

# Graffiti for intellectuals



SIMON SAYS

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By Si Frumkin

## THE SECRET LEICA FREEDOM TRAIN

**My father** loved his Leica camera. Actually it wasn't a real, genuine, made in Germany Leica proudly manufactured in Germany by the Leitz A.G. optical giant. It was a replica, a knock-off made in the Soviet Union by the Dzerzhinsky Optical Works that was a wholly owned subsidiary of the NKVD – the initials of the Soviet Ministry of Interior but known mostly for managing the secret police. Instead of a proud inscription “Leica” in flowing graceful script, it was engraved, in Russian, with “NKVD” and the initials “FED” that stood for Felix E. Dzerzhinsky - the founder of the secret police. But other than that it was something to cherish and be proud of – there just weren't all that many Leicas – real or imitations - in pre-war Lithuania

Later, in the ghetto, father traded the Leica for food but I remembered it as a miraculous instrument. I saw one like it many years later, on a shelf of used cameras, in a photo shop in Los Angeles – it was just as I remembered, the Russian NKVD and Dzerzhinsky engraved on it. But by then I had a good Japanese camera and the memory of my fathers' Leica remained just that – a memory.



I have recently learned something about Leicas that I didn't know and about the remarkable man who made them. His name was Ernst Leitz II. He was the head of E. Leitz A.G., designer and manufacturer of Germany's most famous camera whose logo was recognizable around the world. It wasn't the first 35mm camera but it certainly was the best known and most popular. All metal body, magnificent optics, built in focusing, variable shutter speed – it was a far cry from the boxy Kodaks and their kin; the Leicas were coveted by professionals and amateurs alike. They were the “camera of the 1930s”.

Ernst Leitz was best known for the Leica. There is something else, however, about him than

should be known: he and his family-owned firm, at considerable personal risk, saved hundreds, maybe thousands, of Jews!

Leitz AG was founded in the German city of Wetzlar in 1869. Its skilled employees – many of them Jews – worked for a concerned and enlightened employer: they had pensions, health

of Germany. Employees, retailers, even friends of the family were assigned to France, Britain, Hong Kong and the U.S. By 1938, after the violence of *Kristallnacht*, Jewish life became even more precarious and groups of “Leitz” Jews arrived in New York weekly. They were found jobs by executives of the Leitz Inc. in Manhattan and were paid by Leitz until they became

persecuted for having tried to improve the living conditions of 700-800 Ukrainian slave laborers who had been assigned to work for Leitz.



Oscar Leitz II

After the war, Elsie Leitz was honored for her life-saving efforts by a number of European humanitarian and governmental organizations. Little was said about the rest of her family, in particular her father. Ernst Leitz, the steel-eyed Protestant patriarch, insisted on having no publicity for his family's good deeds. The story came to light only recently, after the last member of the Leitz family had passed away.



Illustration from Soviet magazine (*Sovietskoye Foto*, May 1934) showing the advantages of a compact camera over the conventional bulky camera.

care, sick leave, paid vacations perks that were unheard of at the time.

By the time Hitler came to power in 1933 Leitz A.G. had grown to a giant enterprise with its precision optical products distributed around the world. As anti-Jewish policies were adopted and carried out by the nazis, Jewish employees began to ask their Christian boss, Ernst Leitz, for help to leave Germany.

Leitz responded by quietly forming what became known as the “Leica Freedom Train”. It was a covert program to give Jewish employees a chance to leave under the guise of being assigned to Leica's offices outside

self-sufficient. Of course, there were problems. A top executive, Alfred Turk, was jailed for working to save Jews and it took a very large bribe to have him released.

While Ernst Leitz himself wasn't arrested – his corporation was too important an earner of foreign currency and a supplier of optical equipment to the German army – his daughter, Elsie Kuhn-Leitz, was arrested by the Gestapo at the Swiss border after helping Jewish women cross into Switzerland. Later, in the 1940s she was

A book, “The Greatest Invention of the Leitz Family: The Leica Freedom Train” by Farnk Dabba Smith, a California-born rabbi who currently lives in England, was recently published. It may be ordered (\$5.00 plus postage) from the American Photographic Society, 1150 Ave. of the Americas, New York 10036. ☆



FED—the Soviet Leica

# FOR YOUR OSCAR CONSIDERATION

By Calev ben-David, J'lem. Post, March 3-9, 2006

**BEST PICTURE:** Indiana Jones and the Temple Mount of Doom (Produced and directed by Steven Spielberg) - Though at first Spielberg seemed to be playing it safe by returning to the popular Indiana Jones adventure series, this follow-up project to the controversial Munich proves to be an equally timely and provocative film. The story carries the swashbuckling archeologist into the present day, with Harrison Ford playing an aging Indy called out of retirement when the lost Ark of the Covenant he discovered in Raiders suddenly resurfaces in Jerusalem.

