

Olivia Jayne Frank, 1956-2023

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Olivia Jayne Frank, alias Ruth Mayer, Ruth Alison Peacock, Rebekah Stern, Joanne Olivia Gold and Olivia Jayne Hart, a transgender spy for the Mossad, MI5 and MI6, died of pneumonia and kidney failure in the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital on September 11, 2023, 67 years after her birth at Crumpsall Hospital in Manchester.

She was registered as a baby boy but in 2017 the British authorities amended the certificate under the 2004 Gender Recognition Act to record the

birth on March 17, 1956, of a girl, the daughter of Derek Victor Pearcey and Eunice Pearcey of 52 Belle Vue Street, Manchester 12.

Her father had been a pre-war regular soldier in the Rifle Brigade, promoted through the ranks and seriously wounded as an officer during the Second Battle of Alamein. Despite German Jewish origins, he served post-war in the British army campaign against Jewish insurgents in Palestine, 1945–1948.

Olivia Frank's life story, variously published as *Naked Spy Girl*, *The Mossad Spy*, *Thatcher's Prisoner*, and currently available from Amazon as *The Third Direction*,¹ describes how she was prescribed oestrogen by an NHS doctor in Manchester before joining the Israel Defense Forces as a woman, flying to Tel Aviv in 1974 on a false British passport supplied by her father's Jewish contacts.

In March 1975, she killed an Al Fatah Force 17 guerilla fighter on a raid

¹ Olivia Frank, *The Third Direction* (Red Sea Publishing House, 2022), £15.99, h/b at <<https://shorturl.at/dotz9>> or <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Third-Direction-Olivia-Frank/dp/1916096387/ref=tmm_hrd_swatch_0?_encoding=UTF8&qid=&sr=>>.

into Lebanon.² In *The Third Direction*, published in 2022, she described being wounded in Africa, hit in the shoulder by a grenade fragment during Operation Thunderbolt, the 1976 rescue of 102 hostages from Entebbe Airport in Uganda in which Yonatan Netanyahu, elder brother of the present Israeli prime minister, was killed.

She described service in a 'unique foreign legion attached to the feared Sayerert Golani'³ during a covert 1980 attack on an Iraqi-trained suicide squad in Lebanon:

Up on the top floor, the last gunman attempted to lob a grenade at me. I killed him with a burst from the Uzi. It ripped his body apart.⁴

She was recruited by A'man, Israeli Defence Force military intelligence, for her first foray as a spy in 1981.

I was to play a non-Jewish *shiksa* [girl], claiming to be a PLO sympathiser, on an undercover assignment on the Greek island of Kós. The Mossad would shadow me as I tackled a brief encounter with a wealthy Lebanese man, a Muslim and an Oxford graduate, who was in reality a terrorist.⁵

Taken by boat to Bodrum in Turkey, given keys to a Mercedes and told to drive three days to an interrogation in Munich, she recounted returning by private jet to Damascus and being taken by Land Rover to a training camp for women run by the PLO splinter group the Abu Nidal organisation.

She described living for months unarmed and undercover in the camp until the day it was attacked by Israeli aircraft during the 1982 invasion of Lebanon. This operation was ordered by defence minister Ariel Sharon and was described in 2014 by the Oxford historian Avi Shlaim as 'a war of deception that failed to achieve any of its grandiose geopolitical objectives'.⁶

A terrorist attempt to assassinate the Israeli ambassador gave Sharon his opportunity for war. He blamed the PLO for the assassination attempt. But he got his facts wrong. The PLO were not this time to blame. But Sharon had his excuse to take out Yasser Arafat.

² On Force 17 see <https://military-history.fandom.com/wiki/Force_17>.

³ A commando unit. See <<https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/background-and-history-of-israel-s-special-forces-units>>

⁴ Olivia Frank, *The Mossad Spy*, (Red Sea Publishing House, 2019, ISBN 978-1-9160963-0-1) p. 34.

⁵ *The Mossad Spy* (see note 3) p. 36

⁶ Avi Shlaim, 'America must see that Sharon is the problem', the *Observer*, 14 April 2002.

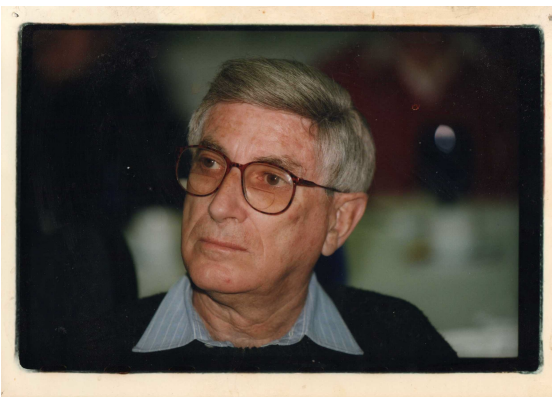
Warmongering and Sharon went together. His ghastly Operation Peace for Galilee turned into the 1982-5 First Lebanon War that cost Israel 668 dead and 3,887 wounded. In the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps alone, the Red Crescent counted two thousand people massacred in one day in 1982 by Sharon's Phalangist allies.⁷

In Lebanon, 'Ruth Mayer' encountered her first boyfriend:

During the fighting in Lebanon I was with a few Israeli officers taking a break in the ruins of a bombed house. I took off my helmet. One guy, looking a bit surprised, sidled up to me and said, 'I'm Avrim. I didn't realise that . . . that you're a woman.'⁸

Both were later posted to a sector of the Israeli frontier where Avrim was shot dead by an Arab fighter. 'Bullets meant for me tore into him.'

