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# Palmerston's Fifth Column, USA

## The assassination bureau

Narcotics traffic was the business of organized crime during the 19th century no less than in the 20th, and Britain's Opium War cabinet spun out a web of criminal connections that crisscrossed the globe. Prime Minister Palmerston conducted the opium business behind a screen of respectability, in full public view. What remained hidden — until the report of the Military Commission that heard evidence on the Lincoln Assassination — was the importance of Palmerston's secret life, as Patriarch of the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry.

It does not surprise the modern student that the perpetrators of the narcotics traffic show up in every element of the dirty side of 19th century politics, including presidential assassinations. But the extent of the web of criminal networks put in place by Palmerston could have come out of a Gothic horror story. American counterintelligence specialists of the time, such as Edgar Allan Poe and Samuel Morse (1), knew the problem well.

**Palmerston's irregulars, employed in illegal dope trafficking,**

assassinations, and "Fifth Column" subversions against the United States in the period before and during the Civil War, are the linear ancestors of what is now called organized crime. The Chinese "Triads," or Societies of Heaven; the Order of Zion and its American spinoff, the B'nai B'rith; "Young Italy," whose Sicilian law enforcement arm became known as the Mafia; the Jesuit Order based in decaying Hapsburg Austria; Mikhail Bakunin's bomb-throwing anarchist gangs; and nearly every other inhabitant of Britain's political netherworld followed a chain of command that led through the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry directly to Lord Palmerston and his successors.

The model for the Scottish Rite operation is the ethnic secret society — Jewish, Italian, or Chinese. Closest to hand among Palmerston's agencies was the Order of Zion, a highly specialized dirty tricks operation founded by London-based *Hofjuden* ("Court Jew") families, whose close ties to the British oligarchy traced back to the founding of the Bank of England, and before that to an alliance with the piratical financiers of post-Renaissance Genoa. The names of these families will appear and re-appear throughout this report, including the Mocattas and Goldsmids, gold dealers in London before even the Bank of England was there, now the operators of one of the world's most sophisticated money-laundering devices; the Montefiores, now central figures in the modern Most Venerable Order of St. John of Jerusalem; and the de Hirsch family, whose tightly controlled colonization program for Jews in Canada brought the present leaders of organized crime to the New World.

Control over the Order of Zion rested in the British Board of Deputies, founded in 1763 and still in action. One of the board's earliest presidents was Sir Moses Montefiore, described in contemporary accounts as "Queen Victoria's favorite Jew." (2) When Montefiore took command of the board in 1835, its dirty tricks division, the Order of Zion, was on the verge of launching the covert campaign that would lead to both the Lincoln assassination, and the founding of organized crime, so-called, in the United States. Through the efforts of Montefiore, later Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli (the Earl of Beaconsfield), and the

then nouveau riche Rothschilds, the Order of Zion nursed into being the leadership of the Confederacy.

Their starting point was the 1843 founding of the B'nai B'rith, also called the Constitutional Grand Lodge of the Order of the Sons of the Covenant, as a recognized branch of the Scottish Rite for American Jews. B'nai B'rith's first headquarters were at 450 Grand Street in Manhattan, at the house of Joseph Seligman, the wealthy "dry goods" merchant. (3) Seligman, whose name survives on Wall Street along with such of his contemporaries as August Belmont, Loeb, Schiff, and Lazard, was allied to the cotton-trading British oligarchy.

