**Threats to Democracy?**

**Everyone Wants to Influence our Elections.**

**When we can no longer trust the results of our elections, because of foreign social media. We are attacked at the heart of our Democracy.**

**We have all heard about Russians, Chinese and North Koreans using social media to manipulate the minds of Americans, but now we hear that even our Allies (Israel) are using social media to support specific candidates who will support their nation.**

**When foreign nations can effectively promote specific candidates, the validity of our elections is jeopardized and our democracy is seriously endangered.**

**How long will we tolerate any foreign country, friendly or otherwise, to use social media to influence our elections?**

**How do we stop this!?**

**SOURCE:**

**The Candidate and the Spy: James Bamford on Israel’s Secret Collusion with Trump to Win 2016 Race**

 **Nation, April 2023**

* ["The Candidate and the Spy: The Trump Campaign’s Collusion With Israel"](https://www.thenation.com/article/world/trump-israel-collusion/), ***Nation***, April 2023
* ["Spyfail: Foreign Spies, Moles, Saboteurs, and the Collapse of America's Counterintelligence"](https://www.twelvebooks.com/titles/james-bamford/spyfail/9781538741153/) Book, Jan 2023

In his new book, *Spyfail: Foreign Spies, Moles, Saboteurs, and the Collapse of America’s Counterintelligence*, investigative journalist James Bamford reveals that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu dispatched a secret Israeli agent to the United States in the spring of 2016 to help Donald Trump win the presidential election. The agent met with advisers to Trump and offered to share secret intelligence with the campaign against Hillary Clinton. Bamford’s investigation finds that while American media fixated on Russia’s role in swaying the 2016 election, Israeli interference was completely ignored. He joins us from Washington, D.C., for more on what’s been uncovered during his investigation. “The Israelis got what they wanted, and Trump got what he wanted, and the American public was screwed in the meantime,” Bamford says.

**AMY GOODMAN:** This is *Democracy Now!*, democracynow.org, *The War and Peace Report*. I’m Amy Goodman.

As mass protests rock Israel against the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his plan to overhaul Israel’s judiciary, we turn now to look at how Netanyahu secretly tried to help Donald Trump win the 2016 election. That’s the focus of a new [cover story](https://www.thenation.com/article/world/trump-israel-collusion/) in *The Nation* headlined “The Candidate and the Spy.” Longtime, award-winning investigative journalist James Bamford reveals Netanyahu dispatched a secret Israeli agent to the United States in the spring of 2016 to meet with advisers to Trump and offer to share secret intelligence with the campaign against Hillary Clinton.

The story is based in part on a series of text messages sent by the Israeli secret agent to Trump adviser Roger Stone. In one message, from August 12th, 2016, the agent wrote, quote, “Roger, hello from Jerusalem. Any progress? He is going to be defeated unless we intervene. We have critical intel. The key is in your hands!” the text read. Later, the agent wrote, quote, “October Surprise [is] coming!”

James Bamford writes, quote, “While the American media and political system fixated on Russian President Vladimir Putin and his armies of cyber warriors, trolls, and bots, what was completely missed in the Russiagate investigation of 2016 was the Israeli connection. No details of it were ever revealed in the heavily redacted Mueller Report” or in the Senate Intelligence Committee report.

James Bamford joins us now from Washington, D.C., author of many books, his latest, *Spyfail: Foreign Spies, Moles, Saboteurs, and the Collapse of America’s Counterintelligence*.

Jim, welcome back to *Democracy Now!* It’s great to have you with us. Take us on this journey. Talk about what happened, why we know a lot about Russia, or at least a lot is made of, in going after Russia, saying it tried to overthrow the 2016 election or spin it for Trump. What actually is documented here is Israel’s involvement, and yet Mueller report, Senate Intelligence Committee, it looks like they knew but just didn’t want to talk about it.

**JAMES BAMFORD:** Well, exactly. The documents I got are from the FBI. There are the FBI affidavit about this. There’s documents, numerous quotes from the secret agent, the Israeli secret agent sent by Netanyahu, talking about the “PM,” which the FBI agent indicates was the prime minister, and lays out a months-long plot, basically, from May of 2016 ’til the fall of 2016, right up to the election.

This was investigated by the Mueller team. It was the Mueller team, the Mueller FBI agents who actually got a search warrant for the secret agent’s communications. And that’s what these documents are. These are the basis of that investigation from the FBI and the Mueller team. But all this was redacted from the final Mueller report. All they focused on was Russia, and in the end, they basically gave Russia a bill of health. They said that there was no collusion between Russia and the Trump campaign.

They left out a little bit from the report, and that’s that there was collusion, but it was from Netanyahu and Israel to the Trump campaign, and it went on for months and months and involved providing the Trump campaign with secret access to the information that the Russians were picking up from Hillary Clinton’s campaign and the DNC. In other words, the Israelis, they have a very, very sophisticated eavesdropping organization, Unit 8200. It’s their equivalent of the NSA. And they were eavesdropping on the Russians and eavesdropping on WikiGate, and they were — and Julian Assange. And they were picking up all this information that the Russians were getting from the Clinton campaign and the DNC. And rather than giving it to the president of United States, to Obama, which is what an ally is supposed to do, especially one that gets $4 billion a year, they instead were giving it to the Trump campaign, secretly giving it to the Trump campaign, in order to get concessions from Trump when he became president, and hopefully they were going to help make him president.

**AMY GOODMAN:** Well, let’s talk about that moment, why this was so critical for Netanyahu. Talk about the Quartet, the direction Obama and the Quartet were going in, and why Netanyahu wanted Trump to win.

