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## Is there a western conspiracy to protect Israeli agents?

Linda S. Heard  
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Imagine that you could fraudulently obtain a German travel document to be used by assassins, utilising the name and personal details of a still-living individual to do so, and even if you were caught, arrested and extradited to Germany for trial, you would be allowed to return to your home country. It's possible if you happen to be an Israeli. Given that Germany is known for its strict adherence to rules and laws, this really is mind-boggling. I'm referring to the alleged Mossad agent Uri Brodsky, who is believed to have illegally obtained a German passport that was used to enter Dubai by one of Israel's gang of assassins behind the murder of Hamas commander Mahmoud Al Mabhouh. Brodsky was arrested in Warsaw Airport in June; not for spying or conspiracy to murder but for the lesser crime of illegally procuring a passport. On August 12, he was extradited from Poland to Germany where a German judge happily released him on bail and told him there was no bar to his return to Israel provided he returns in the event he is sentenced to prison. However, according to the Israeli daily Haaretz, Israel is likely to have done a deal with the German authorities whereby Brodsky will probably get away with a fine. There's a word that springs to mind: conspiracy. It seems that Poland, Germany and Israel have been in cahoots to spring this unsavoury individual who goes under several aliases to save Tel Aviv from embarrassment. What other explanation can there be when there is little doubt that Brodsky is linked however tenuously to a pre-planned and ruthless murder? Their actions have made a mockery of the concept of justice and the rule of law. Brodsky should have been handed over to Interpol and interrogated or sent to Dubai for questioning. Dubai Police have spent an inordinate amount of man hours on this case and have used every kind of cutting-edge forensics and technology in an attempt to crack it.

Yet, the Polish and German authorities didn't even have the courtesy to allow Dubai's intelligence agents to speak with the only person in custody who potentially holds the key to the truth. If the shoe had been on the other foot, and foreign agents had penetrated Germany with murder on their mind, there would have been an outcry had Dubai patted a possible killer on the back and sent him back home to mama. While it's true that a co-founder of Hamas would be viewed by most European capitals as a persona non grata and there were no tears shed in Poland or Germany following Al Mabhouh's demise, that is not the point. Neither European nor international law blesses extrajudicial assassinations — irrespective of the victim in question. As despicable as the inaction of Poland and Germany to aid Dubai in solving this crime is, it is hardly surprising. It appears that Arabs are fair game in some European countries where for decades the Mossad has been given a virtual carte blanche to target Israel's enemies. At least six Arab men have been murdered by Israeli agents in France over the past 28 years, including Palestine Liberation Organisation leaders Zuhair Mohsin and Atef Bseiso, as well as the Egyptian nuclear scientist Yahia Al Meshad, who was found in a Paris hotel room with his throat slashed. Several Palestinians have been killed in Greece, Cyprus and Malta while a Moroccan waiter was mistakenly killed by Mossad agents in Norway while out walking with his pregnant wife. Yet Israelis with a government licence to kill get away with murder and abductions time and time again. Not so the Russians. When former KGB officer Alexander Litvinenko was poisoned with radioactive polonium-210 whilst in London, Britain demanded the extradition of chief suspect Andrey Lugovoy from Moscow. The refusal of the Russians to comply caused a serious diplomatic rift and cooling of British-Russian relations. Another country that conspires with Israel to protect its spies is, of course, the US. When cells of Russian spooks were recently caught in suburban America living under fake aliases, they were arrested before being swapped for agents held in Russian jails for spying for Washington. But it's altogether another story when it comes to Israeli agents spying on the US. In 2004, Jane's Intelligence reported that Israeli intelligence has been "spying on the US and running clandestine operations since Israel was established". When Israelis are caught in the act, such as the Israeli 'art students' who were arrested prior to the 9/11 attacks or the five Israeli 'removal men' who were seen dancing as they videotaped planes flying into the World Trade Centre twin towers, they are packed off to Israel. Even the Jewish weekly The Forward confirmed that at least two of the men were working for the Mossad. Former CIA counterterrorism officer Philip Giraldi maintains his former colleagues were very concerned about Israeli espionage against the US but they knew they wouldn't get promoted if they spoke out. He explains why the US government is laissez-faire when it comes to Israeli moles. "Israel has a privileged position and that's the way things are. It's crazy. And everyone knows it's crazy." Crazy maybe, but a far more appropriate word to describe a culture that massages one country's spies and assassins is 'sick'. Gulf News