'Ruth' and Avrim had already discussed leaving Israel in despair at the aggressive foreign policy of the Likud government. Instead, she encountered the British-born Israeli spymaster David Kimche (1928-2010) when she was under sedation in a military hospital. Kimche was known in Israel as 'The Man with the Suitcase' and conducted dangerous and secret diplomacy in Iraq, Germany and Africa. During several hospital visits he took care not to reveal his name to 'Ruth Mayer', who called him 'Moses'.



'I told him he had found me lost in a wilderness and how it seemed I had not been living in a promised land after all. He knew what I meant. He implored me to stay in Israel . . . I could see this remarkable man, my new confidant, knew well that the bad guys had tarnished Israel's image. If the good guys behind the scene gave up, he argued, it would finish Israel. All power

would go to the zealots, to Ariel Sharon. Moses persuaded me to stay.'⁹

Kimche was deputy director of the Mossad until 1980 and ambassador-at-large for the state of Israel from 1987. He had been born into an aristocratic family of Swiss Jews living in London and at 19 was wounded in the 1948 Arab-Israeli War.

With his older brother Jon, he co-authored the classic 1954 Zionist history

⁷ *The Mossad Spy* (see note 3) p. 46.

⁸ *The Mossad Spy* (see note 3) p. 47.

⁹ *The Third Direction* (see note 1) p. 39.

The Secret Roads: The Illegal Migration of a People, 1938-1948.¹⁰ Jon Kimche had worked in a Hampstead bookshop with George Orwell between 1934 and 1935 and was with Orwell in Barcelona during the Spanish Civil War. He edited *Tribune* for Aneurin Bevan and Stafford Cripps during the war.

He went missing from the *Tribune* office in 1945, using his Swiss passport and his wartime secret service contacts to organise the rescue and migration of survivors of German death camps. After the brothers published *Both Sides of the Hill: Britain and the Palestine Wars*,¹¹ Jon Kimche became Middle East editor of the *Observer* under David Astor.

Mossad

The Mossad sent for 'Ruth Mayer' in 1983. After three months of psychiatric tests she entered their Academy at Herzliya under the name of Rebekah Stern. The preliminary training at the Academy has rarely been described in foreign publications and certainly never previously by a recruit with a transgender body.

In January 1984, I began the second half of my course, learning how the Mossad ticked and how they kept their organisation small and neat by hiring far fewer staff than rival foreign intelligence organisations. They saved manpower by using their *Sayanim* or Jewish assistants. There were *Sayanim* in all trades and professions, everywhere in the world. It would cost us only a phone call to get their help. Apart from their expenses, they worked for the sake of Israel, and not for cash. *Sayanim* were used only when operationally required and protected from risk by not knowing any top secrets.

The Mossad had other helpers in house, not just the scientists and technicians but well-paid born-again villains. The talents of former villains were not allowed to go to waste. Employment by the Mossad kept the former criminals out of trouble with the police. There were skilled safecrackers and counterfeiters.

Bogus companies set up by a team of creative in-house accountants were used in sting operations against opponents. Some of my own accountancy skills were honed working with the Mossad accountants, allowing me to develop a useful cover for my own work. Mossad hackers installed the very latest pirated software on our computers.¹²

¹⁰ Jon & David Kimche, *The Secret Roads* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1954).

¹¹ Jon & David Kimche, *Both Sides of the Hill* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1960).

¹² *The Mossad Spy* (see note 3) p. 67.

Dave Kimche came to see her again in June 1984.

I embraced him at the Mossad academy and he began to talk to me about Avrim. By that time I found I could talk about Avrim. I decided to make a personal confession to Moses, 'I have to tell you that when Avrim and I heard what Ariel Sharon was doing in Lebanon, that was it for us. We'd had enough of the IDF. We wanted no part of that. It appalled us.'

My mentor in the Mossad cast his eyes down and appeared to be talking to his boots, 'Blame the zealots. I thought the spirit of the Jews had survived Hitler and the Shoah. But I'm certain now that I was wrong.'

Although his real name was unknown to me, he talked confidentially about the 'bloodlust' of ultra-orthodox Jews in Israel. He was scathing. He called them unholy fanatics, even terrorists. He derided them for setting themselves up as though they were holier than everyone. He attacked them for claiming to be the 'real Jews' and for dismissing liberals like me as 'not proper Jews'. I had never seen him angry before.