B'nai B'rith was a straightforward covert intelligence front for the Montefiores and Rothschilds. Its American house organ, the *Menorah*, could not disguise its relationship to the Rothschilds. It chose to flaunt it:

"The name Rothschild, in all countries is a synonym for honor and generosity, and no name in Europe has a popularity so great and so well merited. The Rothschilds in France occupy a social position even higher than that of the English branch of the family." (4)

The *Menorah* was also frank on the subject of the B'nai B'rith's relationship to the Scottish Rite Freemasons:

"Their reunions were frequent and several of them being members of then existing secret benevolent societies and especially of the Order of the Free Masons, and Odd Fellows, they finally concluded that a somewhat similar organization, but based upon the Jewish idea, would best obtain their object." (5)

Once in operation, the B'nai B'rith effectively merged its operations with another branch of the Scottish Rite, based in the Midwest and South — the Knights of the Golden Circle, the forerunner of the Ku Klux Klan, the training ground for the entire Confederate military and political leadership. (6) Its most important American operative was Judah P. Benjamin, a British subject and leader of the B'nai B'rith, whose amazing career included a brief term as Confederate Secretary of War and then Secretary of State, during the closing phases of the Civil War. (7) Another British subversive agent later worked together with Benjamin to found the Ku Klux Klan. He was Dr. Kuttner

Baruch, B'nai B'rith leader and grandfather of Bernard Baruch, a leading Wall Street Anglophile. (8) Their colleagues in that venture included Confederate General Albert Pike, a Grand Commander of the Scottish Rite, and a Jesuit priest. (9) The same group carried out the Lincoln assassination — which raises questions concerning the Defense Department's refusal to release secret files concerning that assassination. Are they afraid to embarrass the now politically powerful B'nai B'rith?

The B'nai B'rith and its Confederate opposite numbers, the Knights of the Golden Circle and the Ku Klux Klan, were only three of the many parallel operations that Palmerston brought to life during the 1860s. In Britain, future Prime Minister Disraeli, the man who evaded debtors' prison through the help of the House of Rothschild, launched the "Young Englanders." (10) In Italy, the local leader of the Scottish Rite, Mazzini, organized and commanded "Young Italy." (11) Scottish Rite member and Rothschild agent Alexander Herzen initiated a similar group covertly, avoiding the watchful eyes of the Czarist secret police; his best-known protégé took the name Bakunin. (12) In China, as of the second Opium War, the long-established "Triad" secret societies had already taken the retail distribution franchise for the distribution of British opium imported from India, and had become an uncontrollable, paramilitary arm of British "free trade."

What Palmerston and his colleagues had at their disposal was an International Assassination Bureau, capable of eliminating any chief of state who resisted British policy objectives. Not much different from the Red Brigades of Italy or the Baader-Meinhof terrorists of Germany today, the Scottish Rite's rainbow gathering of secret societies took money from the narcotics traffic and orders from Lord Palmerston.

What must be judged, in the long run, as the most deadly of these organizations was organized on an international footing at the same time that B'nai B'rith appeared in the United States. Disraeli, Moses Montefiore, and other leading British *Hofjuden* founded a new masonic-style order called, in the original French, the "Alliance Universelle Israelite." It became known — and feared — under the name of its elite secret arm, the *Order of*

*Zion.* (13) Most of the Order of Zion's funding was provided through the London and Paris banking houses of Rothschild, Montefiore, and de Hirsch. In crucial respects, the Order of Zion and Palmerston's Scottish Rite of Freemasonry were indistinguishable. In France, for example, the head of both organizations was the same individual, Adolphe Isaac Cremieux. (14)

Order of Zion leader Judah P. Benjamin was the individual who gave the order for Lincoln's assassination, according to the one authoritative historical document in the public domain, the report of the Judge Advocate assigned to investigate the assassination and report to the Military Commission responsible. (15) The report cites the orders of Confederate President Jefferson Davis and Judah Benjamin. According to this document, Confederate secret intelligence had raised a dirty tricks slush fund of \$649,000 through the sale of Confederate bonds in Liverpool. At the time, the headquarters of this outfit, called the Secret Cabinet, were housed in St. Lawrence Hall in Montreal — in the same building occupied by the Commander in Chief of British forces in Canada, General Sir Fenwick Williams. (16) The report names George N. Sandis as the group's money mover; Sandis was an American citizen, formerly an advisor to Democratic presidential candidate Stephen Douglas, and Consul of the United States in Liverpool under the Pierce Administration.

