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When Intelligence is Alleged to be Bogus: An Israeli Example

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Abstract. This article highlights a series of hypotheses that may merit analysis when intelligence provided by one's case officer is alleged to be bogus. It then describes a congruence in analyzing intelligence whether or not there are such allegations.

According to the The New York Times and the Jerusalem Post, a Mossad case officer has been alleged to have been providing bogus intelligence reports to his superiors concerning Syrian activities of Israeli security import. To comprehensively evaluate the allegation, one might assess the validity of a number of hypotheses. A few follow: (1) The officer's reports were inaccurate, and the officer believed they were accurate and developed them through appropriate intelligence procedures. (2) The officer's reports were inaccurate, and the officer believed they were accurate solely based on what must be true according to that officer's ideology. (3) The officer's reports were inaccurate, and the officer was being controlled by Syrian intelligence, that of some other foreign power, or that of some internal Israeli political entity. (4) The officer's reports were inaccurate, and the officer believed they were accurate while experiencing cognitive, personality, motivational, or behavioral dysfunctions. (5) The officer's reports were inaccurate and were or are part of some Israeli disinformation plan. (6) The officer's reports were accurate, and the officer was actually being controlled by Syrian intelligence, that of some other foreign power, or that of some internal Israeli political entity. (7) The officer's reports were accurate, and the reports are being alleged to be inaccurate in a turf battle among Israeli intelligence agencies. (8) The officer's reports were accurate and the reports are being alleged to be inaccurate in an Israeli disinformation plan.

There are further hypotheses involving combinations of the above and involving the notion that the individual allegedly involved--Yehuda Gil-fabricated reports dependent or independent of Issues of accuracy. Perhaps all hypotheses could be supported by at least some accurate information--as with the analysis of any hypothesis. In fact, there often is an isomorphic parallelism between the individual, group, organizational, and other conflicts inherent to evaluating allegations that one's case officer has been passing bogus information and to evaluating any intelligence hypothesis from a case officer as above suspicion as Caesar's wife must be. So, too, the hypothesis that one's case officer might be passing bogus reports should always be part of report analysis. Everything can be supported, everything can be suspect, yet--in contrast to the propositions of postmodernists--not everything can be equally right or wrong. Whether through the Habermas notion of the ideal speech situation or the hermeneutic notion of the ongoing negotiation of cultural meanings, a right and wrong can be derived even if with this derivation comes no absolute certainty. (See Brown, A.S., & Nix, L.A. (1996). Turning lies into truth: Referential validation of falsehoods. Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, & Cognition, 22, 1088-1100; Faimberg, H. (1995). Misunderstanding and psychic truths. International Journal of Psychoanalysis, 76, 9-13; Gil affair playing well in Damascus. (December 8, 1997). Jerusalem Post, http://www.jpost.com; Gil's attorney: My client went bad upon retirement. (December 8, 1997). Jerusalem Post, http://www.jpost.com; Habermas, J. (1987). The theory of communicative action (Vol. II). Boston: Beacon; Markham, M.R. (1995). Truth, philosophy, and behavioral science: A reply to Hocutt. Behaviour and Philosophy, 23, 73-77; Mossad head Yatom credited for rooting out Gil. (December 8, 1997). Jerusalem Post, http://www.jpost.com; Schmemann, S. (December 7, 1997). Israeli intelligence

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received bogus reports, study says. The New York Times, p. 4; Warnke, G. (1987). Gadamer: Hermeneutics, tradition, and reason. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.) (Keywords: Analysis, Intelligence, Truth.)

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