He said the extremism of the 'zealots' had turned them into the 'Nazis of Israel'. The pursuit of ritualistic obligation had robbed them of compassion. I was shocked to see that this important officer of the state of Israel did not dare speak his mind on the street. As he paced the floor, he told me that politics and ritual had crossed swords in the Holy Land for so long that a diabolical beast had now evolved.

Real Jews want peace. The ultra-right fanatics are creating an apartheid-like repression which has no place in a democracy. The racists are strangling Israel.

Moses made it clear that he knew what went on inside the Knesset. He told me that the fanatics who regularly threatened to kill moderate politicians accounted for the dreadful state of Israeli politics. The political right wing continued to deny the Palestinians a homeland and of course, the zealots did eventually murder their own prime minister Yitzhak Rabin in 1995.

My mentor knew his stuff and told me that he was working directly with *AI*, a word that means 'above'. I knew he meant those who planned the Mossad's top-secret missions. His astonishing candour prompted me to be cheeky. Choosing my moment carefully, I asked him to tell me his real name.¹³

¹³ *The Third Direction* (see note 1) p. 55.

'Rebekah Stern's' Mossad assignments included scrambling under gunfire into a moving car with Ehud Barak, Israel's future prime-minister. My own 2020 *Lobster* article suggested that by *chutzpah* or arrogance the Mossad – known to its combatants as *the office* – devised an eleventh hour plan for their transgender spy to disrupt an Abu Nidal bombing team in Germany using the plot of a recently-published John le Carré thriller.¹⁴

After flying to Manchester to re-activate her previous 'legend' as the rebellious daughter of a real businessman from Hale Barns in Cheshire, 'Rebekah Stern' lived for weeks in Munich with Palestinians until she encountered her targets, an Arab bomb-maker and a German neo-nazi known only as 'Konrad', identified recently as Karl-Heinz Hoffmann, founder of the illegal Wehrsportgruppe Hoffmann paramilitary sports club.¹⁵

In two of her books, she described how, five hours after she had sent a 'burst' radio message to the Mossad, 'Konrad' strapped two radio-controlled bombs to her body and ordered her to plant one bomb in a block of flats inhabited by German Jews.

I closed in on Konrad's target. It was ten storeys high and, checking lights in the windows, it looked as though most of the residents were home. I had enough stuff on me to bring the house down. I stood across from the flats, took Konrad's plastic card out of my pocket and waited for a black Mercedes van to pass by.

I was still there wondering what to do when a guy I hadn't noticed before started whistling. It was the Hatkivah, the romantic national anthem of Israel. The whistler spoke to me, 'I guess you've heard that tune before. It's over. . . I'm Shaul, from the office.'

My final curtain fell as the rain poured down. Shaul implored me to stay calm and shelter in the bright lobby. He told me he was part of a *Yarid* team. Shaul said Konrad was for me no more.

The black van that I had just seen passing me in the road reappeared outside the flats and in a rush, two men leaped out. I might have known. It was the skinheads who had eyeballed Konrad's car. Shaul let them into the lobby and told me to leave the shoulder bag and its lethal payload on the tiled floor. I climbed into the van and took a seat so that Shaul could sit behind me and get to work. He helped me off with my

¹⁴ 'Did the Mossad steal John le Carré's cunning plan?', *Lobster* 79, Summer 2020, at <<https://shorturl.at/cjsX1>> or <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/article/issue/79/did-the-mossad-steal-john-le-carres-cunning-plan/>>.

¹⁵ *Tablet*, New York, June 28, 2019 at <<https://shorturl.at/bdIMU>> or <<https://www.tabletmag.com/sections/arts-letters/articles/mossad-spy-identifies-neo-nazi-konrad>>.

coat. Wary of booby traps he took his time removing the second bomb from my back.

My very diligent and careful new friend finally said, 'It's off. You're safe.' Shaul led me from the van to a Mercedes saloon drawn up behind us in the street.¹⁶

In the Mercedes was Kimche. The Man with The Suitcase had flown to Munich to rescue the transgender spy who had never failed him.

Enter MI5

In the five years in which your correspondent tried and failed to disprove her account of how her active service for the Mossad ended after her *legend* was blown, Olivia Frank never revealed the name of her father or how Kimche had arranged for her to return to her parents in Cheshire. The Mossad had warned her that MI5 would be watching when she returned to England: 'You have no friends outside Israel.'

In 1987 when the *Intifada* broke out in Israel, I had turned thirty and was now eligible for gender reassignment surgery . . . I was revelling in my new life in the North of England when Margaret Thatcher cracked down on the Mossad spies working in Britain.

I had my first brush with this Thatcher crackdown at Grappenhall when I was on my way to the shops in my Rover SD1. A black Rover just like mine slipped into traffic behind me. It was still on my tail two miles further down the road . . .

I climbed out of my car and walked towards them. The smirking driver lowered his window. I asked him straight, 'Why are you following me?'

