



**The Man Who Never Has Enough**

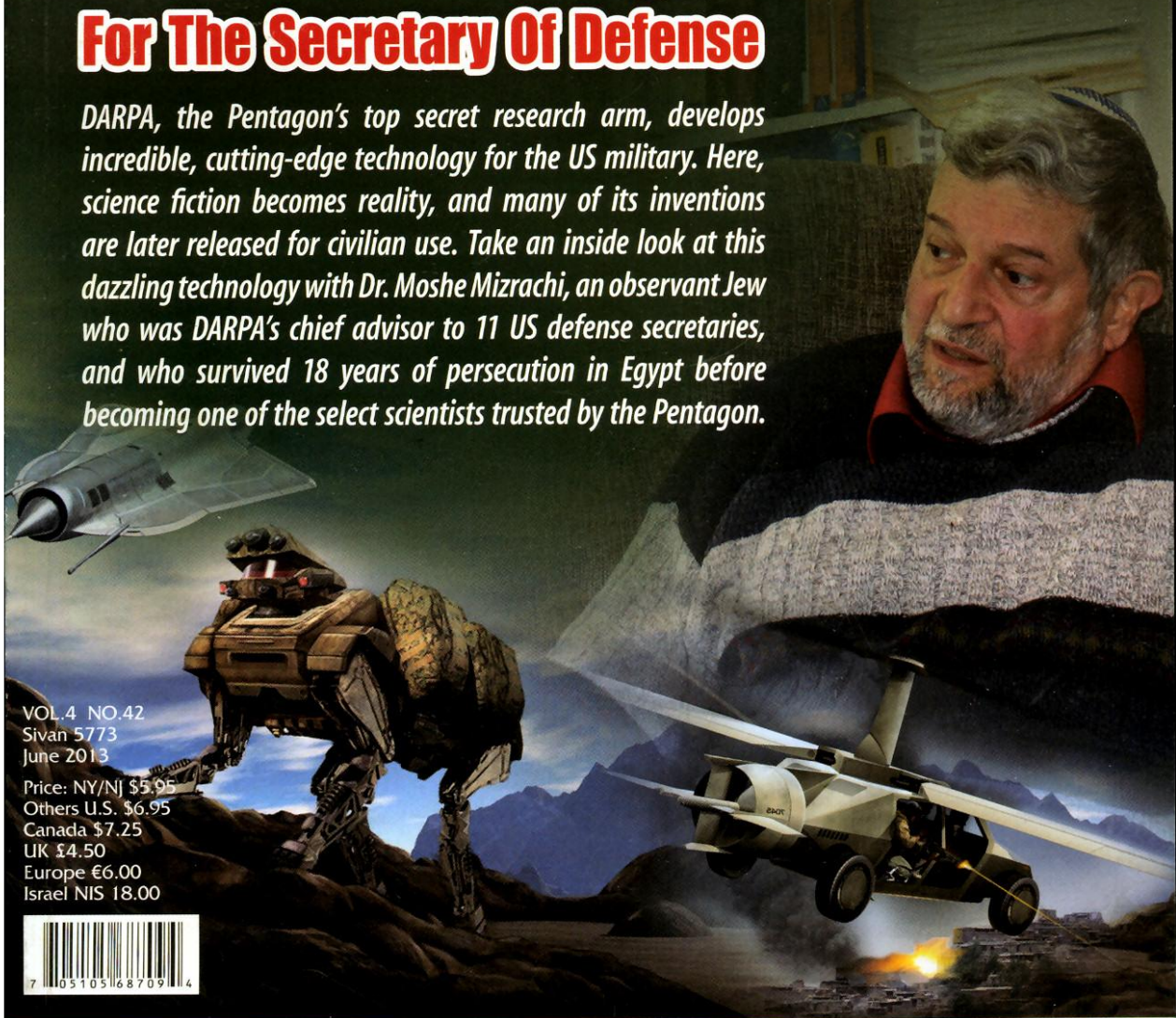
*Prince Alwaleed bin Talal takes every opportunity to flaunt his huge fortune. But does the prince who claims to own more American assets than anyone else have a hidden agenda?*

***117* ZMAN**

IN-DEPTH COVERAGE, TIMELY ISSUES, STIMULATING STORIES FOR THE JEWISH FAMILY

**The Technology Guru  
For The Secretary Of Defense**

*DARPA, the Pentagon's top secret research arm, develops incredible, cutting-edge technology for the US military. Here, science fiction becomes reality, and many of its inventions are later released for civilian use. Take an inside look at this dazzling technology with Dr. Moshe Mizrachi, an observant Jew who was DARPA's chief advisor to 11 US defense secretaries, and who survived 18 years of persecution in Egypt before becoming one of the select scientists trusted by the Pentagon.*



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## From Persecution To The Pentagon

*Shimon Rosenberg*

He is an observant Jew who survived of 18 years of persecution in Egypt to become one of the select scientists hired by the Pentagon to work on some of the most secret and advanced technologies for the American military. During his 34-year tenure at the Pentagon, he helped advise 11 US defense secretaries. Meet Dr. Moshe Mizrahi and learn about his incredibly varied and rich life.

## A Clash of Civilizations

When the State of Israel was declared in 1948, Jews in Arab lands became scapegoats. Mobs in Algeria, Morocco, Libya, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Egypt vented their frustrations against their Jewish neighbors, most of whom they had been living with peacefully for generations. It resulted in a great exodus of Jews, some 850,000 by most estimates. In comparison, the events of 1948 created about 726,000 Arab refugees from "Palestine."

