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Sun Vanunu and Pollard: Time for Compassion and Common Sense

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Written by [Eileen Fleming](#)

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by Eileen Fleming

Information Pollard sold a quarter of a century ago is old news now, as is everything Vanunu knew about Israel's Dimona plant.

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Jonathan Jay Pollard was born in 1954 in Texas and grew up in an affluent family in Indiana. Until 1998 Israel publicly denied that Pollard was an Israeli spy, although it granted him citizenship in 1995.

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Last week the relentless campaign to release Pollard was reignited with a letter circulated by Rep. Barney Frank and signed by more than 30 Democratic members of the U.S House of Representatives calling on President Barack Obama to grant clemency to the confessed spy. This was topped off by Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu also requesting Obama release Pollard, who was arrested a quarter century ago on the steps of an Israeli embassy while spying for Israel.

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The letter from congress was written in coordination with the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, National Council of Young Israel, B'nai B'rith International, the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, the Zionist Organization of America, Agudath Israel, and former presidential candidate Gary Bauer, who is a fundamentalist Christian Zionist. They wrote:

"It is indisputable in our view that the nearly twenty-five years that Mr. Pollard has served stands as a sufficient time from the standpoint of either punishment or deterrence. In summary, we see clemency for Mr. Pollard as an act of compassion justified by the way others have been treated by our justice system. We urge you to use the clemency power in this case."

According to Ian Williams' article in the July/Aug. 1993 Washington Report "although Pollard insists he was motivated by concern for Israeli security, he was paid (and is still being paid) a handsome salary by the Israeli government. His Israeli handlers also provided gifts and trips to Europe for Pollard and his wife, Anne. The severity of Pollard's sentence was based on secret testimony by [then-Defense Secretary] Caspar Weinberger, who is on record as saying that Pollard was lucky--he should have received three life sentences. Pollard provided Israeli intelligence with more than 1,000 classified U.S. documents, some consisting of hundreds of pages, comprising overall some 360 cubic feet of paper.

"According to American investigative reporter Seymour Hersh, Pollard sold information on nuclear targets in the Soviet Union to Israel. U.S. defense sources suggest that what caused the most bitter anger against Pollard in the Pentagon and throughout the American intelligence community was the fact that the information compromised human agents in the Soviet Union and elsewhere. U.S. intelligence sources have concluded that the Israeli government bartered this information to the Soviet Union." [1]

What ever information Pollard sold a quarter of a century ago is old news now, as is everything Vanunu knew about Israel's Dimona plant where he worked the night shift as a lowly technician twenty-four years ago.

In April 1999, thirty-six members of the House of Representatives signed a letter calling for Vanunu's release from prison because they believed "we have a duty to stand up for men and women like Mordechai Vanunu who dare to articulate a brighter vision for humanity."

President Clinton responded with a public statement expressing concern for Vanunu and the need for Israel and other non-parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty to adhere to it and accept IAEA safeguards.

During Vanunu's closed door trial, Defense witness and the Sunday Times journalist who broke Vanunu's story, Peter Hounam, testified that "We did not pay him money, but only covered his expenses... Money did not motivate him."

Sunday Times journalist Wendy Robbins wrote, "Mordechai never asked for nor received a single penny for his information... he blurted out the whole tale without first setting out any financial preconditions. Mordechai got nothing out of the whole episode. He never `sold' Israel's secrets -- he told them."

Vanunu told me, "All the secrets I had were published in 1989 in an important book, by [Nuclear Physicist] Frank Barnaby, *The Invisible Bomb: Nuclear Arms Race in the Middle East*."

Barnaby testified, "I found Vanunu very straightforward about his motives for violating Israel's secrecy laws he explained to me that he believed that both the Israeli and the world public had the right to know about the information he passed on. He seemed to me to be acting ideologically."

"Israel's political leaders have, he said, consistently lied about Israel's nuclear-weapons programme and he found this unacceptable in a democracy. The knowledge that Vanunu had about Israel's nuclear weapons, about the operations at Dimona, and about security at Dimona could not be of any use to anyone today. He left Dimona in October 1985." [2]

Senior Fellow at the Cato Institute, Doug Bandow wrote in, [Trade Mordechai Vanunu for Jonathan Pollard](#) that Vanunu "immigrated to Australia, converted to Christianity, and traveled to Great Britain after meeting a journalist for the Sunday Times who was interested in his story. Vanunu's account made the paper's front page, but a Mossad agent convinced him to join her in Rome, from which he was kidnapped, drugged, and returned to Israel. Shimon Peres, usually seen as a liberal peacenik, apparently insisted on Vanunu's seizure."

