



Français



37th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION
Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade

EVIDENCE
CONTENTS
Tuesday, June 4, 2002

s22(1)(a)(ii)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Mr. Keith Martin: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Finally, I've been doing some work on the related issue of the trafficking of blood diamonds and a guy by the name of Ari Ben-Menashe, who has had some dealings with the Department of Foreign Affairs. He lives in Montreal, and he is a former Mossad agent. I've come up with some very serious allegations, and I just want to know what your perspectives are on them. It deals with Ben-Menashe; a guy named Victor Bout, who is an international arms dealer; and a guy named Bredenkamp, who's another international arms dealer. They allege that Israel was giving biological and chemical weapons to both Iran and Iraq during the war. Is that true or is that just a myth?

Thank you very much.



The Vice-Chair (Mr. Bernard Patry): Mr. Sinclair.



Mr. Donald C. Sinclair: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Martin, on the third question, I think you would have to ask those involved. I have not heard of this, and I wouldn't want to speak for Israel, but I would be highly doubtful in my own mind that there was anything to this whatsoever. But again, that's from my own mind. If you wanted a conclusive answer, you'd have to pose it, I think, to Israel.

s22(1)(a)(ii)



Title: Myanmar – Sitrep 34 – 7 March
MRN: 07/03/2021 10:18:08 PM ZE10
To: Brussels; Canberra; Geneva UN; Indo-Pacific Posts; London; UN New York;
Washington; Yangon
Cc:
From: Canberra
(CHCH/DFAT/SED/SBBB)
From File:
EDRMS
Files:
References: s 47E(d)
Response: Routine, Information Only

s22(1)(a)(ii)



s 47F(1), s22(1)(a)(ii)

s 47E(d)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

13. Ari Ben-Menashe, an Israeli-Canadian lobbyist, has told media he and his firm, Dickens & Madson Canada have been hired by Myanmar's generals to help communicate with the United States and other countries who 'misunderstood' them. Among other things,

Ben-Menashe claimed Myanmar's generals want to leave politics after the coup and to distance themselves from China.

s22(1)(a)(ii)

text ends

Sent by: s22(1)(a)(ii)

Prepared by: s 47F(1), s22(1)(a)(ii)

Approved by: s22(1)(a)(ii)

Topics: CONSULAR/Consular Contingency Planning, POLITICAL-ECONOMIC/International Political, SECURITY/Threats & Risks

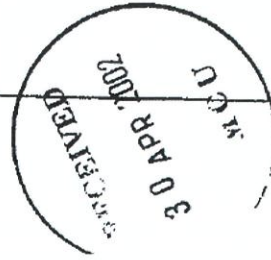
▼ New Distribution

s 47E(d)

s 47F(1)

From: s 47F(1)
Sent: Tuesday, 23 April 2002 9:45 PM
To: A. Downer. Mp@Aph. Gov. Au
Subject: FW: ZWNEWS - 23 April 2002

s 47F(1)

**ZWNEWS**

23 April 2002

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- Ben-Menasha signs contract - DNews

s22(1)(a)(ii)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

From The Daily News, 22 April**Ben-Menasha signs contract**

Ari Ben-Menasha, a key player behind the sting operation of an alleged plot to assassinate President says he has signed a contract with the government to launch an international economic lobby. Ben-Menasha said this on SW Radio Africa's Saturday programme, News This Week. SW Radio Africa is an independent station which is run by Zimbabweans and broadcasts from the United Kingdom. "I have signed a contract with the Zimbabwean government to embark on an international economic lobby," said Ben-Menasha, the director

24/04/2002

of a Canada-based public relations consultancy firm, Dickens and Madson. However, in the same radio interview he said he had decided not to be a witness in the case anymore, repeating what he was quoted as saying in The Zimbabwe Independent's Friday issue.

Ben-Menashe was expected to be the State's star witness in the treason charges against Tsvangirai, Welshman Ncube, the MDC secretary-general, and Renson Gasela, the party's shadow minister of agriculture. They are due to appear in court next week to answer charges arising from a meeting they held with Ben-Menashe in London and Montreal in which they allegedly plotted to kill Mugabe. The trio, if convicted, face the death sentence or life imprisonment. Ben-Menashe said of the Tsvangirai case: "That is now something else, I am now concentrating on this contract." Asked if he got the deal because of his links with Zanu PF, he said: "The contract was signed with the government of Zimbabwe and not Zanu PF." He refused to say how long the contract was for. There was no immediate confirmation from the government.