'You'd better get used to it. We represent the Security Service. We know you work for the Mossad. If you're caught doing stuff for them on British soil, you'll be arrested.'¹⁷

The British were cracking down on the Mossad after eighteen months of provocation. Inside a telephone kiosk in Bonn in July 1986, West German police had found eight superbly-forged British passports with a genuine Israeli passport and a number of Israeli embassy envelopes. International investigations revealed that the forgeries had been destined for the Israeli embassy in London for use on offensive operations by the Mossad.

The Mossad had also outwitted the *Sunday Times* in London by luring and

¹⁶ *The Mossad Spy* (see note 3) p. 97.

¹⁷ *The Third Direction* (see note 1) p. 80.

eventually kidnapping the newspaper's star informant, the former Israeli nuclear technician and peace activist Mordechai Vanunu.

In August 1987, just a few days before the start of Vanunu's secret trial at the Jerusalem District Court, the British police found six suitcases containing AK-47s, hand grenades and 30 kgs of military Semtex explosives at a flat in Kingston upon Hull. Ismail Hassan Sowan, a 29 year-old Palestinian engineer was arrested and confessed to Scotland Yard detectives that he had been working as a double-agent for the Mossad on a sting operation directed against the Palestine Liberation Organisation in Britain. Sowan told the British that the Mossad had used him to trace Abdul Rahim Mustapha a suspected PLO Force 17 assassin.

After Sowan had been jailed for 11 years for arms possession in 1988, Margaret Thatcher's government ordered the expulsion of Arie Regev, the Mossad chief in London.

Life for a transgender Mossad combatant living in a Cheshire caravan park apparently became 'Orwellian' after a second spook in a black Rover told her, 'You have a choice to work with or against the Service. Tell us what we need to know about the Mossad and we'll leave you alone. You've got a week to think it over. We want full details.'

After buying a caravan park home for her parents at Cabus in Lancashire, she was arrested and accused of setting fire to her parents' park home in Cheshire. She was in custody, when her father, also facing charges, died in hospital after taking an overdose at the age of 72. In her memoirs, she says her mother told her that her father 'believed his divided loyalties after Alamein had led to your persecution'.

In 1988 she jumped bail on the arson charge to live with her mother in Burnage, Manchester. Soon after Eunice Pearcey collapsed and died in Burnage, her daughter was arrested by armed police and held on remand at Risley remand centre, known as 'Grisly Risley' and described in 1988 by the chief inspector of prisons as 'barbarous and squalid'.¹⁸

A demoralised transgender prisoner pleaded guilty to arson at Warrington Crown Court and was sentenced to 3 years and 6 months in a men's prison. She emerged from HMP Liverpool, formerly Walton Gaol, in December 1989, on parole. Working as bookkeeper for a Manchester tax adviser, she started living as the wife of Jim Frank, a former supermarket manager who was working as security guard at the tower block in Ordsall where they were both living.

¹⁸ *Warrington Guardian*, June 4, 2023 at <<https://shorturl.at/cIDW9>> or <<https://www.warringtonguardian.co.uk/news/23561447.risley-prison-recovered-infamous-riot-1989/>>.

A new employer, 'millionaire timber merchant' Graham Hill, gave her time off from accountancy at his head office for the removal of a tumour in the arm in which she had been wounded at Entebbe.

Targeting Asil Nadir

According to her memoir, the spooks came looking for her again on May 10, 1993. They were waiting for Olivia and Jim in a Sainsbury supermarket car park off Regent Road, Salford. It was a soulless *treffpunkt* that would have pleased Len Deighton or Le Carré. From the back seat of her Rover the officers introduced themselves.

'Hi, I'm Taylor, I'm with the Secret Intelligence Service.'

'My name is Denham. I represent Her Majesty's Security Service.'¹⁹

Smooth and superior, the rich timbre of his voice betrayed Oxbridge. My heart quickened. It was a long time since I had had a briefing. All ears, it was like the old days and not about to stop him now. Denham began:

'I feel sure that you keep abreast of the news, you must know that Asil Nadir, the Turkish-Cypriot tycoon, fled Britain last week. He's now a fugitive from British justice, we mean to secure his earliest arrest. We mean to trap Nadir and force him to face trial in the UK. To that end, I want you to meet his banker, Elizabeth Forsyth. The SFO intend to deal with her when she returns to the UK.'

'Unlike Nadir,' Taylor cut in, 'We know for certain Mrs Forsyth will return from Cyprus. She has close family ties in this country.'

'Forsyth will be found guilty at her trial', decreed Denham. 'It's important to our strategy she's imprisoned.'²⁰

Denham wanted me to play a mole and meet Mrs Forsyth in prison. I was meant to be her trusted companion and tell her I used to work for Israel's secret service, the Mossad. They assured me it would impress her. Denham told me if Nadir were to start going into my background by seeking help from MIT . . . the Turkish Secret Service, MI6 would confirm my *legend*, or cover story. He said I would receive instructions on how to snare Nadir and land him jail.²¹

Both Elizabeth Forsyth and Jim Frank assured me in interviews that Olivia Frank's account of what happened next is accurate. This was an ambitious

¹⁹ *The Third Direction* (see note 1) p. 161.