After arriving in Israel, Indy learns that the Ark is being used by a scheming Mossad agent (Geoffrey Rush, reprising his Munich role) to incite far-right Jewish extremists in a plot to blow up the mosques on the Temple Mount and spark a new Israeli-Arab War. After discovering archeological evidence that the Palestinians really are descended from the ancient Canaanites, Indy teams up with a beautiful Hamas leader (Salma Hayek, projecting plenty of sex appeal even under a chador) to thwart the Mossad plan.

"I think of this film as another prayer for peace," comments Spielberg, "albeit one with all the action, excitement, romance, occult elements, and even the odd Nazi or two, that we've come to expect from an Indiana Jones adventure."

**BEST DIRECTOR:** Hany Abu-Assad for Die Hard 4: Die Hard for Jihad - When the Palestinian director of Paradise Now agreed to make his Hollywood film debut with the latest installment of the Die Hard series, many were quick to charge him with selling out. But Abu-Assad uses the opportunity to brilliantly subvert the traditional Hollywood action thriller, bringing an entirely new perspective to a tired genre.

As the film begins, we learn that Said, the Palestinian protagonist of Paradise Now, has miraculously survived his suicide bombing attempt in Tel Aviv and emigrated to Detroit to begin a new life in America. Though at first Said forgoes activism in his new home, after watching a TV broadcast of Da Ali G. Show that he considers an unacceptable insult to Islam, he decides the only appropriate and just response is to blow himself up in Pontiac Stadium during

a Detroit Lions football game.

Standing in his way though is fanatical police detective. John McClane, played once again by Bruce Willis, this time in a career-rejuvenating performance that brings out all of the latent imperialist - Zionist brutality inherent in the McClane character. Abu-Assad's superb cinematic skills will put audiences on the edge of their seats and have them standing and cheering on Said's explosive finish, as the plucky suicide bomber overcomes the evil McClane and other insurmountable odds to see that Islamic justice is done.

## **BEST ACTRESS:**

Charlize Theron, for So Su-ha! - Proving once again she is far more than just a pretty face and great body, actress Charlize Theron pulls off another astonishing chameleon act, gaining 30 pounds, wearing a false nose and learning fluent Arabic, to play Suha Arafat in this charming remake of the classic romance/thriller Charade.

Suha, a recently widowed woman living the good life in Paris, suddenly finds herself pursued by an array of motley characters convinced she knows the whereabouts of some \$9 billion in foreign aid money to the Palestinian Authority that went missing in foreign bank accounts over the years.

Soon after, a mysterious hand-some stranger (George Clooney, channeling Cary Grant) pops up offering to protect Suha and help her recover the missing cash. As romance between them blooms, she starts to wonder if he is a CIA agent, a Mossad operative, a Fatah militant, or her knight in shining armor. The high-light of this delightful Parisian romp is undoubtedly Theron's astonishing embodiment of the real-life widow of the Rais; "She's more Suha than Suha!" declared an astonished Abu Mazen after seeing the film.

**BEST FOREIGN FILM:** Meta Enta Kafir

Shirrir (from The Islamic Republic of Tora-Bora) - Near-unanimous critical acclaim greeted this first film produced in this semi-autonomous region on the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan, and directed by Mustafa al-Hamzi-Hindi, whose only previous work behind the camera was a series of short videos starring Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri.

Released by Miramax in the US under the English title Tender Strands of Dawn (although the original Arabic title translates roughly as "Die you evil infidel"), this is a sensitive, moving examination of the life of Muhammad, a veteran Taliban fighter-turned-farmer now simply trying to raise his family in peace.

After spotting NATO fighter planes flying overhead, Muhammad decides he has no choice but to leave his quiet life behind, kidnap the first Western journalist he can find, and exact a just retribution. When CNN anchor Anderson Cooper falls into Muhammad's hands, an unexpectedly heart-warming relationship develops between them, until it comes to an abrupt end soon after Cooper confesses his Jewish roots in front of the video camera.

Called by The Guardian "an insightful and delicate examination of East-West cultural cross-currents that cuts right to the bone," this film has already garnered several international awards, including the "Golden Scimitar Award" at the Teheran Film Festival.

**BEST SONG:** "Eiladi, My Lady" (Love theme from So Su-ha!): Words and music - Ibrahim Hefeth Touqan, Muhammad Salim Flayfel and Lionel Richie.

This clever new arrangement combining the Palestinian national anthem "Eiladi, Eiladi" together with the pop-classic "Three Times A Lady" and sung with passion by Celine Dion, not only proved the perfect love theme for So Su-ha!, but scaled the pop charts for weeks:

"There's nothing to keep us apart!

