

Blair and Israel

Colin Challen

A weary groan was surely heard across the land when it was announced that Tony Blair was to be appointed to President Trump's 'Board of Peace,' which has been given the daunting task of rebuilding Gaza. The dismay will not just have been because of Blair's enthusiastic support for the Iraq war, but also for his notable failure as the envoy of the Quartet intended to build working relationships between Israel and Palestine.

On the latter account, his position was compromised by his clear lack of impartiality. As the authors of *Blair Inc: The Man Behind The Mask* wrote ten years ago:

Getting the trust of the Palestinians will be made even harder now it is known that one of the main funders of the Tony Blair Faith Foundation is Haim Saban, an American Israeli billionaire, and one of the most prominent pro-Israeli lobbyists in America. 'I'm a one-issue guy and my issue is Israel,' Saban told the New York Times. He joins several other campaigners for Israel among the Faith Foundation's donors, but there are no Muslims as far as anyone knows.¹

What the authors of *Blair Inc* concluded all those years ago was that Blair was able to use his position as Quartet envoy to tout for his own business in the Arab world by building closer relationships with local authoritarian rulers. As is well known, Blair was not terribly choosy whom he saddled up with to make his fortune. But now his fortune is made, he still wants to be a significant political player, and Trump has offered him that chance: appointing him to be his leading member or deputy on his UN-approved 'Board of Peace,' charged with rebuilding Gaza, the Palestinian Authority, a new police force, a 20,000 'peace force' and disarming Hamas, to boot. Given his record, how did Blair so elegantly slide into this role?

The Tony Blair Institute for Global Change (TBI) is central to Blair's post prime ministerial career and, according to a report produced by *Lighthouse*

NB This essay first appeared in Colin Challen's blog
<<http://www.colinchallen.org/blog>>.

¹ Francis Beckett, David Hencke, Nick Kochan, *Blair Inc: The Man Behind The Mask* (London: John Blake, 2015, p.19)

Reports, has lately shifted its focus from being a wide ranging think tank, to a technology advocacy consultancy, following the arrival of a significant funder, Larry Ellison, whose fortune is based on his data company Oracle (which recently made him briefly richer than Elon Musk). *Lighthouse Reports* investigators spoke to many ex-TBI employees and have exposed what is driving the business's overwhelming enthusiasm for technology.

Ellison invested \$130 million in the TBI between 2021 and 2023, with a further \$218 million pledged since then. The scale of funding took the TBI from a headcount of 200 to approaching 1,000. Blair himself takes no salary from TBI but over this time the institute has been able to recruit from bluechip firms like McKinsey and Silicon Valley giants Meta. In 2018, before the Oracle founder's funding surge, TBI's best-paid director earned \$400,000. In 2023, the last year where accounts are available, the top earner took home \$1.26 million.

Blair and Ellison have a relationship that goes back to the former's time in office. In 2003 Ellison and Blair, then in his pomp, had a photo opportunity at Downing Street to mark a gift of supplies to 40 specialist schools. In tech circles this is known as 'land and expand'. Oracle has since been contracted hundreds of times by the British government and, according to data collected by procurement analysts Tussell,² has earned £1.1 billion in public sector revenue since the start of 2022.

What the *Lighthouse Reports* article didn't mention is Ellison's devoted Zionist philosophy. This is revealed in a report in *The Dissident* on Substack:

Oracle has signed multiple lucrative contracts with the Israeli national security state . . . Oracle sees itself as an activist organization, one whose goal is the advancement of the Israeli colonization project.³

In this regard, given his actual leanings as opposed to his rhetorical support for Palestine, Blair makes a perfect fit for promoting Ellison's agenda. A certain degree of whitewashing is called for and is delivered when Zionists (like Blair and Starmer) regurgitate their 'two state' homilies. To some extent big money, such as that from Ellison, seeks to obfuscate its thoroughgoing colonialist tracks. An old Quartet envoy surely fits the bill.

In the same *Dissident* article we learn that in a leaked email to former Israeli PM Ehud Barak,

Safra Catz [Oracle's Israeli CEO] explicitly expressed a commitment to influencing U.S. public opinion in favour of Israel, "Asking Barak to sign

² <<https://www.lighthousereports.com/investigation/blair-and-the-billionaire/>>

³ <<https://the307.substack.com/p/how-larry-ellison-is-using-his-wealth>>

on as a consulting producer for a reality TV show about 'Women of the IDF' with the goal of humanizing the IDF in the eyes of the American public." ⁴