²⁰ *The Third Direction* (see note 1) p. 161.

²¹ *The Third Direction* (see note 1) p. 163.

state-sponsored deception scheme that generated many documents, including letters on government notepaper which I have seen.

The fact that in 2000 or 2001, on legal advice, Olivia Frank sent her life story to Special Branch at New Scotland Yard has also been persuasive. She was blaming Margaret Thatcher and the British police for her ghastly years in the British prison system and hoped to trigger a Special Branch investigation – or at least establish that her disclosures were in the public interest.

Detective Chief Superintendent Mark Lewingdon [sic]²² described our conduct as ‘commendable’. We sent him a copy of our manuscript on a compact disc to New Scotland Yard. He delegated the task of reading our story to Detective Sergeant Tim Jones who eventually told Jim he had found it both tragic and compelling. He urged us to publish, ‘You’ve done no wrong. But they’ll be livid.’

Publishing houses and newspapers were not as brave as Mr Jones. Despite initial interest they either thought it too good to be true or they proved too fearful of legal action from the British government to print the story.²³

Olivia Frank’s account of how two British spooks persuaded the Franks to commit a white-collar crime, embezzling £26,735 from Graham Hill’s company, in order to ensure arrest, trial, conviction and a fourteen months prison sentence at Manchester Crown Court, was hard to accept.

Into Holloway prison

Putting a transgender spy into a Holloway prison cell alongside Elizabeth Forsyth appears to have involved a huge expenditure, including an MI6 brown envelope full of cash to pay for Olivia’s private gynaecological surgery at the Nuffield Hospital in Chester; repayment of embezzled cash to the Manchester timber merchant; new National Insurance numbers, fresh passports and NHS cards for a Mr & Mrs Hart; a holiday for the Harts in the South of France, when the Old Bailey conviction of Mrs Forsyth was delayed; and the promise of £200,000 should the former Tory donor Asil Nadir ever be persuaded to return for trial at the Old Bailey, which happened in 2012.

In January 2017, I photographed £50,000 in banknotes that Olivia Frank said she found in a bin bag in the back of her Ford Ka in an Oswestry car park

²² Mark Lewindon, was a detective chief inspector in Special Branch, New Scotland Yard, on 22 July 2005, when the innocent Brazilian electrician, Jean Charles de Menezes, was shot dead by police at Stockwell underground station. *Guardian*, October 3, 2008.

²³ *The Third Direction* (see note 1) p. 339.

on November 11, 2016.²⁴

Olivia Frank's description of how she befriended Elizabeth Forsyth in Holloway Prison reads like tradecraft of the highest order.

Everyone stared at her as she carried her prison breakfast tray. The international banker looked shell-shocked. I felt sorry for her, she looked so out of place. I had to remain professional. She was my target. I had to plan how we should meet. It had to appear natural and at this early stage, I must avoid eye contact . . .

Denham had kept the promise he had made in my car. He had delivered my target. Far be it for me to allege collusion between MI5 and the judiciary but the history is persuasive. Mr Justice Tucker had misdirected the Old Bailey jury²⁵ and had sentenced Elizabeth Forsyth, a 59 year old Scottish grandmother, to serve five years in prison for handling £440,000, allegedly part of a vast fortune stolen from Polly Peck International by her client Asil Nadir. Nadir was a Conservative Party donor who had fled to Northern Cyprus during his pre-trial hearing on theft and fraud charges before that very same Mr Justice Tucker. When it came time for Mr Justice Tucker to sentence Mrs Forsyth, her 89 year-old mother and her son, Ian McAlpine, were both watching in No. 1 Court at the Bailey. On April 25th, the McAlpine family announced that there would be an appeal.

Next morning in Holloway, like a fish out of water, I could hear Mrs Forsyth's cut-glass home counties accent across the exercise yard. The hook was far too important to rush. There was a big change in her demeanour today from the broken woman I had witnessed yesterday. The feisty lady in a smart scarlet tunic with shiny gold buttons and not a hair out of place, approached me . . .

'Do you mind? You seem like a nice girl. I'm Elizabeth. May I walk with you?'

My mission was now well under way. I used the MI5 arrangement to send a brief note to Denham in a letter posted to Brown and Co, the firm of fake solicitors. I told him all was well.²⁶

Elizabeth Forsyth and the MI5 stool pigeon were both held at Cookham Wood Women's Prison in Kent, where Olivia read an advance copy of Forsyth's book

²⁴ The photograph is in the review of *THE MOSSAD SPY* at <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/article/issue/78/the-mossad-spy-by-olivia-frank/>>.

²⁵ R v Forsyth, Court of Appeal, Criminal Division, April 8, 1997.

²⁶ *The Third Direction* (see note 1) p. 194.

*Who Killed Polly Peck?*²⁷ By the time of her release on 12 July 1996, she had become convinced that the banker once described by the *Guardian* as 'Britain's most-wanted granny' was innocent.

Elizabeth Forsyth walked free from the Appeal Court in January 1997. Her conviction was found unsafe due to judicial errors and by January 1998 Olivia and Jim Frank were being interviewed by Asil Nadir at his headquarters in Istanbul for posts in his security team.