Eight days before Lincoln's death, the chief of the Secret Cabinet — former Interior Secretary in the Buchanan Administration, Jacob Thompson — withdrew \$180,000 from the group's account at the Bank of Montreal in Montreal, to set the murder plot in motion. (17) His courier was one John Harrison Suratt, a British agent trained at Jesuit Georgetown College. Neither Thompson nor Benjamin was ever apprehended; both fled to England and remained there under the Crown's protection. (18) This evidence, heard on June 25 and June 26, 1865, ran up against a cover-up effort under the direction of Secretary of War Edward Stanton that compares in audacity with the work of the 1963 Warren Commission. The relevant raw documentary is not available to researchers. The documents

relating to the Lincoln assassination are still locked up in the archives of the Defense Department. Jefferson Davis, who lived comfortably in Montreal after the collapse of the Confederacy, kept his papers in the Bank of Montreal, the same bank that conducted the funds for the assassination itself. If they are still in the vaults of the Bank of Montreal, the bank has not acknowledged this. (19)

These facts concerning the death of President Lincoln are more than a useful case history, illustrating the power of the dope trade's criminal networks. If the leads developed in New Orleans District Attorney Garrison's investigation of the Kennedy assassination were accurate, the two murders were the work of the same operation. All that is necessary is to cross out the names "Secret Cabinet" and "Judah Benjamin," and write in: Perminde and Major Louis Bloomfield (see Part III, Section 3).

From what remains of the official record, there is no question that the death of Abraham Lincoln was traced to British-controlled and British-funded networks by American military intelligence. It must be underscored that much more than the central figure of Lord Palmerston brought these networks into the mainline of the narcotics traffic. Southern cotton, for which the British verged on invading the United States during the Civil War (20), was not merely a facet of the same trading operation that produced the dope trade; for all purposes, it was the dope trade. Opium was the final stage in the demand cycle for British-financed and slave-produced cotton. British firms brought cotton to Liverpool. From there, it was spun and worked up into cloth in mills in the north of England, employing unskilled child and female labor at extremely low wages. The finished cotton goods were then exported to India, in a process that destroyed the existing cloth industry, causing widespread privation. India paid for its imported cloth (and railway cars to carry the cloth, and other British goods) with the proceeds of Bengali opium exports to China. Without the "final demand" of Chinese opium sales, the entire world structure of British trade would have collapsed. Palmerston's above-cited remark concerning the future of British trade in opium-consuming China and other parts of the East was, in fact, a matter of hard contingency.

Britain's new instrument of subversion in the United States was controlled elements of Italian and Chinese immigration, combined with the Order of Zion entity that had been in place since 1843. By the turn of the century, the different ethnic networks became so intertwined that, for generic purposes, the name "organized crime" applies to all of them.

The implantation of the ethnic secret societies into the United States is a complex story, but may be centered accurately in a few case histories. One is the way that the family of Sam Bronfman — the man who shipped enough liquor to the United States to double the size of Lake Erie, in the testimony of Lucky Luciano — got to North America. Bronfman's story begins, in fact, in Romania, where the Order of Zion secret organization achieved its first major victory, a coup d'etat that brought King Charles of Romania to the throne in 1887. In the years following the Civil War, the Order of Zion merged with the much older Cult of Mizraem, a centuries-old covert organization that dated back to the days of Genoese and Hapsburg intrigue and assassination. (21) From the British side, Sir Moses Montefiore, and on the Romanian front itself, American Consul Benjamin Peixotto, aided the local secret society in installing a new monarch. (22) Peixotto held a leadership position in the American B'nai B'rith and was a member of the Order of Zion.

## The Elders of Zion

Romania became, in consequence, a nesting place for the most lurid form of Central European covert operations until the Second World War. The character of the political machine the Order of Zion installed in that country is perhaps best illustrated by the strong support Order of Zion elements gave to the Romanian Green Shirt Nazis, who seized power in Hitler's wake during the 1930s. (23) Romanian Jews show up prominently in American organized crime, as well as in the terrorist activities of the Israeli secret service, the Mossad.