Historian Sir Martin Gilbert offers a chilling description of the atrocities perpetrated against the Jews at that time in his book, "In Ishmael's House: A History of Jews in Muslim Lands." The family of our interviewee in this month's cover story, Dr. Moshe Mizrahi, was a victim of those developments. Born in Egypt in 1949, Moshe was persecuted throughout his childhood until he left in 1967. His family was among the last 1,000 Egyptian Jews that had once numbered 100,000 in 1948.

When he finally got out (his father never did), he came to America penniless and without any skills. However, as he put it, he had a "Jewish mind," a strong work ethic—and a lot of help from Above. He rose in the ranks, landed a job in the Pentagon and spent the next 34 years there. For 30 of those years, he served as a special advisor to the highest official in the Pentagon, the Secretary of Defense. His opinion weighed heavily when deciding which new military technologies seemed worth investing in and pursuing. His rise to a position of prominence is both poignant and inspiring.

It also highlights the difference between the integration of Jews into Western lands versus what is happening to young Muslims who arrive. While there are many examples of fine, well-integrated Muslims – including those who have good relations with Jews – the rising tide of Islamic radicalism in Western lands has become a hot topic and a concern even in previously liberal strongholds, as another article this month about the Islamization of Europe details.

It seems clear now that Islamic, xenophobic regimes are going to dominate the Middle East for some time to come and that the economies of most of the Arab states are in shambles and are likely to remain so. Poverty, illiteracy, discontent and raging frustration remain the lot of the hundreds of millions of Arabs living in the Middle East. This will presumably continue to create refugees seeking asylum in Europe and thereby only increase the tensions. As a noted Syrian-born academic who lives in Germany put it: "Either Islam gets Europeanized or Europe gets Islamized."

None of this bodes well for Jews. Europe's hostility towards its Jews is in direct proportion to its continuing Islamization. We must all hope that Europe will come to its senses and face up to the problem of its potential Islamization before it is too late. If not, the clash of civilizations and religions, with all of its consequences, appears to be inevitable.

*Yaakov Astor, Editor-in-Chief*

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### Rabbinical Advisor

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# From Persecution To The Pentagon

An Interview With  
Dr. Moshe Mizrachi

Shimon Rosenberg





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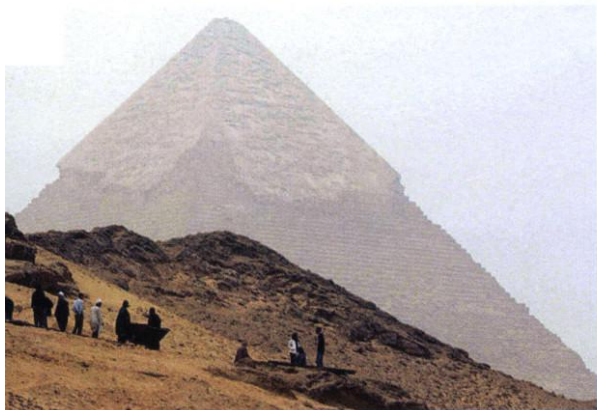




**D**id you ever stop to think about the source of the GPS that directs you to your destination (well, most of the time)? Or the computerized connections you use to deliver files and information across the country or around the world in a matter of seconds? Stealth airplanes that penetrate enemy territory and deliver bombs or launch deadly missiles without being detected? Pilotless drones that terrorize terror organizations in the Middle East? These are just some of the hundreds of inventions with both military and civilian applications that are the products of a special Pentagon agency, the Department of Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA).

DARPA's purpose is to research and develop cutting-edge technology that can be valuable for military purposes. The US government pours billions of dollars into DARPA each year. One of the scientists who had a hand in many of the technological developments at DARPA is Dr. Moshe (Maurice) Mizrachi, an observant Jew who spent 34 years in the Pentagon. Of those, 30 years were spent as a special advisor to the highest official in the Pentagon, the Secretary of Defense. His opinion weighed heavily when deciding which new technologies seemed worth investing in and pursuing.

During his tenure, Dr. Mizrachi served as advisor to 11 defense secretaries. He chaired numerous hearings and issued hundreds of reports that helped decide the future direction of the entire department.



Egypt has a long history of Jewish settlement.



Zman interviews Dr. Moshe Mizrachi in his home.

Nevertheless, what makes his story particularly fascinating are the unlikely origins of this mathematical genius and scientist. He grew up as a persecuted Jew in Egypt. Eventually, he escaped to America, where he spent difficult years scrounging for a job while he studied diligently to obtain an advanced degree.

*Zman* met with Dr. Mizrachi at his home in Springfield, Virginia, and listened as he told us the fascinating details of his years of terror in Egypt and how he struggled in his new homeland until he rose to prominence. Surprisingly, he mastered English—not to mention speaking fluent Arabic, French and Italian. We asked him how a man who spent his first 18 years in Egypt, where English studies comprised a maximum of one hour per week, had become so fluent in English. He responded, “That’s the secret of a *Yiddishe kopf* [Jewish mind].” In fact, after arriving in the United States, Dr. Mizrachi took courses in English. He mastered the language in a short time and was one of only two students in his course who received an “A.”

Here, then, is the riveting account of the man and his life.

## Egypt's Jewish Community

Moshe Mizrachi was born in Cairo (*Al Qahira* in Arabic) on September 4, 1949. His family came from Italy and is of Sefardic background.



“Egypt has had a Jewish community for as long as anyone can remember,” he reminds us. “2,500 years ago there was already a huge Jewish community in Alexandria that thrived for hundreds of years. The Rambam lived in Cairo 800 years ago. The Cairo Genizah [an invaluable collection of ancient Jewish books and manuscripts found in storage at a *shul* near Cairo] that was discovered in the 19th century confirms that Jews have lived in Egypt continuously through most of the time that we Jews have been in exile.