Before quitting the Dimona, Vanunu shot 56 photos in top-secret locations and also exposed how lax SECURITY was, for he obtained the keys to the top-secret locations when a supervisor carelessly left them in the shower room.

Vanunu's photos and testimony proved to nuclear physicists that Israel had become a major nuclear power by stockpiling between 100 and 200 atomic bombs within the seven underground levels where plutonium production, and secret nuclear weapons were assembled without any knowledge, debate or authorization from its own citizens. Israel has yet to allow International Inspectors into the aged Dimona plant, which is leaking and endangering the health of its own citizens.

In 1963, when Vanunu was nine years old the Zionists came to his home town of Marrakesh and convinced his Orthodox father to abandon his general store and pack up the first seven of his eleven children for the land of milk and honey. Instead, the Vanunu's were banished to the desert of Beesheva, an ethnically cleansed Palestinian village.

A few months later, Shimon Peres, then Israel's Deputy Minister of Defense met with President John Kennedy, inside the White House.

Kennedy told Peres, "You know that we follow very closely the discovery of any nuclear development in the region. This could create a very dangerous situation. For this reason we monitor your nuclear effort. What could you tell me about this?"

Peres replied, "I can tell you most clearly that we will not introduce nuclear weapons to the region, and certainly we will not be the first."

By September of 1986, Peres was convulsing over Vanunu, who had been employed as a lowly tech in his progeny; Israel's clandestine underground nuclear weapons centre in the Negev called the Dimona.

Peres ordered the Mossad, to "Bring the son of a bitch back here."

Peres ordered Vanunu's kidnapping that included a clubbing, drugging and being flung upon an Israeli cargo boat back to Israel for a closed-door trial, 18 years in jail, six years under 24/7 surveillance and another 78 days in solitary confinement that began 23 May 2010.

On 11 October 2010, Israel denied Vanunu's appeal to leave the state. Also in October, it was announced that Vanunu was awarded the 2010 Carl-von-Ossietzky-Medal which he is to be awarded in Berlin on 12 December 2010.

Within days of the announcement of a record 205 nominations for 2009's Nobel Peace Prize, [one of several prizes endowed by Swedish industrialist and dynamite inventor Alfred Nobel] Vanunu declined that honor in a letter to the Nobel Peace Prize Committee in Oslo:

"I am asking the committee to remove my name from the nominations...I cannot be part of a list of laureates that includes Simon Peres...Peres established and developed the atomic weapon program in Dimona in Israel...Peres was the man who ordered [my] kidnapping, he continues to oppose my freedom and release. WHAT I WANT IS FREEDOM AND ONLY FREEDOM. FREEDOM AND ONLY FREEDOM I NEED NOW."

On 22 November 2010, I snail mailed the following and enclosed copies of [BEYOND NUCLEAR: Mordechai Vanunu's FREEDOM of SPEECH Trial and My Life as a Muckraker: 2005-2010](#) and the LETTER to Netanyahu, Barak, Yishai from the International League for Human Rights on the official letterhead: [Read more...](#)

Dear President Obama, Vice President Biden, Secretary of State Clinton,

"As the only nuclear power to have used a nuclear weapon, the United States has a moral responsibility to act...When we fail to pursue peace, then it stays forever beyond our grasp. We know the path when we choose fear over hope. To denounce or shrug off a call for cooperation is an easy but also cowardly thing to do. That's how wars begin. That's where human progress ends...the voices of peace and progress must be raised together...Human destiny will be what we make of it...Words must mean something."- President Obama, Prague, April 5, 2009.

As a child of the Cold War, I share the Dream of multitudes; who share the Dream Vanunu dreamt in 1985-of a Nuclear Free World.

Please help FREE VANUNU NOW so that he can personally receive the Carl Von Ossietzky Medal in Berlin on 12 December 2010

Eileen Fleming,
Founder of [WeAreWideAwake.org](#)
Staff Member of [Salem-news.com](#)
A Feature Correspondent for [Arabisto.com](#)

Producer "30 Minutes with Vanunu" and "13 Minutes with Vanunu"
Author of "Keep Hope Alive" and "Memoirs of a Nice Irish American 'Girl's' Life in Occupied Territory" and [BEYOND NUCLEAR: Mordechai Vanunu's FREEDOM of SPEECH Trial and My Life as a Muckraker: 2005-2010](#)

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Only in Solidarity do "we have it in our power to begin the world again."-Tom Paine

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