The Order of Zion was simply the Jewish division of the Most Venerable Order of St. John of Jerusalem, the London-centered

chivalric order and secret society, whose members swear — and act on — a blood oath. A secret meeting in Paris in 1884 yielded the famous minutes of the Order, published under the title, *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. The minutes were intercepted and published by the Russian counterintelligence service, the Okhrana. (24) Probably, the decision to publish the captured minutes involved retaliation against the Order of Zion's role in fomenting a sweeping destabilization against the government of Russian Prime Minister Count Witte, whose government fell during the so-called 1905 Revolution. Witte had sought an alliance with Germany and France against Britain on a program that included the industrial development of Russia. The question of the authenticity of the *Protocols* has been a matter of fierce, even hysterical dispute. The question may be settled with dispatch by a textual comparison between the oaths of the Order of Zion printed in the *Protocols*, and the blood-curdling oaths sworn by initiates into the fourth Grade of the Knights of Columbus of Mexico, which maintains close ties to the Jesuits and to the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, which reads in part as follows: (25)

I, \_\_\_\_\_, in the presence of all-powerful God, the blessed Virgin Mary, the blessed St. John the Baptist . . . by the belly of the Virgin Mary, the womb of God and staff of Jesus Christ, I declare and swear that his holiness the Pope is vice regent of Christ and sole and true head of the universal Catholic Church on earth, and in virtue of the keys to do and undo given to your holiness by my savior Jesus Christ, (you) have the power to depose kings and heretics, princes, states, communities and governments and dismiss them from office without risk. . . .

I promise and declare that I will, when the opportunity presents itself to me, wage war without quarter, secretly or openly, against all the heretics, Protestant and Mason, such as I may be ordered to do, in order to extirpate them from the face of earth, and I will not take into account either age, sex or station, and I will hang, burn, strangle and bury alive those infamous heretics: I will cut open the

stomachs and wombs of their women and smash the heads of the babies against the rocks and walls, in order to annihilate the execrable race; that when this cannot be done openly, I will secretly employ the poison cut, strangulation, the sword, dagger or bullet, without consideration for the honor, rank, dignity or authority of the persons, whatever their status in public or private life may be, such as I may be ordered at any time. . . .

If I manifest falsity or weakness in my determination, I consent that my brothers and comrade soldiers in the army of the Pope may cut off my hands, my feet and slit my throat from ear to ear. . . .

I promise to execute and fulfill this oath, in testimony whereof, I take this sacred sacrament of the Eucharist and affirm it even with my name written with the point of this dagger, drenched in my own blood and sealed in the presence of this holy sacrament. Amen. (26)

Romania's Order of Zion stronghold produced, among other criminal elements, one Yechiel Bronfman, who emigrated to Canada in 1889. The circumstances of Bronfman's emigration are noteworthy. His passage was paid by the de Hirsch family fund for settlements in Canada — which conferred benefits with strings attached. De Hirsch political screening of new immigrants was so precise that a significant number of new arrivals were sent back without funds, for unreliability. (27).

The important features of the arrival of the Italian "Mafia" in the United States are inseparable from the story of the Order of Zion. Mazzini, the sponsor of the Mafia in Italy, reported directly to the most prominent of Britain's *Hofjuden*, Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli, and received funding from the leading British *Hofjuden* bankers, Rothschild and Montefiore. (28) Correspondingly, when Mazzini sent his lieutenants into the United States, the veterans of the "Young Italy" movement moved into channels already carved out by the likes of ex-General Pike and B'nai B'rith. The combination of *Hofjuden*-controlled crime networks and the Mafia provided the framework for organized crime on a big-business scale.