“There were good times and bad times for the Jews in Egypt,” Dr. Mizrachi goes on to explain. “We even had our own Purim in addition to the usual one, dating back to the year 1524 when the governor of Cairo, Ahmed Pasha, decided to annihilate all the Jews of Cairo unless they provided him with a huge sum of money that was impossible to produce. Even if they would have sold all their belongings it would not have sufficed to pull together that sum. The Jews fasted and prayed to the One Above and on the designated day, the 28th of Adar, the pasha was murdered by troops loyal to the Turkish sultan, Suleiman. They had discovered that the pasha had plans to carry out a rebellion against the sultan who ruled over Egypt and many other Arab lands. The Jews were saved by a miracle. Since then we celebrated a separate Purim, known as Purim *Mitzrayim*, at the end of the month of Adar.”

At the beginning of the 19th century, the Ottomans appointed a friend of the Jews, Muhammed Ali, as viceroy of Egypt. He welcomed Jews from all over to settle in Egypt. The large influx that resulted triggered an economic renaissance in Egypt. The Jewish community produced ministers, merchants, doctors, financiers, builders and more.

Despite their dazzling success—or because of it—the Jews were always treated as foreigners. They were denied citizenship even though they had been born in Egypt. Still, the Jews lived under conditions that were relatively good for the Arab world. Every once in a while a riot would break

out and the Arabs would attack the Jewish quarter, “but usually the king protected us and there were no particular difficulties for Jews,” Dr. Mizrachi explains.

However, in 1948, after the creation of the State of Israel, the situation for the Jews in Egypt changed for the worse. Suddenly, a series of persecutions began. There were around 100,000 Jews in Egypt at that time. A large percentage of the Jewish population left Egypt and moved to *Eretz Yisrael* and other places. It was in these tumultuous times that Moshe Mizrachi grew up.

*When I was three years old, in 1952, a revolution took place in Egypt and Gamal*



Left: Muhammed Ali, the viceroy who invited Jews to Egypt. Right: Gamal Abdel Nasser, the Egyptian leader who vowed to destroy the Jewish state.



Egypt's Ben Ezra synagogue.



Abdel Nasser took power. He became hostile to the Jews and made this clear at every opportunity. Jews then began to leave the country en masse. When I was around seven, in 1956, the war for control over the Suez Canal broke out and there was a mass exile of Jews from Egypt. The Jewish population in Egypt fell by 90%.

As I grew up, more and more Jews left Egypt. The situation kept going from bad to worse. The Nasser government approved one harsh decree after another. Jews were not permitted to travel abroad for more than one day; if anyone left the country he could not return to his home; if anyone left the country he could not take anything with him. He had to sign a statement declaring, "I will never return, and I relinquish my rights to everything I owned."

If anyone worked for the government he was fired from his job; if someone was a businessman and had an export-import license, it was revoked. The government confiscated all large Jewish businesses and the owners became workers for the government for a low salary. Bank accounts were frozen. Jews were forbidden entry to certain places. Jews could not find jobs. They were under constant supervision by government forces. Every once in a while they arrested a Jew on fabricated accusations. Some Jews spent a long time

in prison on false charges. The Jews were tortured and convicted.

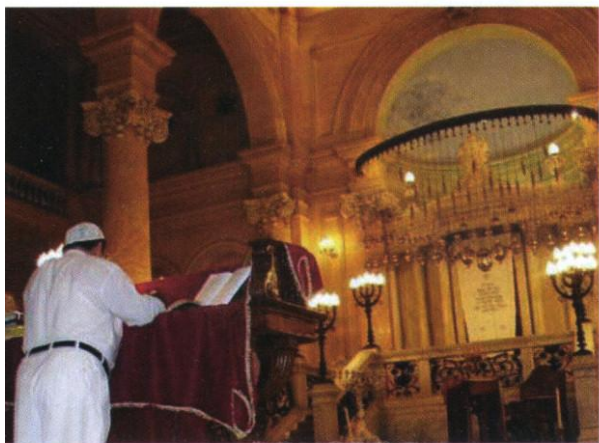
My father was among those who lost their export-import licenses. He had a business in downtown Cairo where he sold clothing, and he could no longer import any clothing from abroad. Nevertheless, he refused to leave. He thought the bad times would eventually come to an end.

## Escape

By the time Moshe grew up in Cairo there were no longer any Jewish schools. They had all been forced to close. The mass exodus also left the remaining community too weak to support its own school system. Instead, Jewish children were forced to attend public school where they were subjected to constant discrimination.

In public school the teachers indoctrinated their students with anti-Semitism. The students were taught poems and literature that defamed the Jews.

*I had to learn the anti-Semitic studies together with all the other children and afterward my teacher tested me on it.... He ordered me to repeat the anti-Jewish propaganda that he baked into the children, such as, "The beautiful Palestine will soon be a homeland for us and a mass*



Cairo's Rambam shul.



Some of the last Jews remaining in Egypt are seen at a Cairo synagogue.





grave for the Jews.' By the way, I was 13 when I recited those words. That was the "bar mitzvah" speech I was forced to recite.

The other children were encouraged by the teacher's treatment of me in particular and by the anti-Semitic climate in the country in general. They beat me and yelled at me "you dirty Jew" and other slurs. It goes without saying that all this left a very bad taste in my mouth and I trembled when going to school.

The fear was so great that we always placed the mezuzos from inside so you couldn't tell from outside that it was a Jewish house. In fact, when I came to America I complained, "The American Jews are not following the halachah properly. They put their mezuzos outside."

Year after year we sat at the Seder and thanked the Almighty for freeing us from the land of Egypt and the land of slavery with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and we wondered, "What exactly are we still looking for in this land, when the situation keeps going from bad to worse?"

If things weren't bad enough for us Jews, I always suffered as a child from the fact that all of my friends and relatives were slowly disappearing. One day they were with us, played with us and spent time with us, and suddenly the next day they were no longer there. One day it was

a close friend, the second day a cousin and the third day it was an aunt. In the darkness of the night they left the country and its anti-Jewish persecution.

