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The federal judge who shut down The Spotlight was a key player in the bizarre conspiracy involving the theft by Israel's intelligence agency of high-tech surveillance software.

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By Michael Collins Piper

In the early 1990s, *The Spotlight* was the one widely-read national media voice providing detailed coverage of the now-infamous INSLAW scandal.

*The Spotlight* exposed corruption by Justice Department officials and other high-level power-brokers who helped facilitate the theft of sophisticated surveillance software that ended up in the hands of Israel's Mossad and other foreign intelligence services.

Even *The Washington Post Magazine* was ultimately moved to comment on June 14, 1992, that "If the claims that have been made [about the INSLAW affair] are true, they add to a scandal of monstrous proportions."

It now turns out that the federal bankruptcy judge, S. Martin Teel—who issued an order on June 27 forcing the shutdown of *The Spotlight*—was a front-line figure involved in this "scandal of monstrous proportions."

In the late 1980s, Teel was the key Justice Department attorney defending the Justice Department against charges by Bill and Nancy Hamilton, the owners of INSLAW, a small Washington, D.C.-based firm, that department officials had illegally conspired to steal their software (known as PROMIS).

Then, in 1987, after then-federal Bankruptcy Judge George S. Bason, Jr. ruled against the Justice Department and in favor of the Hamiltons, saying Teel's clients/colleagues had stolen the PROMIS software through "trickery, fraud and deceit," Bason was denied reappointment and Teel was appointed in his place.

Bason later charged, in testimony before Congress, and in an exclusive interview with *The Spotlight's* weekly talk forum, *Radio Free America*, that the Justice Department had conspired to force him off the bench in retaliation for his ruling against the department.

A key player in the effort to dislodge Bason in favor of Teel was then-Deputy

Attorney General Arnold Burns, a powerful attorney with long-standing ties to the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) of B'nai B'rith. Burns is also a founder of "Nesher," a quietly influential group of some 300 high-ranking federal officials and bureaucrats who meet informally, bound together by a desire to advance the Zionist cause.

Former Judge Bason also raised questions about whether, in fact, Teel was qualified for the promotion in light of his extremely limited experience with bankruptcy litigation.

Teel was given Bason's judgeship, a reward for helping cover for a corrupt conspiracy involving complicity by assets of both the CIA and Israel's Mossad.

According to investigative reporters Mark Fricker and Stephen Pizzo, "The Inslaw case had become the judicial kiss of death in Washington, with no judge wanting any part of it. Inslaw's allegations raised serious questions about corruption and lawlessness within the Department of Justice, and the banning of U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Bason had sent the judiciary a chilling message."

Even Chief U.S. District Judge Aubrey Robinson in Washington, D.C. said of other judges in relation to the INSLAW affair: "They wouldn't touch it with a 10-foot pole."

No wonder. Aside from Judge Bason's political assassination, there have been many strange deaths—some clearly murder—directly connected to INSLAW. (See accompanying story) In a strange way, S. Martin Teel may be the only person who actually benefited from the entire affair.

Although Teel is the sole bankruptcy court judge sitting in the Washington, D.C. jurisdiction, he should never have been allowed to hear Liberty Lobby's federal bankruptcy in the first place. There is clearly an egregious conflict of interest and a very real axe to grind against the populist Institution and its weekly newspaper.