Ben-Menashe is involved in a number of deals, including several multi-million dollar contracts concluded in 1997 and 1998 with the Zambian government of former president Frederick Chiluba. It is alleged that Ben-Menashe, representing a Canadian company, was introduced to Chiluba. The Zambian government allegedly paid US\$7,8 million (Z\$429 million) for maize procurement, which was never delivered. The Zambian government also contracted Ben-Menashe to play down allegations of gun-running by the Angolans in 1998. Angola accused several senior Zambian politicians of selling arms to Unita. Chiluba's government allegedly paid US\$1 million to Ben-Menashe to use his alleged contacts in the United States' Central Intelligence Agency and the United Nations to downplay the allegations.

s22(1)(a)(ii)

The Hon. Philip Ruddock MP

Minister for Immigration and Multicultural
and Indigenous Affairs

Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Reconciliation



Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600

Telephone: (02) 6277 7860

Facsimile: (02) 6273 4144

The Hon Alexander Downer MP
Minister for Foreign Affairs
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

21 JAN 2003

Dear Minister

Thank you for your letter of 24 January 2002, advising me of your response to
a possible visit to Australia by Mr Ari Ben-Menashe.

s 47E(d), s 47F(1)

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention.

Yours sincerely

Philip Ruddock

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DFAT 22 JAN 2002 AMBAIC

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MS SV

The Hon Alexander Downer MP
Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600



Dear Mr Downer

POSSIBLE CONTROVERSIAL VISA APPLICANT – MR ARI BEN-MENASHE

I am writing to seek your views on an application to visit Australia by Mr Ari Ben-Menashe. Comments are also being sought from the Prime Minister. Mr Ben-Menashe, who has previously claimed to be a former member of an Israeli intelligence agency, was the subject of some media interest during his stay in Australia between April 1991 and April 1992.

Mr Ben-Menashe currently works for Dickson and Madson, business consultants in Montreal. s 47F(1)
s 47F(1)

s 47F(1)

Mr Ari Ben-Menashe, date of birth 4 December 1951, is a citizen of both Israel and Canada. s 47E(d), s 47F(1)
s 47E(d), s 47F(1)

In November 1989 Mr Ben-Menashe was arrested in the USA for violating the US Arms Export Control Act, but was acquitted by a Federal Jury in November 1990. Mr Ben-Menashe claimed to have been employed by the Israeli secret service and that at the time of his arrest he was involved in consultations with the Iranian government, sanctioned by both the Israeli and US Governments, for the sale to Iran of three military aircraft owned by Israel.

As part of the case for the defence, a "Time" magazine correspondent testified that Mr Ben-Menashe had told him about arms deals between the US and Israel several months before the story broke in a Lebanese newspaper in November 1986. This was the first published report of activities which became known as the 'Iran-Contra' case.


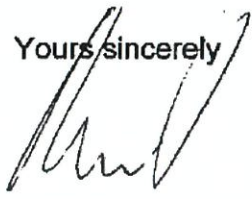
During his time in Australia, Mr Ben-Menashe was the subject of some media interest concerning his claims of prior employment with the Israeli secret service. He also claimed that arms shipments had transited a West Australian port in 1987. He has written a number of books on the Israeli secret service. ^{s 47E(d), s 47F(1)}

s 47E(d), s 47F(1)

On 25 September 2001 Senator Murray asked a Question on Notice about the refusal of Mr Ben-Menashe's application for a protection visa in 1991. The Question also asked about the investigations conducted at the time by the Department into Mr Ben-Menashe's claims to be a former Israeli intelligence officer. The WA Royal Commission was interested in Mr Ben-Menashe's allegations that a US \$6 million contribution was made to an Australian political party as part of an arms trafficking operation, and that arms transfers took place through a West Australian port in 1987. Mr Ben-Menashe, however, departed Australia in April 1992 prior to testifying in the WA Royal Commission. A copy of Senator Murray's Question on Notice, No. 3840, and the response is at **Attachment A**.

s 47F(1), s 47C(1)

Yours sincerely



Philip Ruddock

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE**IMMIGRATION AND MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO****QUESTION No 3840**

Senator Murray asked the Minister representing the Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs –With reference to the refusal by the Department to grant refugee status to Mr Ari Ben-Menashe in 1991, and given that Mr Ben-Menashe's application was based on his claim to be a former Israeli military intelligence officer and his fear of prosecution under the Official Secrets Act if he were to return to Israel:

- (1) Did the Department investigate whether Mr Ben-Menashe was in fact a former military intelligence officer; if not, why not.
- (2) If the matter was investigated, what was the result of this investigation.
- (3) If the Department did not accept Mr Ben-Menashe's claim that he was a former military intelligence officer, on what basis did it reject that claim.
- (4) Did the Department make any determination as to the extent to which Mr Ben-Menashe was involved in intelligence activities.
- (5) Was the Department aware that Mr Ben-Menashe appeared before a Congressional inquiry in the United States (US).
- (6) Was the Department aware of Mr Ben-Menashe's desire to similarly appear before the West Australian Royal Commission into the Commercial Activities of Government and Other Matters.
- (7) Was the Department aware that Mr Ben-Menashe intended to inform the Royal Commission that arms had been illegally trafficked through Fremantle in Western Australia.
- (8) Was the Department aware that Mr Ben-Menashe also intended to testify that a US\$6 million 'contribution' was made to the Australian Labor Party as part of the arms trafficking operation.
- (9) In respect of (1) and (4) to (8) inclusive, was the Minister made aware of these facts; if not, why not.