My country, my country, my nation of eternity, I swear under the shade of the flag, I will live as a fighter, I will strive as a fighter, I will die as a fighter, until I come back!

Palestine is my home, Palestine is my fire, Palestine is my revenge! Yes, you're once, twice, three times my country! And I love you." \*



# WHO REALLY CONTROLS AMERICA?

The terrifying inside story of the insidious power lobby that runs America

**Editor's Note:** While walking on the Harvard campus, I saw a manuscript blow out of a dumpster and fall at my feet. Curious, I picked it up and read it thoroughly. This is the remarkable text you are about to read and which no doubt will soon be published by two prestigious political scientists who are so innovative and courageous that they understand one need not know anything about a subject in order to pontificate about it. --Barry Rubin, April 3, 2006

All analysts agree, and it is not even a matter of controversy, that a powerful lobby has seized control of U.S. foreign policy and used it for another country's interests. This manipulation has been very damaging to the United States and it is time that this cabal is exposed. That is why it is necessary to analyze the pro-British lobby's terrible effect in damaging U.S. interests and subordinating our beloved country to an evil alien state.



In fact, the United States gets nothing from its alliance with England, a country which has repeatedly undermined American interests and defied American leaders. Moreover, U.S. support for Britain has angered such important forces as the Irish, Argentinean, and French peoples. It is time that this mistaken policy is challenged and changed.

While superficially, the United States and Britain have been allies, history shows that the British are unreliable at best. It should not be forgotten that Manchester (the proper capital of England since London was stolen from the Celts) treated its American colonies in a very oppressive way, a factor that triggered the American Revolution. Afterward, the British seized American seamen on the high seas, blocked American commerce to Europe, and burned the Capitol building and White House.

Since then, things haven't been much better. During the American Civil War, Britain encouraged the Confederacy. And then came the most disgraceful chapter of all. A conspiracy of British sympathizers working at the highest levels of U.S. government worked with Britain to drag the United States into World Wars One and Two, resulting in the deaths of tens of thousands of

Americans and our unnecessary confrontation with such countries as Germany and Japan which did not otherwise threaten U.S. interests.

There are alternative explanations of the long and uncritical U.S. support for Britain, but these are all unsatisfactory compared with our conspiracy theory. For example, some believe that support for Britain appeals to Americans because we have similar societies. In fact, this is untrue. Unlike our system of democracy, Britain has a monarchy and a parliamentary structure. Moreover, histori-

cally, the British were a society based on blood relations. The country profited by the conquest of innocent Angles, Saxons, Jutes, Hibernians and Celts, occupying through war such lands as Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. And certainly the British Empire ruled large occupied territories and acted in a very oppressive and exploitative manner for centuries, including the trade in opium to China.

Contrary to U.S. interests, Britain absorbed huge amounts of U.S. aid, giving little in return. Rather than be grateful, the British manipulated American policy through a powerful lobby. For example, U.S. Ambassador to the UN Jean Kirkpatrick, a key member of the British lobby, helped ensure American support for British imperial interests in the Falklands.

As if this were not enough, Britain has subjected the United States to massive cultural subversion. With their snobbish manners and exports of illegal tea (See: *Boston Tea Party*), the British have long made fun of the United States. Britain has also de-



liberately tried to destroy an independent American culture. Need we mention the factors that began the current cultural decline in America--the Beatles and the Rolling Stones? Now we can also unmask the key figures in the British lobby, the most notorious of all being, Alistair Cooke. Former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher hypnotized George Bush Sr., into going to war with Iraq in 1991. Even our food is being contaminated by marmalade, English muffins, and roast beef. And what of the "queen" who, according to reliable sources (see the scholarly publications of Lyndon LaRouche) is a drug smuggler.

Many institutions as well as individuals have served the British lobby, for example the Anglican Church and the many people of English descent who have put their "second homeland" before the United States in their divided loyalties and treachery.

No examination of the British lobby can be complete, however, without a discussion of how the UK conspiracy led the United States into the Iraq war. Prime Minister Tony Blair, facing considerable political troubles at home, provoked the war in order to boost his power and to eliminate a regime that threatened British, but not American, interests.

Pretending to be a friend, Blair flew to

America and spoke to a joint session of Congress shortly after the September 11 attacks. In fact, though, Usama bin Ladin's assault on New York and Washington was a protest against the British oppression of Muslims, both historically by British imperialism and today through the treatment of Britain's Muslim subjects at home. Even the enmity of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini can be explained in terms of the nefarious British lobby. The real target of Iran was the writer Salman Rushdie protected by--you guessed it--the United Kingdom.