The couple found themselves in a web of lies and disinformation generated by a long-running feud between the British spooks, the Serious Fraud Office and the investigative reporters David Alford and Peter Salkeld from Central Television's *Cook Report*. The feud is too complicated to be described in an obituary but Olivia Frank tackles it enthusiastically in *The Third Direction*.

She describes a conversation after telling SIS officer Taylor that Volkan Karabudak, Asil Nadir's security chief, was sending contracts for Olivia and Jim to join the Nadir security team in Istanbul.

I wanted him to think I was concerned about my future and asked Taylor to confirm how much MI6 would reward us for the job. He assured me we would receive two hundred thousand pounds plus the bonuses set out in the Final Brief. He said once Jim and I returned to London, I would need to 'settle my account' before I received the money. MI6 expected me to sit in a BBC news television studio and claim *The Cook Report* story was a hoax. It would be worldwide breaking news.

I could see it now. Exposing *The Cook Report* to worldwide ridicule would provide the British secret service with revenge for Roger Cook's interview with Nadir, screened in May 1997 by Central Television as *The Man from Del Monte*. Taylor's carefully crafted fabrication must destroy Nadir's and Roger Cook's credibility. It would finally isolate and silence Nadir. No journalist would ever again risk their career in any more attempts to tell his story. Not just me, nobody would ever know the big secret the British secret services wanted to hide. Even out of office, Thatcher would have another political prisoner.²⁸

In 2004, HM Revenue and Customs abandoned a second attempt to convict Elizabeth Forsyth of money laundering after a Natwest bank clerk was found to have changed her story seven times. The trial cost HMRC £16 million.

In letters from her home in Oswestry, between 2006 and 2009, Olivia Frank complained about 'the 1993-8 joint MI5/6 operation against Asil Nadir

²⁷ Elizabeth Forsyth, *Who Killed Polly Peck?* (London: Smith Gryphon, 1996).

²⁸ *The Third Direction* (see note 1) p. 331.

and *The Cook Report* to Owen Paterson, her local MP, to a string of government ministers and to several police chiefs. She asked for a police investigation into Taylor, Denham and the director of the Serious Fraud Office (SFO), Robert Wardle. Two West Mercia police detectives spent four hours being briefed by Olivia Frank before the SFO closed the investigation.

Gerald James's 1995 book *In the Public Interest*²⁹ prompted Elizabeth Forsyth and Olivia Frank to suspect that Nadir's firm Polly Peck had been involved in secret arms deliveries to Saddam Hussein in Iraq.

Elizabeth decided to meet him over coffee at his club in London. James told her Astra had invoiced a Polly Peck subsidiary, Unipac, for arms manufactured by Astra, including explosives for a so-called supergun built by the Canadian engineer Gerald Bull for the Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein.

James was adamant Astra had invoiced Polly Peck. He asked Elizabeth if there had been an accountant or solicitor who could have opened undisclosed bank accounts for Polly Peck or Unipac to conceal arms consignments. Elizabeth mentioned an accountant, the late Dennis Robertson,³⁰ had been a partner at the accountants Stoy Hayward responsible for the Polly Peck audit. James said Robertson had been the Stoy Hayward partner responsible for the audit of his own company Astra. He told Elizabeth he remained very suspicious about the timing of Robertson's death.³¹

Olivia recalled a meeting at Secret Intelligence Service headquarters in London when 'Taylor briefed me to tell David Alford, Asil Nadir was making arms deals with Iraq and Libya.' She googled 'supergun' on her computer.

It took me all round the globe but no nearer the cause of the feud between the British deep state and Asil Nadir. Then I had a crazy idea. The website of the Central Intelligence Agency offered the public a searchable document archive.

I typed 'supergun' into the CIA search engine. Up popped *Project Babylon, the Iraqi Supergun*. Here was a US government report on the very subject that concerned me, released under freedom of information

²⁹ Gerald James, *In the Public Interest* (London: Little, Brown & Co, 1995).

³⁰ John Burnes, 'Joseph K and the spooky laundrette' in *Lobster* 36, winter 1998: 'I believed that money had been laundered in my name through Dutch bank accounts by the late Dennis Robertson, my ex-wife's accountant; and that he laundered funds for SIS, the British intelligence service.'