**JAMES BAMFORD:** Well, a key reason he wanted Trump to win was because Trump vowed to throw out the nuclear agreement with Iran that the Obama administration worked very hard on and was very useful to the United States. And Netanyahu didn’t like it. He didn’t want it. He wanted Trump to get rid of it, and Trump was planning to do that.

But he wanted a second thing, too. The Obama administration was putting a great deal of pressure on Netanyahu to work out an agreement with the Palestinians over Jerusalem, which was divided — the final agreement over Jerusalem was going to be divided between the Palestinians and Israel. Israel wanted — Netanyahu wanted the entire city to be Israeli. And so they were putting pressure on the Trump campaign, saying, “Look, this is what we want, and we can help Trump get elected, but we have to have a — basically, have to have an agreement that he’s going to help us on this issue over the sovereignty of Jerusalem.”

And in the very end, that’s what happened. There was a secret meeting, or at least a private meeting, in the Trump penthouse in New York just between Netanyahu and Trump. And after it was over, Trump came out, and that’s what he said. He said that “If I’m elected president, I’m going to move the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem and declare Jerusalem the capital of Israel.” So, the Israelis got what they wanted, and Trump got what he wanted, and the American public was screwed in the meantime.

**AMY GOODMAN:** Jim Bamford, in your [piece](https://www.thenation.com/article/world/trump-israel-collusion), “The Candidate and the Spy,” you write, “Although the affidavit did not specify any individual defendants, the numerous potential criminal charges laid out in the FBI documents spoke to the seriousness of the Israeli plot. They included violation of the foreign contributions ban, which prohibits foreigners from contributing money or something of value to federal, state, or local elections. Other charges included aiding and abetting, conspiracy, wire fraud, and attempted conspiracy to commit wire fraud. Still another charge, 'unauthorized access to a protected computer,' indicates Israel may have conducted illegal hacking operations.” Can you talk more about this, and the man who is the spy in that title of your piece, married to, what, Netanyahu’s cousin?

**JAMES BAMFORD:** Well, yeah, they don’t name the spy. The spy’s name is redacted. But there are a lot of similarities with one of Trump’s closest associates, Isaac Molho. And he’s a very shadowy character. He’s described as very discreet. And Netanyahu sends him on secret missions various places. So, I just mentioned that that happens to be a very close associate who goes on secret missions for Netanyahu, at least according to the Israeli newspaper *Haaretz*, the well-known and highly respected *Haaretz*. So, he’s a candidate, but I don’t know if he was the secret agent or not. I’m just mentioning him as one of the people that Netanyahu does send out on secret missions. So, you know, I think it would be very important for the U.S. government to identify this person who was trying to interfere and throw the election in favor of Trump.

**AMY GOODMAN:** You also comment that it’s not only the United States that the Netanyahu government was involved with trying to interfere with the elections. You talk about Latin America, Africa. Talk about this Archimedes Group.

**JAMES BAMFORD:** Well, just to back up a little bit, just recently, in the last few weeks, there was an enormous [investigation](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/feb/15/revealed-disinformation-team-jorge-claim-meddling-elections-tal-hanan) that was revealed throughout much of the world, actually. And it was an eight-month investigation by journalists from some of the most respected newspapers in the world, including *Haaretz* in Israel, *El País* in Spain, *The Observer* and *The Guardian* in London, the *Der Spiegel* in Germany and a French newspaper. Anyway, it was an enormous investigation, went on for eight months. And the focus was Israel interfering in elections around the world.

And they came out with an enormous amount of detail, including undercover investigations of Israeli activity trying to overthrow — or, rather, throw elections in Latin America, Africa and, according to one of the members of the group, in the United States. So, this had been going on for a very long time. It basically identified Israel as the world’s center for election interference and — or secret election interference. And Archimedes Group was one of those companies, earlier on, before this investigation, that was identified as a company that Israel was using to — or at least it was a private company with ties to the Israeli intelligence that was using a lot of fraud and other aspects to throw elections in various parts of the world. I think there were 13 countries or something it was involved in.

So, this has been going on for a long time. Israel has been involved in enormous amounts of covert operations and intelligence operations in the U.S. just in the last seven years. Half my book deals with Israeli intelligence and covert operations in the United States. But there’s a determination by all parties involved — the administration, congressmen, the mainstream media — to completely use blinders when it comes to Israel.

**AMY GOODMAN:** So, finally, while the U.S. media fixated on Russian interference in the 2016 election, another campaign to influence the outcome, by Israel, went unreported. That was 2016. Now we’re moving in on the 2024 election, and you have the prime minister of Israel is again Benjamin Netanyahu, and again President Trump is running for president. Your final thoughts, Jim?

**JAMES BAMFORD:** Well, it’s going to be *déjà vu* all over again. It’s going to be a repeat, since we have the same players in the same positions, and the same media that pays no attention to anything that Israel does that’s questionable in the United States, and the Congress and the administration that completely turn a blind eye to Israeli intelligence. So, yeah, we’re here again, and it just can repeat itself with the same players doing the same play all over again, unless there is congressional investigation or hard-hitting reporting by the mainstream media and further investigation by the FBI.

**AMY GOODMAN:** Well, Jim Bamford, we want to have you back on to talk about your book, but we want to thank you so much for being with us now. James Bamford, longtime investigative journalist. We’ll link to your new [cover story](https://www.thenation.com/article/world/trump-israel-collusion/) for *The Nation*, “The Candidate and the Spy.”

*The original content of this program is licensed under a*[*Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 United States License*](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/us/)*. Please attribute legal copies of this work to democracynow.org. Some of the work(s) that this program incorporates, however, may be separately licensed. For further information or additional permissions, contact us.*