(10) On what basis was Mr Ben-Menashe's application for asylum rejected.

Reply:

I can advise that after careful consideration of all the available information, the Department concluded that Mr Ben-Menashe's claims did not amount to persecution under the Refugees Convention 1958 and accordingly it was determined that Mr Ben-Menashe was not a refugee within the meaning of the Refugees Convention.

I would prefer not to reply to this question in Parliament with the personal particulars of this case, in view of the privacy considerations.

However, I am willing to offer Senator Murray a private briefing on this matter, should he request one.



FOREIGN
AFFAIRS AND
TRADE

Ministerial Submission

**FOR: MR DOWNER
(FOR ACTION)**

**MR VAILE
(FOR INFORMATION)**

From: John Quinn, AS MAB, s 47E(d)
Janaline Oh, A/g AS IOB, s 47E(d)

Contact: s 22(a)(ii)
s 22(a)(ii)

Subject: s 47E(d)
MENASHE

: MR ARI BEN-

Urgency: Routine

Key Issues:

s 47E(d)

s 33(a)(iii)

Mr Ben-Menashe, a citizen of Canada and Israel and former Israeli intelligence agent, is a paid lobbyist for the Zimbabwean Government, and has an international reputation as a liar and fraudster. s 47C

Recommendations:

That you:

(a) s 33(a)(iii)

;

(b) s 47C

(c) s 47E(d)

Decision:

Agreed/Not Agreed

Signed/Not Signed

Signed/Not Signed

Please Discuss

Domestic/Media Considerations: Yes. (see Attachment A)

Action:

Alexander Downer
/ /

Information:

Noted

Mark Vaile
/ /

Background:

s 33(a)(iii), s 47F(1)

s 33(a)(iii)

2. In March 2002, SBS's *Dateline* program aired video footage, filmed by a hidden camera, of a meeting between Ben-Menashe and Zimbabwean opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai. The footage appears to show Tsvangirai and Ben-Menashe discussing arrangements for a transition of political power after the "elimination" of President Mugabe. *Dateline* alleged that Tsvangirai had been plotting to assassinate Mugabe, and Tsvangirai was subsequently charged with high treason in Zimbabwe. The trial has been consistently deferred, in an apparent attempt by the Zimbabwe Government to use the charges to counter Tsvangirai's legal challenge to the validity of the March 2002 presidential elections, which saw Mugabe returned to power. Tsvangirai has filed a defamation lawsuit against SBS, and a trial is scheduled to take place at the NSW Supreme Court in mid-2003. Tsvangirai is to be represented by Stuart Littlemore QC.

3. Dickens & Madson, Ben-Menashe's Montreal-based business consulting firm, is said to have received some US\$400,000 from the Government of Zimbabwe for lobbying services aimed at revamping and promoting Zimbabwe's image abroad, and Ben-Menashe describes Mugabe as a "friend". s 33(a)(iii)

4. Ben-Menashe has developed an international reputation as a liar and fraudster, who uses his former Israeli intelligence background to attract attention to various dubious allegations and accusations. A US Congressional inquiry in 1993, known as the October Surprise Taskforce, found Ben-Menashe's claims regarding the Iran-Contra affair to be a fabrication, s 47E(d)

Additionally, Ben-Menashe's firm, Dickens & Madson, defrauded the Government of Zambia in a deal to supply maize in the late 1990s, and has been connected with the smuggling of "conflict diamonds" on behalf of senior Zimbabwean politicians involved in the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Ben-Menashe also made allegations in 1999, later proven to be false, claiming that Mossad was behind a conspiracy to kill Princess Diana.

John Quinn
Assistant Secretary
MAB/PMD

Janaline Oh
A/g Assistant Secretary
IOB/ILD

Consultation:**File No.:**

Attachment ADomestic/Media Considerations

SBS journalist Mark Davis, who ran the *Dateline* story on the alleged Zimbabwe assassination plot, also filed a story for *Dateline* on 31 October 2001, rehashing claims made by Ben-Menashe in 1991 that arms shipped by the US to Iran, as part of the Iran-Contra affair, transited Western Australian defence facilities in 1987. Ben-Menashe alleged that a secret payment of US\$6 million made to the WA Labor Party by a company controlled by the CIA (Hadron Inc) in return for the illegal transit of the arms on Australian soil. Ben-Menashe's claims implicated former Prime Minister Hawke and businessmen Alan Bond and Yosse Goldberg in the transaction. Representatives of the WA Royal Commission into the Commercial Activities of Government and Other Matters (WA Inc.) questioned Ben-Menashe about these claims, s 47E(d)

The story run by Davis in 2001 brought no new evidence.

s 47E(d)

,s 47C

. s 47F(1)

Democrats

Senator Andrew Murray, a member of the Joint Standing Committee Inquiry into the Electoral Funding of Political Parties, told Parliament in late 2001 that the Committee should look into the allegations. ALP MPs have rebutted such suggestions by pointing to Ben-Menashe's reputation as a delusional liar.