed to them."

On the basis of this settlement, Abe Foxman and the ADL team victoriously declared that the entire case against them had been an anti-Semitic hoax, and anyone who had suggested otherwise—for example, anyone who quoted any of the scores of media reports in the *Los Angeles Times*, *Chronicle*, *ABC News*, *Washington Post*, and elsewhere—was a liar, a "conspiracy theorist," and "anti-Semitic."

"[This] confirms our consistent position that the ADL has engaged in no misconduct of any kind," Abe Foxman and [ADL Director] Melvin Salberg said in a prepared statement.

Roy Bullock was allowed to keep his job with the ADL.

To foil any future criminal or civil action—including a pending class-action suit by victims of the spy scandal—the ADL petitioned a judge to recognize Bullock and the other spies as "journalists," protected by First Amendment. As journalists, they would not be legally obliged to hand over most of the documents that victims' lawyers would need for discovery in order to prove their case.

By the end of 1993, the district attorney's case against Gerard had collapsed. The FBI had inexplicably refused to cooperate with the prosecution, and declined to share all the damning evidence it had collected. The police officer who illegally passed confidential names of thousands of Americans on to South African intelligence got off with a single

misdemeanor charge, for which he was sentenced to 45 days “sheriff’s work detail” and three years’ probation. He is now rumored to be back living in the Philippines.

The head of the San Francisco office, Richard Hirschhaut, dodged a bullet too. The FBI discovered a trove of memos between Hirschhaut and Irwin Suall bragging about Tom Gerard passing on whole dolly-loads of files on Arab-Americans. Hirschhaut slipped a few times when testifying, admitting for instance that the majority of what the ADL does is track and attack critics of Israel, rather than what the ADL has always said its mission is: “Fight all forms of bigotry, defend democratic ideals, protect civil rights for all.”

In any event, Richard Hirschhaut is doing fine today. Having weathered the lawsuits that went nowhere, he now runs the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center in Skokie.

Despite the California Appeals Court agreeing that the ADL was entitled to many of the same protections as journalists, the class-action lawsuit by its victims continued until 1999 when it was settled by the ADL agreeing to pay \$175,000 of the plaintiffs’ court costs and a further \$25,000 to improve relations between the Jewish, Arab, and African-American communities. The final settlement came in 2002, but ADL still refused to guarantee it wouldn’t continue trying to gather information on these groups.

Meaning

In 1993, the fact that the ADL had spied on me for the most evil regime since the Nazis was hard to absorb.

I was in no condition to see that spy scandal for what it was: raw, unvarnished Israel-advocacy politics—an early preview of the sort of cynicism, paranoia and right-wing extremism we’ve come to expect from pro-Israel groups. When Israel took the occupied territories in 1967 and imposed Jewish-supremacist rule over the native Arab majority, that was it. Israel, Zionists, and their supporters crossed over to the dark side. Getting that letter about the ADL spying on me should have opened my eyes to Greater Israel’s ugly hard-right political logic, but I took it personally, not politically. “Why me, Israel? WHY ME?”

Others got the message far earlier. Investigative researcher and reporter Chip Berlet, whose research into right-wing groups has dovetailed with the ADL’s, recalled an incident in the mid-1980s that brought home to him the ADL’s right-ward turn. It was an incident that left even Berlet, one of the greatest investigative reporters of the past few decades, deeply traumatized.

As the [Village Voice described it](#) in 1993, Bertlet and his research partner went to the ADL’s headquarters in Manhattan to meet the ADL’s legendary “fact-finder” and chief

spymaster, Irwin Suall, so that they could share their research on anti-Semitic extremist Lyndon LaRouche, and compare notes.

Berlet naturally expected a friendly and constructive meeting with Suall. Instead, what happened next shocked Berlet and his research partner:

Suall leans back in his chair and basically runs down a dossier on each of us: about what our political activities are, who we work with, what organizations we belong to. Obviously, he was just trying to blow us away and he succeeds admirably. We were just sitting there with our mouths open feeling very uncomfortable.

And then he leans forward and says, "The right-wing isn't the problem. The left-wing is the problem. The Soviet Union is the biggest problem in the world for Jews. It's the American left that is the biggest threat to American Jews. You're on the wrong track. You're part of the problem."

This post originally appeared on NSFWCORP.



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