Given that Blair and Barak served for some time concurrently as prime ministers, it is not surprising that they knew each other; but it is said that they were 'old friends'. In 1997, Barak had arrived in London as the leader of Israel's beleaguered Labour Party, seeking help to win the 1999 election. With the aid of Blair's experts in Millbank, he won and remained prime minister for two years. After losing the next election to Benjamin Netanyahu, he became a successful businessman.⁵

Later, according to Tom Bower:

In 2012 Barak resigned as defence minister and resumed life as a consultant for Israeli companies across the world. The two former prime ministers forged a profitable alliance, even as Blair's position as the Quartet's envoy became discredited and Barak, despite his military heroism was criticised within Israel for using his experience of office to become rich. It appeared no coincidence that Barak would be consulted by Nazarbayev in Kazakhstan and by various West African presidents, and that Blair mentioned Israeli drones to President Buhari of Nigeria.⁶

One of the companies Barak was involved with was the data company Carbyne, 'founded by former members of Israeli military intelligence', which was seen as useful during the Covid pandemic for its ability to locate individual patients. 'It was backed by former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak, billionaire investor Peter Thiel, and a small investment from (now deceased) pedophile Jeffrey Epstein.'⁷

I am not about to suggest that Tony Blair came to befriend or still less work with Jeffrey Epstein, but he did consent to meet the fixer in 2002 after lobbying by Peter Mandelson who at that time was nothing more than a backbench MP, having twice left Blair's cabinet in disgrace. But what we do have is evidence of how connections are made when networkers are working at full throttle. This account comes courtesy of a report in *Metro* regarding a meeting set up by Mandelson with Blair to introduce Epstein:

In an email to Sir Tony's chief of staff at the time, Jonathan Powell, Lord

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Tom Bower, *Broken Vows* (London: Faber and Faber, 2016) p. 550.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Antony Loewenstein, *The Palestine Laboratory: How Israel Exports the Technology of Occupation Around the World* (London: Verso, 2023) p. 94.

Mandelson refers to Epstein as 'safe'. Sent on May 7, 2002, it said:

Do you remember when Clinton saw TB [Tony Blair] he said he wanted to introduce his travelling friend, Jeffrey Epstein, to TB?

This was frustrated – TB said at the time – in the office for reasons (he says) he was unclear about.

I think TB would be interested in meeting Jeffrey, who is also a friend of mine, because Jeffrey is an active scientific catalyst/entrepreneur as well as someone who has his finger on the pulse of many worldwide markets and currencies.

He is young and vibrant. He is safe (whatever that means) and Clinton is now doing a lot of travelling with him.

I mentioned to TB that Jeffrey is in London next week and he said he would like to meet him.

I have ascertained from Jeffrey that he is flexible – he could be here any time from Tuesday onwards to fit round the diary – but would obviously need to know reasonably quickly so as to re-schedule accordingly. Can you let me know?'

A further memo, written on May 14, 2002, briefed Sir Tony about Epstein ahead of a meeting scheduled for 5pm on that day. The memo was written by senior civil servant Matthew Rycroft and marked 'R', which is believed to stand for 'restricted'. It read:

Jeffrey Epstein is seeing you at 5pm today.

He is a financial adviser to the super-rich and a property developer. He is a friend of Bill Clinton and Peter Mandelson.

The background on Epstein is that he is very rich and close to the Duke of York.

Peter says that Epstein now travels with Clinton and Clinton wants you to meet him.

He thinks you would find worthwhile a conversation with him about a) science and b) international economic and monetary trends.⁸

What, one wonders was discussed at that meeting, arranged by Mandelson (but first suggested by Bill Clinton) at which no minutes were taken, apparently? We now know from the extensive release of Epstein emails that he was frequently in contact with Barak regarding various deals, so it is safe to assume that if Blair and Barak were indeed 'old friends' that Blair may well have traded insights on Barak's commercial ventures. It is hard to conceive

⁸ <<https://shorturl.at/RXXQx>> or <<https://metro.co.uk/2025/10/11/tony-blair-met-jeffrey-epstein-downing-street-prime-minister-24398519/>>.

that with Epstein's 'scientific' bent, the discussion did not touch upon developing information technologies, one of Blair's professed remedies for fixing the UK economy. The idea that the meeting was going to look at 'international economic and monetary trends' stretches credulity. Somebody else in Blair's government at that time would have had a much greater interest in that subject – not that Mandelson would want to introduce his best mate to him (i.e. Gordon Brown).

After leaving parliament both Blair and Mandelson went on to building their own political consultancies, the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change and Mandelson's Global Counsel (which as a result of the Epstein affair has completely distanced itself from him). Both outfits secured significant contracts with Zionist tech bros, in Blair's case as referred to above.

These morsels of information all point in the same direction.