In most cases people left the country very suddenly, without informing anyone beforehand. They were afraid that the anti-Semitic neighbors would try to rob them, so they kept it a secret and told nobody what they were planning to do.

There were large Jewish synagogues in Cairo. We prayed at the Shaar Hashamayim, the largest shul in the country. But the shuls were locked up one by one after all of the congregants left the country, and most shuls remain closed under lock and key to this very day.

Moshe Mizrachi's father was an eternal optimist and he refused to give up. He used to tell his family, "This is my home. This is where I was born and this is where I will die. The troubles are just a passing matter. Eventually, the anti-Jewish hysteria will die down and we'll be able to live calmly



Rambam was a prominent resident of Cairo in the 12th century.



Jews were forced to flee Egypt, leaving everything behind.



Violent anti-Semitism forced Egypt's Jews to leave.



and peacefully like our parents did all those years. Just hold on a bit longer.”

Unfortunately, his optimism was never borne out by reality.

*When I was 17, in 1967, the Six Day War broke out. By that time there were no more than 1,000 Jews in Egypt, the last 1%.*

*The persecution of Jews intensified. All Jewish men between 18 and 60 were arrested. They were subjected to torture and abuse. My family was spared this fate because I was only going to have my 18th birthday in several months and my father was already over 60.*

*My three sisters left the country with their families, and my relatives on both sides had all left the country. From my entire family, only my parents and I remained. You can imagine how difficult it was for me to remain alone. All the people I knew had disappeared. But it appeared as though the smaller the community became the more the persecutions grew. All doors were closed to Jews. They couldn't do anything for a living.*

*I couldn't take the persecution any longer and I decided I had to leave. But when I turned to the authorities with the request that they grant me permission to emigrate I ran into extreme difficulties. Just like all of the hateful rulers from Pharaoh to modern Syria and the Soviet Union, they persecuted us bitterly but didn't want to let us leave the country.*

*I wondered then, “Why do they*



Jewish newspaper in Australia reports the Jews' flight from Egypt.



Mizrachi's exit visa with the red Arabic “Y” written on both sides of the stamp, branding him a Jew.

*withhold permission for Jews to leave the country like that? They know that they will have the Jewish possessions in their hands regardless.” But of course their goal was to make matters difficult for us every step of the way, to enslave us, to make us work hard, to embitter our lives and keep us in their country so they could torture us more.*

*For four months I battled with all the obstacles they placed in my way. We had to bribe the appropriate authorities to receive the proper seals, and even then we had to find those officials who did not particularly hate Jews. As a result it took many Jews years until they received their emigration permits. I got away relatively easily.*

*Finally, on October 26, 1967, I received my papers and managed to leave the country, but I was bereft of anything. By way of a parting gift they wrote a “Y” in red on both sides of my visa, which stands*



for "Yahud," that I'm a Jew. This was a signal for the officials to abuse me as much as possible before they let me out of the country.

Years later, when I already had children and I sat at the Seder table with my family, I put the visa into my Haggadah by the words "In every generation one is obligated to visualize himself as though he left Mitzrayim." For me, those words always came easy.

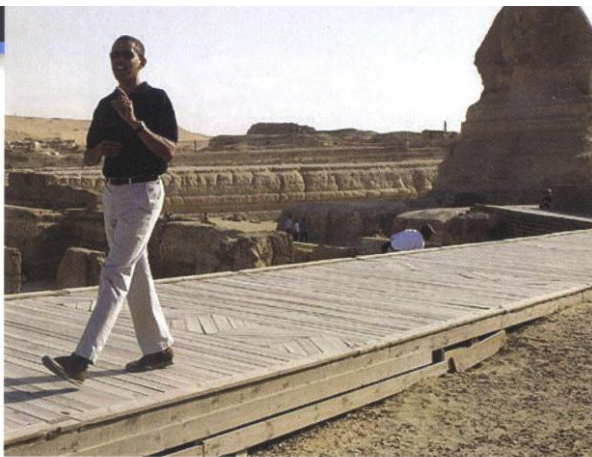
## The Land of the Free

After Moshe escaped in 1967, he never saw his father again. The senior Mizrachi refused to leave, arguing that he could not abandon the Jewish communal buildings with nobody to look after them. He passed away six years later, in 1973.

The exact circumstances of the elder Mr. Mizrachi's passing remain a mystery. Moshe knows that his father died after undergoing an operation in an Egyptian hospital. He suffered severe hemorrhaging and passed away three days later. There is no way to know whether the doctors had done their best, or whether they had intentionally neglected or even murdered his father.

After her husband's passing, Moshe's mother immigrated to America to live near her children. She enjoyed the last 20 years of her life in the United States. "My sister went to Egypt then—without a passport and without a visa—and she cried and told them, 'My father died and my mother is alone and has no one to look after her. Let me take her out of here.' The Creator helped and the Egyptian officials told her, 'Fine. If you want, take her.' And that's what happened. My mother had to leave every last thing behind, including historical items and books that we had in the family for generations. She came to America where she spent the first three years with my two sisters and the last seventeen years with us. She lived to see her children and grandchildren [Dr. Mizrachi has three children]. She passed away in 1993."

After leaving Egypt, Mizrachi first



President Obama on his visit to Egypt while attempting to reach out to the Arab world.

traveled to an uncle in Belgium. He stayed there for a few months until he was granted a special refugee visa allowing him to enter America. His sisters had already been living in America for a number of years. In America, Mizrachi first went to his sister in Texas. He spent the next seven years in Texas, working hard to support himself while he trained for a profession.