³¹ *The Third Direction* (see note 1) p. 352.

rules in the USA. I was disappointed, but hardly surprised by the poor quality of the images the CIA had released to the public. The best bits were heavily redacted to obscure sensitive information. I stared in frustration at long rows and deep squares of black patches covering the secret material. It presented a new challenge. I did not know if this report would help Nadir, but it was all I had. I had an idea, the Supergun, constructed in the Middle East, meant this CIA report concerned the Middle East and anything in the Middle East that concerned the CIA would concern Israel. The CIA sometimes share material with their opposite numbers in the Mossad. In that case, would the Mossad happen to have in their files an unredacted, clean copy of the CIA report on the Supergun?³²

The story of how a Mossad courier brought an apparently unredacted copy of the CIA report to be photographed at Olivia Frank's flat in Oswestry appeared on a website named JANCOM [Justice for Asil Nadir Committee], run by Olivia Frank and her colleague Martin Tancock, under Lord Acton's motto 'Everything secret degenerates, even the administration of justice; nothing is safe that does not show how it can bear discussion and publicity.'³³

The Israeli version of the document, with a cover page over-stamped in red with the Modern Hebrew word for 'secret' and the Modern Hebrew text 'From office of prime minister. Date Received 11.91', named two former British Special Air Service soldiers as the assassins of the supergun designer Gerald Bull. The document says the murder was arranged by Stephan Aldolphus Kock, a former officer in the Rhodesian Special Air Service. A consultant to the Midland Bank, Kock was born in Czechoslovakia and died in Scotland in 2008.³⁴

Kock manipulated Project Babylon to divert media attention from the covert arms deals and tipped off UK Customs. They raided a port in Middlesbrough, England,³⁵ and seized the final supergun consignment of barrel tubes.³⁶

If genuine, the stamps indicated that the CIA had passed their secret

³² *The Third Direction* (see note 1) p. 356.

³³ Letter 74, 23 January 1861, published in *Lord Acton and his Circle* (1906) by Abbot Gasquet.

³⁴ Kim Sengupta, 'MI6 knew firm was selling arms to Saddam', *The Independent*, February 24, 1998.

³⁵ Common foreign corruption of Middlesbrough.

³⁶ *Project Babylon: The Iraqi Supergun*, Israeli version, p. 25.

document to Israel in November 1991, just after the government of Yitzhak Shamir had agreed, under intense pressure from US President George HW Bush, to attend the Madrid peace conference after the defeat of Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait.

In his 2013 *View from the Bridge*, the editor of *Lobster* wrote:

The most interesting and important collection of new information that I have seen this year is at <http://www.jancom.org/>.

In recounting the US-UK (but apparently mostly UK in this account) covert operations to arm Iraq and the subsequent events, it describes four assassinations – Bull, journalist Jonathan Moyle, Belgian politician André Cools, and one Lionel Jones – commissioned by the late Stephan Kock, allegedly of MI6, and carried out by British (SAS) personnel. This was followed by a vast judicial-state conspiracy to cover it up.

But is the document genuine? We will probably never know: the CIA certainly won't confirm it. My guess is that it isn't, that it is disinformation; that someone spotted the redacted section in the original report and realised they could use it. This is what makes me doubt it.

Would a CIA report name UK assassins? How would the CIA know who had done the killings?

The JANCOM site says 'All the expert evidence indicates that the CIA report is genuine. It matches the highly redacted copy released under the US Freedom of Information Act. (FOIA)'. But the front covers of the two documents, the official declassified version on the Web and the version offered by the JANCOM site are different. And even if they were identical, things can be copied.³⁷

Despite his doubts, the editor of *Lobster* emailed the mysterious JANCOM on June 19, 2013:

Hello. I would be most interested to know when and how you acquired the 3 pages apparently from the CIA's redacted Project Babylon report. Clearly this document's origins and credibility is at the heart of the story. As it is presented on the JANCOM site there is no reason to accept it as genuine; and one or two reasons to doubt its authenticity

Olivia Frank was ready to break cover but her reply was tentative:

Describing to you now via the Internet/Prism how the document was

³⁷ *View from the Bridge*, *Lobster* 65, at <https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/article/issue/65/the-view-from-the-bridge-28/>.

acquired would negate the safety of the source. I do accept that this explanation should be part of the JANCOM website, but it is still in the process of creation and not yet completed. Authenticity of the said document is beyond all doubt. It is genuine. Unless we can reach an arrangement of trust whereby the source might be revealed to you, we are unable to do so. We do hope that you understand our dilemma. Should you have any more questions, I would hope to be able to answer them.

Despite a telephone call from Gerald James assuring *Lobster* that the unredacted CIA report came from the Mossad, Ramsay was cautious. His complaint that a Frank manuscript had 'no index, not enough editing; far too much reported speech (she can recall conversations decades later?)',³⁸ earned a defiant reply from the Mossad Spy: 'I have a fantastic memory – part of being a spy. This is Ramsay playing bastard. He does that very well.'

It was obviously time for a foot-in-the-door man. By an intriguing coincidence, Robin Ramsay had previously asked me to knock on the door of John Burnes in Wigan, after Burnes's computer had disintegrated during the publication of his story about the very same spooky accountant – Dennis Robertson.³⁹ On 31 August 2013, Olivia and Jim Frank briefed me from their armchairs in the Wynnstay Hotel in Oswestry (built 1727). I've been on the story for the last ten years.