## Mazzini's mafia

The first arrivals of the Italian-speaking mob followed the tracks of the original "dry goods" merchants who figured so prominently in the B'nai B'rith, the grandfathers and fathers of the Our Crowd banking group in New York City. New Orleans, the first base of the Lehmans and Lazards in the United States, also became the receiving station for the Mazzini networks. Most important, the first recorded evidence of organized Mafioso activity in the United States identifies the Mazzini networks with General Pike's guerrilla war against the "Reconstruction" South.

Nothing depicts this arrangement better than the stories of the first New Orleans godfathers, Joseph Macheca and Charles Matrenga. Protégés of Mazzini, they took over the New Orleans franchise on behalf of the Palermo mob, which reported to Mazzini and thence to Disraeli. The chain of command was so well known that the joke made the rounds that the word "mafia" was really an acronym for "Mazzini autorizza furti, incendi, e attentati" — "Mazzini authorizes theft, arson, and kidnapping." (29) The first of the Mazzini networks drifted in before and during the Civil War. "The Mafias in New Orleans, New York, and Palermo were separate societies," wrote one leading historian of the period, "but they cooperated closely. A member who was properly sponsored could be transferred from one city to another, from one family to another." (30)

By the close of the Civil War, Disraeli's Mafia was in the hands of one Joseph Macheca. By contemporary accounts, the activities of the Macheca gang were indistinguishable from those of the Klan. In 1868, Macheca organized the New Orleans side of Democratic candidate Seymour's campaign against Ulysses S. Grant. Seymour's funding and political direction came from August Belmont, the Rothschilds' official business agent in the United States. The campaign, such as it was, was described as follows in the *New Orleans Picayune*:

This popular and pleasant-mannered gentleman (Macheca) organized and commanded a company of Sicilians, 150 strong, known as the Innocents. Their

uniform was a white cape bearing a Maltese Cross (the insignia of the British Royal Family's Order of St. John of Jerusalem — ed.) on the left shoulder. They wore sidearms and when they marched the streets they shot at every Negro that came in sight. They left a trail of a dozen dead Negroes behind them. General James E. Steadman, managing the (Seymour) campaign, forbade them from making further parades and they were disbanded. (31)

One historian of the Mafia notes, "This matter-of-fact account is the first report of a formal Sicilian organization in New Orleans, and it is likely that from the ranks of these armed Innocents came the nucleus of Macheca's Mafia." (32)

Belmont's presidential candidate ran on a program drafted at the Seligman and associated Our Crowd banking houses in New York: the repeal of Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation. The same cousins of the British *Hofjuden* controlled General Pike and his hooded goons, the Ku Klux Klan, whom Macheca's gangsters took such great pains to imitate — along with the conceit of the Maltese Cross. Pike, Macheca, and their paramilitary irregulars unleashed a wave of violence across the South that buried Lincoln's Reconstruction policy not many years after the President himself.

The historical record shows that Macheca's group in New Orleans, which started out by shooting blacks for the copperhead Our Crowd banks in New York, had proved its mettle by the early 1870s. It became the jumping-off point for the organization of the mob throughout the United States. Macheca provided a base for Mazzini's syndicate organizer of the first years of the Mafia, Giuseppe Esposito. A close Mazzini associate, Esposito fled Sicily in the early 1870s, arriving in New Orleans to make contact with Macheca. Esposito traveled through the United States, pulling together Italian-speaking secret societies and establishing inter-city communications where none had existed before. From Esposito's tour onwards, the Sicilian-speaking secret societies became crime syndicates. Mazzini's representative on the scene had absolute authority over the local god-fathers, even over the leader of the New Orleans base organiza-

John Jacob Astor. American citizen Waldorf Astor, his direct descendant, was chairman of the Council of the Royal Institute of International Affairs during the Second World War, while Harvard-trained American citizens of the Institute for Pacific Relations smoothed the transition to People's Republic of China opium production (see Part II, Section 7).

The old Boston families who made their fortunes on the narcotics traffic were the ones whom old Joseph Kennedy strove to imitate when he obtained his British liquor delivery contacts during Prohibition, and the same ones who staffed his son's Administration.