To pay for his courses, he had to hold down a full-time job and study at night. He refused to accept help from anyone, even rejecting an offer of temporary government welfare benefits to help him through this difficult period. Dr. Mizrachi always stuck to his principle of never accepting a gift or a free loan from anyone. "If I needed something and I didn't have the money for it, I didn't buy it. These are values that I inherited from my late father. This is what he taught us from childhood. The only debt that I ever had was the mortgage on my home."

With his sharp mind, Moshe Mizrachi soon landed himself a job. "Fortunately, I found work translating technical articles from French and Italian into English. I always



Owning a bank account was such a novelty for the Egyptian refugee that Mizrachi saved one of his first checks as a memento.



worked as an aide for a professor and performed intellectual work in languages, mathematics, science and the like.”

In 1975, Mizrachi received his doctorate from the University of Texas. He tells us that his difficult upbringing in Egypt drove him to dedicate himself completely to his studies. He spent hours each day in the university’s library. There he read through hundreds of volumes from around the world.

“It felt very good to have the freedom to do research, which I could never do in Egypt.”

Mizrachi received such high grades and outstanding recommendations from his professors that he attracted the attention of America’s highest officials. He soon received an invitation from the Pentagon to come and work for the Defense Department.

## Inside the Pentagon

Other career offers came up as well, including a professorship at Texas A&M University and a position in an oil firm. As a newcomer to the United States, however, Mizrachi felt that a job working for the government would be more secure than remaining in the private sector. In this respect he was following the mentality of many Egyptian Jews. They had worked in the civil services in Egypt in large numbers until deteriorating conditions forced them out.

Mizrachi moved to the Washington area (Springfield is less than 10 miles from the capital district) at a time when Donald Rumsfeld was serving as Secretary of Defense. Rumsfeld was appointed to the post by President Ford in 1975 and remained until Ford left the White House after losing the 1976 elections.

Later, Rumsfeld was reappointed to the position of Secretary of Defense by President George W. Bush in 2001. He became the face of the government during the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq after 9/11. Rumsfeld remained at his desk into Bush’s second term, weathering much criticism. He stepped

down after popular disapproval of the war in Iraq was blamed for the Republican defeat in the 2006 mid-term elections.

“I began working with Rumsfeld and nearly ended with Rumsfeld,” Mizrachi said, “because he was in the Pentagon twice and I worked at the Pentagon until a short while after he left the Pentagon.”

During the first seven years of his tenure, he worked as a Navy analyst, conducting research for the US military. In 1961, Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, working under President John F. Kennedy, decided to create a special task force of brilliant minds to advise him on critical defense issues. With his outstanding reputation, Dr. Mizrachi became an immediate candidate for the group. This brain trust became known as McNamara’s “Whiz Kids.”

The Whiz Kids analysts presented the Defense Secretary with plans and advised him on what new technology the military needed. Some of these were in the fields of radar, sonar, hypersonics and drones. During his final 10 years in the Pentagon, Mizrachi was largely preoccupied with defenses against weapons of mass destruction. The Defense Department sought ways to protect America from the threat of nuclear, biological, chemical or radiation attacks.

Over the course of his career with the Defense Department, Mizrachi developed many technologies that have been successful in helping America fight the War on Terror.

## Developing New Technology

“Inventing technology is part of the Defense Department’s Science and Technology Program,” Dr. Mizrachi explains, “which the Pentagon earmarks for developing technologies that private industries do not work on but which the military is very much in need of. For the most part, private companies don’t delve into these technologies due to the large amount of money that must be invested and the small chances of earning quick profits.

“An example of this is the GPS, which



was developed by DARPA, the Department of Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency. When the military needed a simplified system to allow its personnel, crafts and even missiles to calculate their precise position instantly, GPS provided the answer. Eventually, this technology trickled down to the civilian world. GPS is but one example of how technology that DARPA produced for military use becomes products for everyday use.”

There are dozens of other forms of technology that we are in daily contact with that few imagine were invented by the military. Besides the GPS, DARPA is responsible for such innovations as the internet, pilotless drones and various computer systems that are widely used in the civilian world. The touch-screen was also created by DARPA.

Here’s another. You are sitting in your car traveling on a long stretch of boring highway. You’d love to rest your feet without worrying about it delaying your arrival. With a flick of your wrist your finger hits the cruise control button and the car accelerates or slows down as necessary to maintain the preset speed. Some modern cars even have a more sophisticated version that slows the car as the traffic becomes more congested. The technology already exists for your car to make sure it stays in its lane even if your mind begins drifting to the side. All this is the result of DARPA work (see the preceding in-depth article about DARPA).

## Dr. Mizrachi’s Achievements

Dr. Mizrachi worked as an advisor to the Defense Secretary, from the secretary’s office in the Pentagon. This set him apart from DARPA itself, which has its headquarters outside of the Pentagon in nearby Langley, Virginia. His job was to listen to ideas and suggestions from DARPA’s leaders about the programs they proposed and then report to the Defense Secretary about the viability of each one.

Until his retirement in 2009, Dr. Mizrachi and his colleagues sifted through dozens



DARPA is working on a robot to carry equipment and supplies to the battlefield faster than a human can.



Tiny spy mosquito developed at DARPA.

of new inventions that were sent their way each year. They studied and analyzed each suggestion and when they were done they presented their conclusions to the Secretary of Defense. The Defense Secretary would rely heavily on the recommendations of these top scientists when deciding which



programs DARPA should pursue and which to shelve.

When deciding what to recommend, Dr. Mizrachi and his fellow analysts took into account each invention's level of benefit. They also analyzed whether it might be pursued by a civilian agency. "If we find out that there's someone outside of the Defense Department who is dealing with that specific program, we let them do it."