The immediate result, of course, was a U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, fulfilling Britain's old interest in dominating that country which goes back to the days of the "great game" (note the cynical disregard for human life). No doubt, Blair's determination to eliminate Saddam Hussein was due to his belief that the democratically elected Iraqi president was supporting the IRA. Yet we must declare: there is no moral reason for preferring Britain to Ba'athist Iraq or to the subway bombers who were understandably protesting British policy by blowing up commuters.

It is vital for Americans to understand how much power Britain wields over America. The administration is filled with "British-Americans" and members of the Anglican Church; Congress never criticizes Britain no matter what it does. Most American presidents have been "WASPs" (white Anglo-Saxon Protestants). This includes, of course, George Bush. As for the media, the totality of British control is clear from the fact that--though it can ruin one's career to point this out--all U.S. newspapers, radio and television stations are in English! The fact that an entire section of the United States is called "New England" is only more proof of this domination, as if any other evidence is needed.



No doubt the powerful British lobby will come after us and try to destroy us or resort to their favorite trick of blaming all criticism on "anti-limieism." We will not, however, be deterred from speaking the obvious truth. America must be saved.

Barry Rubin is Director of the Global Research in International Affairs (GLORIA) Center, Interdisciplinary Center university. He wrote *Yasir Arafat: A Political Biography*, (Oxford University Press) and *The Long War for Freedom: The Arab Struggle for Democracy in the Middle East*



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## THE (REAL) PASSOVER STORY (1) REPORTED BY CNN, BBC OR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Parody (maybe) by Daniel P. Waxman

The cycle of violence between the Jews & the Egyptians continues with no end in sight in Egypt. After eight previous plagues that have destroyed the Egyptian infrastructure and disrupted the lives of ordinary Egyptian citizens,



the Jews launched a new offensive this week in the form of the plague of darkness.

Western journalists were particularly enraged by this plague. "It is simply impossible to

report when you can't see an inch in front of you," complained a frustrated Andrea Koppel of CNN. "I have heard from my reliable Egyptian contacts that in the midst of the blanket of blackness, the Jews were annihilating thousands of Egyptians. Their word is solid enough evidence for me."

While the Jews contend that the plagues are justified given the harsh slavery imposed upon them by the Egyptians, Pharaoh, the Egyptian leader, rebuts this claim. "If only the plagues would let up, there would be no slavery. We just want to live plague-free. It is the right of every society."

Saeb Erekat, an Egyptian spokesperson, complains that slavery is justifiable given the Jews' superior weaponry supplied to them by

the superpower God.

The Europeans are particularly enraged by the latest Jewish offensive. "The Jewish aggression must cease if there is to be peace in the region. The Jews should go back to slavery for the good of the rest of the world," stated an angry French President Jacques Chirac. Even several Jews agree. Adam Shapiro, a Jew, has barricaded himself within Pharaoh's chambers to protect Pharaoh from what is feared will be the next plague, the death of the firstborn. Mr. Shapiro claims that while slavery is not necessarily a good thing, it is the product of the plagues and when the plagues end, so will the slavery.



"The Jews have gone too far with plagues such as locusts and epidemic which have virtually destroyed the Egyptian economy," Mr. Shapiro laments. "The Egyptians are really a very nice people and

Pharaoh is kind of huggable once you get to know him," gushes Shapiro.

The United States is demanding that Moses and Aaron, the Jewish leaders, continue to negotiate with Pharaoh. While Moses points out that Pharaoh had made promise after promise to free the Jewish people only to immediately break them and thereafter impose harsher and harsher slavery, Richard

Boucher of the State Department assails the latest offensive. "Pharaoh is not in complete control of the taskmasters," Mr. Boucher states. "The Jews must return to the negotiating table and will accomplish nothing through these plagues."

The latest round of violence comes in the face of a bold new Saudi peace overture. If only the Jews will give up their language, change their names to Egyptian names and cease having male children, the Arab nations will incline toward peace with them, Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah declared. ☸

### OLD PASSOVER JOKE

Boy comes home from Hebrew school and mother asks him what he learned today.

"We learned all about Passover, Mom," says the boy.

"Tell me about it," she smiles.

"Well, Moses was leading the Jews out of Egypt when he got a message from his surveillance plane that the Egyptians were chasing him. So he got the construction battalion to put up pontoon bridges across the Red Sea so all the trucks with people could get across.

"Then he had them mine the bridges and when the Egyptian tanks started moving across – bang! – he blew them up while the Jewish snipers and machine gunners picked off the survivors."

Mom is horrified. "This is what they taught in Hebrew school?" she stammers.

"Well, not really, but if I told you what the teacher really said you'd never believe it."