There is a footnote in the 2022 *Third Direction* in which Olivia Frank eventually offered an answer to Robin Ramsay's 2013 doubts:

Several weeks after I had acquired the secret *Project Babylon* report and had published it on the Internet, a source of mine told me to revisit the CIA archive. The CIA had replaced the original copy of the report with a document that differed from my copy. Apart from other subtle changes, specifically, the intelligence section was removed. It was too late, I had the genuine copy, verified by Colonel John Hughes-Wilson, formerly on the political staff at NATO headquarters in Brussels, he had examined and verified the authenticity of the CIA report. He was a senior British intelligence officer at Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe in Mons. He knew all there was to know about secret documents.⁴⁰

Olivia Frank was widowed⁴¹ and seriously ill when she published the *Third*

³⁸ <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/article/issue/78/the-mossad-spy-by-olivia-frank/>>

³⁹ John Burnes (see note 30).

⁴⁰ *The Third Direction* (see note 1) p. 366.

⁴¹ Olivia and Jim Frank were not legally married.

Direction in 2022. She still had scores to settle, with Netanyahu and the zealots; with the British policemen and prison officers who had harassed her as 'Thatcher's Prisoner'; with her MP, Owen Paterson;⁴² and with the justice secretary Chris Grayling.

She was miffed when the evidence she had gathered for Elizabeth Forsyth and later presented to Asil Nadir's London solicitors went unheard by the Old Bailey jury who found Nadir guilty in August 2012 of the theft of £29 million from Polly Peck. He was jailed for ten years, serving 3 years and 9 months in British prisons and one day in a Turkish prison before returning to his villa in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, where the deputy Prime Minister, Serdar Denktash, told reporters at the airport: 'I saw the joy in his eyes. He will surely become useful for the island once again.'

Olivia Frank offers 36 reasons for the failure of Nadir's defence.

The British government issued a record number of public interest immunity certificates, 36 PIICs, commonly known as gagging orders, they destroyed Nadir's defence. His trial looked like one of those show trials staged behind the Iron Curtain during the Cold War. There had been a number of these show trials in Britain in the early nineties, Euromac, Ordtech, Matrix Churchill and the trial of Elizabeth Forsyth. Evidence was suppressed instead of investigated, evidence was manufactured and PIIC imposed.⁴³

To support her show trial argument, Olivia Frank tossed into her final memoir the entire text of a long and angry email sent to Elizabeth Forsyth by a barrister during the trial. The email is fascinating but too legally dangerous to be repeated in England by *Lobster*. As a former court reporter, I cannot recall seeing anything so alarming, even in the days of rough and ready assize courts.

Olivia Frank could be gracious when dealing with professionals. In a charming paragraph in her final book, she finds herself admiring the tradecraft of her MI6 handler, the man who had wanted to trap Nadir into returning to England, the man with the Oxbridge accent who had climbed into the back seat of her car on a supermarket car park in Salford in 1993,

⁴² Conservative MP for North Shropshire, resigned 5 November 2021, after a finding that he had broken paid advocacy rules.

⁴³ The use of PIICs is discussed in Martin Tancock, 'Secret Justice: Public Interest Immunity Certificates (PIICs) and their use in the Asil Nadir trials' in *Lobster* 66 at <<https://shorturl.at/hAHJW>> or <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/article/issue/66/secret-justice-public-interest-immunity-certificates-piics-and-their-use-in-the-asil-nadir-trials/>>.

the spy she thought she had outwitted.

Taylor had instructed Jim and Olivia to hire a hardscrabble private detective from a *Yellow Pages* list and to persuade him to trick the *Cook Report* team into believing he was an MI6 officer. Years later Olivia discovered that their cheap private dick from the Kent phonebook had really been a top-class MI6 asset.

Whatever happened to Grundy, alias Mark Perry? Everyone, including Jim and [me] seemed to have forgotten about him, yet he had played a key role in the operation. Here was a stunning twist. My niggle there was 'something not quite right about him' based primarily on the fact that he drove a car far too expensive for a man on his uppers suddenly became clear. Taylor had duped me from the start about Grundy . . . I have since tracked down Perry alias Grundy and found he has a genuine public background in drama. When he worked for MI6, he was not a mediocre actor, he was a good convincing actor playing the part of an amateur . . . Perry is a few years younger than me. He has developed a career within radio and television drama, writing scripts. I shall say no more. I have no intention to unmask him if he is still working as a spy for the British.



© Image: Andrew Rosthorn

Olivia Frank's death in hospital, from entirely natural causes, was almost as mysterious as her flight to Tel Aviv on a false British passport in 1974. She left a hefty sum of money in at least two banks but no will and no living relatives. Just the name and telephone number of Tom Phillips, her proof-reader and close friend for six years who lived in Weymouth. On one of my own visits to the hospital she gave me the keys of her flat in Oswestry which allowed a further check on the accuracy of the books she published – her real testament. The documents I photographed in the flat did nothing

but support her veracity. With one exception for temporary operational reasons, I think I can say that she never told me a lie. Not bad for a transgender spy who had survived the wilderness of mirrors.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ James Jesus Angleton, counter-intelligence chief CIA, 1954-75, took the phrase from the poem 'Gerontion' by T. S. Eliot: 'In a wilderness of mirrors. What will the spider do?'