Dr. Mizrachi was one of those who were called upon to render an opinion regarding the usefulness of pilotless aircraft for the military. "We rely more and more on the drones, just as we rely more and more on robots to do things in the military in order to put fewer lives in danger. In addition, it comes out much cheaper and we can do a better job through machines than through humans."

So what should you do if you have an idea or invention that you think will benefit the US armed forces? "Many people wouldn't mind being able to go themselves to the Defense Secretary and whisper their plan into his ear—especially plans that cost a lot of money to develop into reality—with the hope that he would approve it right away and they could start working on it. But that's not the way it works. When DARPA wanted to work on a new technology but they didn't have the money for it, they came to my office, which was within the office of the Defense Secretary, presented their plans, and we had to decide whether to approve them or not."

DARPA's top officials would present Mizrachi and his fellows with plans for the programs they wished to pursue. Then the team of scientists researched which subdivisions of the military might be interested in this invention. "We made presentations and we listened to briefings. We did the mathematical calculations and various other analyses."

At these meetings, Dr. Mizrachi usually served as chairman. If he felt that the Defense Department should authorize the particular program, he would put together a presentation showcasing the various options, highlighting the benefits and disadvantages

of each option. He then shared this presentation with the Secretary of Defense.

## Q&A

From time to time, Dr. Mizrachi and his team were called upon to render advice regarding critical wartime strategy. In just one example, during the Iraq War, Dr. Mizrachi dispatched a researcher to study conditions in Iraq. He then provided the Pentagon with a recommendation based on the results.

We took advantage of our interview to pose questions on subjects of interest to our readers. Here are our questions and Dr. Mizrachi's replies:

**Zman: Can you tell us about the supposed weapons of mass destruction that drew America into the war with Iraq? No such weapons were ever found there. What was going on at the Pentagon at that time?**

**Dr. Mizrachi:** You have to understand that this is an intelligence issue and had no connection to the Pentagon. The American intelligence agencies told us that Iraq had such a program and everyone believed the intelligence information. And also, this intelligence came not only from us but also from other countries. That's as much as I can say. We had the intelligence information, and we acted according to the information that we received saying that Saddam was producing weapons of mass destruction.

**Zman: Is it now definite that Hussein really did not have any weapons of mass destruction?**

**Dr. Mizrachi:** We did not find them. It is possible he sent them out in a hurry to Syria or somewhere else. Who knows?

**Zman: If the Pentagon had been certain that Iraq did not have weapons of mass destruction, would the war have been averted?**

**Dr. Mizrachi:** Who knows? I mean, there



were also other reasons to go to war with him. He supported terrorism. He murdered his underlings and countrymen without compunction. He was a particularly brutal tyrant.

**Zman:** What was the first major operation that you experienced inside the Pentagon?

**Dr. Mizrachi:** The Iran hostage crisis broke out several years after I arrived in Washington, but I was still working outside the Pentagon as a Navy analyst. The first major operation that I recall was the Gulf War in 1991.

The Pentagon was very surprised since the war came about completely unexpectedly. Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait and President Bush warned that if Hussein did not leave Kuwait, America would go to war, and that's what happened. And it was one of the most successful wars in American history when you take into account how quick and relatively painless the war was.

**Zman:** Your career in the Pentagon spanned many different administrations. Did you ever get the feeling that some administrations were more pro-Israel than others? Did you ever feel that other Pentagon officials were uncomfortable with the fact that you are a Jew?

**Dr. Mizrachi:** There were clearly administrations that were friendlier to the State of Israel than others, and there were times when I disagreed with colleagues in various cases, but I never experienced true anti-Semitism in the Pentagon.

**Zman:** Did the Pentagon accommodate your religious needs as a practicing Orthodox Jew?

**Dr. Mizrachi:** I never had any problems due to my Jewishness. The Defense Department always allowed me to take a vacation when I needed to. In fact, a short while after I began working in the Pentagon a new law came into effect which permitted federal employees to take vacation for religious needs and then

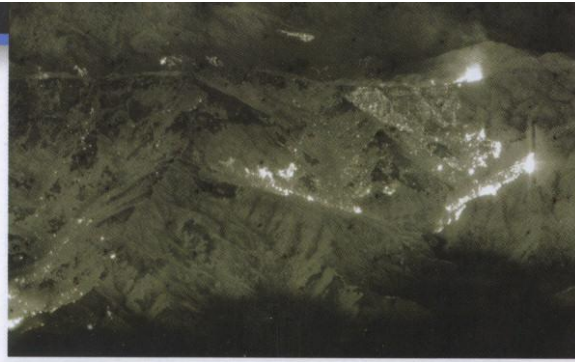


Photo by a drone in 2008 shows the location of wildfires during the disaster in northern California.



Drones are controlled by pilots sitting safely on the ground, sometimes thousands of miles away.



A drone is prepared for a mission in the sky.

repay the time off by working on weekends or national holidays, and so on. So this was never really an issue.

The day I retired was *erev Sukkos* 2009, which fell on a Friday, and I remember how I returned to the Pentagon the following Tuesday, the second day of *Chol Hamoed*,



to participate in a gathering of all Jewish Pentagon employees that was held in the Pentagon's *Sukkah*, which was built every year in the courtyard in the center of the Pentagon. They asked me to give a speech there about *Sukkos*. I noted that it was ironic that after giving so many technical lectures to top-ranking Pentagon officials over the years, my last speech in the Pentagon was about a religious topic.

**Zman:** You worked for the Navy for seven years. Jonathan Pollard also worked for the Navy. Did you have any connection with him?

**Dr. Mizrachi:** It's true that Jonathan Pollard worked for the Navy department, but we were in different divisions—he was in the intelligence division. The Pollard affair took place in 1984, two years after I left the Navy department.

**Zman:** Because of your Egyptian background, you were interviewed by various journalists and commentators during the recent upheaval in Egypt. You expressed your support for the demonstrations against President Hosni Mubarak. Can you explain for our readers your position regarding Egypt?

**Dr. Mizrachi:** Egypt has never been free throughout its entire history, a period of 5,000 years. The Egyptian rulers were invariably tyrants. Often, they were foreigners who ruled over Egypt. After 1952 Egypt was

under the rulership of Egyptian tyrants, but they were tyrants nonetheless. The kinds of rulers who suppressed the citizens and did not even grant them the freedom to express their opinions. They limited all activities of the Egyptian citizens and treated them like children. Now is the first time in Egyptian history that the Egyptian citizens said "enough is enough," and rebelled against their leader.

I don't know of any other case in the long history of Egypt when the Egyptian residents went out into the streets and shouted slogans against their leader, demanded that he be sidelined and burned his image. This never happened before. It is unprecedented, because the Egyptian people have a long history of being passive and living in fear of their ruler. They always accepted their fate. The Egyptians loudly applauded their leader until they were hoarse, shouting "We are with you." And if the following day there was a coup and the leader was overthrown, they went out right away and applauded the incoming leader. They were afraid to speak a word against their leader.

It is difficult to say what the future will bring for Egypt, since democracy is entirely new in Egypt. But we have to be very concerned about the fact that the fundamentalist Muslims drew many votes in the elections.

**Zman:** Some accuse President Obama of badly mishandling the revolution in the Arab world. Allowing pro-Western leaders like



A drone takes off with its payload of missiles to carry out an attack in Afghanistan.

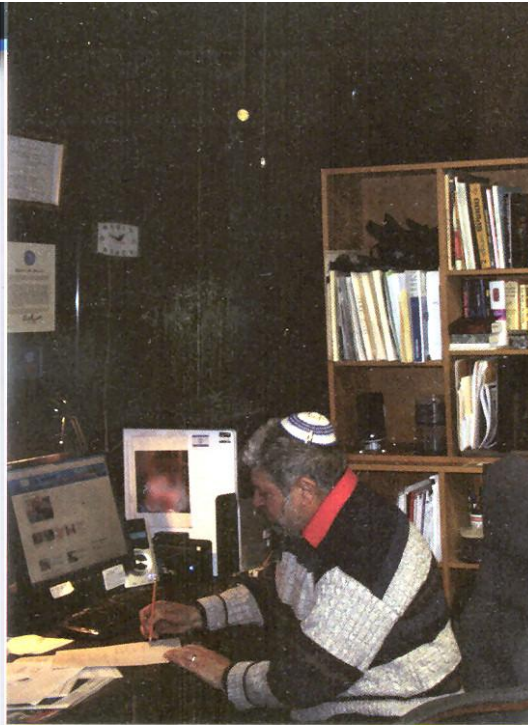


**Mubarak to fall sends the wrong message to Arab countries that have been on good terms with America. Should Obama have supported Mubarak instead of taking the demonstrators' side?**

**Dr. Mizrachi:** There is a strong argument to say that he had no other choice. The masses were determined to free themselves of their leader and to gain their freedom one way or another, sooner or later. It's true that sometimes there are revolutions and eventually one tyrant is replaced by another tyrant. But looking back at history we see that eventually the masses get a free government. So to continue with the old way of keeping the public oppressed doesn't work anymore. We can always hope that in the long term people will choose to throw away their anger and hatred and instead choose to live happily among themselves and with other countries. But regardless of whether or not this happens, one thing is clear: at some point oppression ends. It doesn't go on forever.

**Zman:** That may be true for a nation that chooses democracy, but what about places like Gaza, where free elections catapulted Hamas to power? Or Lebanon, where Hezbollah has become a political party, fields its own candidates and drew many votes in the recent elections? That would seem to indicate that when we grant freedom to Arabs they choose terrorists for leaders.

**Dr. Mizrachi:** In Gaza it was a one-time democracy. We gave the voters a chance to choose a government and they chose Muslim radicals as their leaders and they lost their democracy. The next time there will be voting in Gaza will be 100 years from now.... We gave the Palestinians fair elections and they declared, "We want terrorist as our leaders." Very good, now you are stuck with them. The same will be true in Egypt if the radical Muslims gain real power. It will be their one-time democracy and they will not have freedom for a very long time. It will be



**Dr. Mizrachi doing research from his home in Springfield, Virginia.**

déjà vu, just like in Iran and other Arab countries. But this much is certain: The American people do not like supporting dictators and tyrants who oppress their citizens.

**Zman:** Based on your experience working in the Pentagon, what is your opinion about Iran's nuclear capability? What are the



**Illustration of a sophisticated DARPA attack robot.**



**chances of a military attack to remove the danger of a nuclear Iran?**

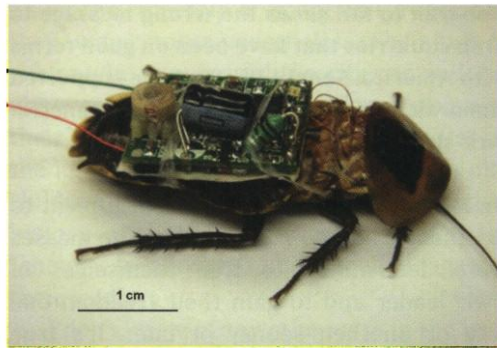
**Dr. Mizrahi:** It is a very big problem. They have the ability to build a nuclear weapon and they are moving ahead faster than anyone would want. One of the things on which I worked in the Pentagon—especially in the last 10 to 15 years—was counter-proliferation. When Clinton became president in 1992 he made counter-proliferation a critical agenda of his administration. “We must prevent other countries from getting their hands on weapons of mass destruction,” he kept declaring.

Clinton made this a priority because it was very clear that with the progress of the internet it became much easier to send information, and there are many scientists around the world with malevolent intentions. The nuclear secrets will not remain secret very long, and not much time will go by before terror groups will have the ability to fabricate weapons of mass destruction. It is a very big problem.

I have no doubt that Iran has the ability and the information to be able to build a nuclear weapon. Yes, America can push off the problem through cyber attacks and attack Iran’s nuclear systems with viruses, but the Iranians are not giving up. They are working very hard and are carrying out lots of experiments, even as America attacks them with viruses, and the day will come when they will have the ability to produce a nuclear weapon.

Can America stop this is a different question. Yes, America can use powerful earth penetrating bombs to blow up Iran’s underground nuclear facilities, but it will only work temporarily. It will set Iran back several years, but no more than that. There is really no other option to stop Iran other than invading Iran and occupying the country for a while, the way America did in Iraq.

The truth is that the problem is much greater than Iran. The problem is that the information of how to produce mass-destruction weapons spreads very quickly, and the damage that an individual person



**DARPA is working on implanting a small insect with microchips, enabling a computer to control its flight. The insect flies and uses energy much more efficiently than man-made robots.**

can do by himself working in the privacy of his basement grows constantly. This is the greatest danger today. The danger was never at such a level.

**Zman:** What is your opinion about President Obama’s efforts at the beginning of his presidency to extend a hand to Muslim countries and attempt to make peace with them?

**Dr. Mizrahi:** Personally, I never agreed with the idea of angering our friends and attempting to make peace with our enemies. I don’t like that policy. It is all very nice to say, “I want to be friends with everyone,” but when someone is not your friend you cannot create the impression that he is and reward him for being bad. President Bush did the right thing when he stated, “Those who are not with us are against us and that is how we will treat you.” It is one thing to show a readiness for peace, but it is another matter when we go the extra mile to show forgiveness to an enemy. I believe that it can have an opposite effect. Perhaps it has already had an opposite effect.

**Zman:** Looking at what is going on around Israel, how countries that were friendly toward Israel have been taken over by Islamic governments, one worries that a war may break out between Israel and its neighbors. The armies of Arab countries are far more advanced than they were during earlier wars.



**Do you think Israel could survive another Yom Kippur War?**

**Dr. Mizrahi:** The greatest military threat to Israel's security, a threat that did not exist during the Yom Kippur War, is the missile. The missile makes borders virtually useless. With Hezbollah in the north and Gaza in the south and missiles that are becoming more advanced and can reach much further distances and are becoming more accurate, the danger is becoming greater and greater. Israel is working on missile defense systems, but that is not the ultimate solution to the problem. Long-range missiles can come flying in from Iran and even from much further countries. Israel is a small country. One of Iran's leaders expressed it, "Israel is a one-nuclear-weapon land." He meant to say that it is such a small country that with a single nuclear bomb you can wipe it out. *Hashem* must certainly protect the Jewish nation so that such a situation should not come about.

**Zman: From what you have told us it is clear that Al Gore did not invent the internet after all....**

**Dr. Mizrahi:** No, we invented it. But I believe that what Al Gore meant to say was that he supported a bill to give the civilian public access to internet technology. It is clear that he had nothing to do with the technical aspects of inventing the internet.

**Medal of Achievement**

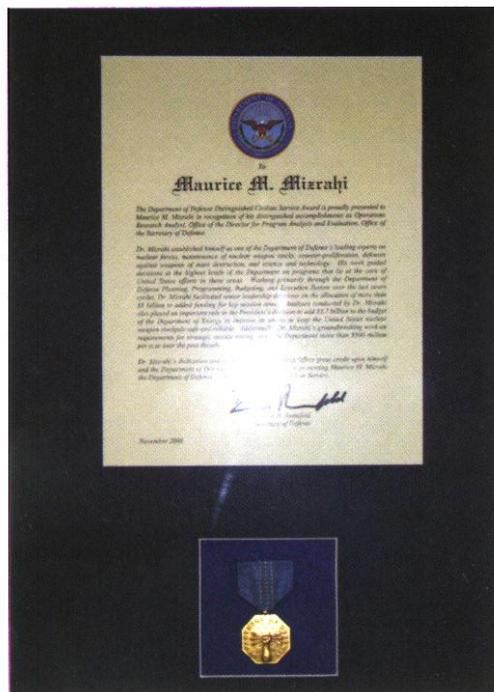
Dr. Mizrahi is a respected leader of the Jewish community in Springfield, Virginia. Since his retirement in 2009, he spends his time studying Gemara and delivering lectures on the weekly *parsha* in the local *shul*.

In 2006, a ceremony was held at the Pentagon honoring Dr. Mizrahi for his devotion to the Defense Department. Donald Rumsfeld awarded Mizrahi a medal, accompanied by a long citation. The citation identifies Dr. Mizrahi as one of the Pentagon's foremost experts on nuclear weapons, counter-proliferation, defense

against weapons of mass destruction and science and technology. "His work assisted in decision making at the highest levels of the department."

The document also notes that Mizrahi helped reach decisions on how to spend \$8 billion in funds allocated for critical programs. "Analyses that were carried out through Dr. Mizrahi played an important role in the president's decision to add another \$3.7 billion to the Energy Department's budget to increase its chances of keeping America's nuclear weapons secure." It further states that Mizrahi's "thoroughness" in demanding testing of strategic missiles saved the Defense Department over \$500 million per year for the next 10 years!

Those are impressive achievements for anyone—but especially someone born in a foreign country and persecuted for his faith. Of course, most impressive of all is that Moshe Mizrahi was able to do all that while his stayed faithful to his higher calling. He never forgot who he was or where he had come from. ■



**Medal presented by the Pentagon to Dr. Mizrahi in recognition of his outstanding work.**