Oracle Corp.

Oracle promotes itself by asking "Why do 11 of the top 11 global aerospace and defense companies run Oracle Applications?" Specializing in database-management systems, this US multinational with assets of US$73.5 billion, also brags that "11 of the world's 20 largest ministries of defense run Oracle applications." The world's largest military is no exception. Between 2000 and 2009, Oracle sold about US$1.2 billion worth of products and services to the US military. This was about 55% of Oracle's sales to the US federal government.

Despite all this, or perhaps because of it, Oracle was ranked as one of the "100 Best Corporate Citizens" in 2010 by *Corporate Responsibility* magazine, and one of the "World's Most Ethical Companies" by the Ethisphere Institute in 2009.

Oracle's large government cli-ents include Israel's military. The firm has sold computer "systems and advanced tools" to Israel's military since at least 1986. Since founding Oracle Israel in 1996, Oracle has invested in, and acquired, numerous high-tech companies in Israel, and has won many major military contracts there.

In 1998, Israel's business paper, *Globes*, reported that Oracle "maintains a massive presence in Israel" and that its clients included state-owned Israeli war industry, Rafael. (See previous issue, p.49.) Other Oracle clients in Israel include Pelephone (owned by Bezeq) and Motorola. (See previous issue, p.11, and this issue, p.20-21.) Among Oracle's "partners" in Israel is Tadiran, which is owned by the Israel's largest war industry, Elbit Systems. (See previous issue, p.28.)

A 1999 *Globes'* article, "Israeli Robocop," described "the computer revolution [in] the Israel Police Force." It discussed a US$10-15 million contract to equip 1,000 national police patrol cars with computers connected with "central information sources through a wireless data communications network…to identify people by means of photographs or identity cards and obtain archived information…. The database will oper-ate using an Oracle DB server."

In early 2001, Oracle Israel landed a three-year contract worth about US$16 million to provide the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) with
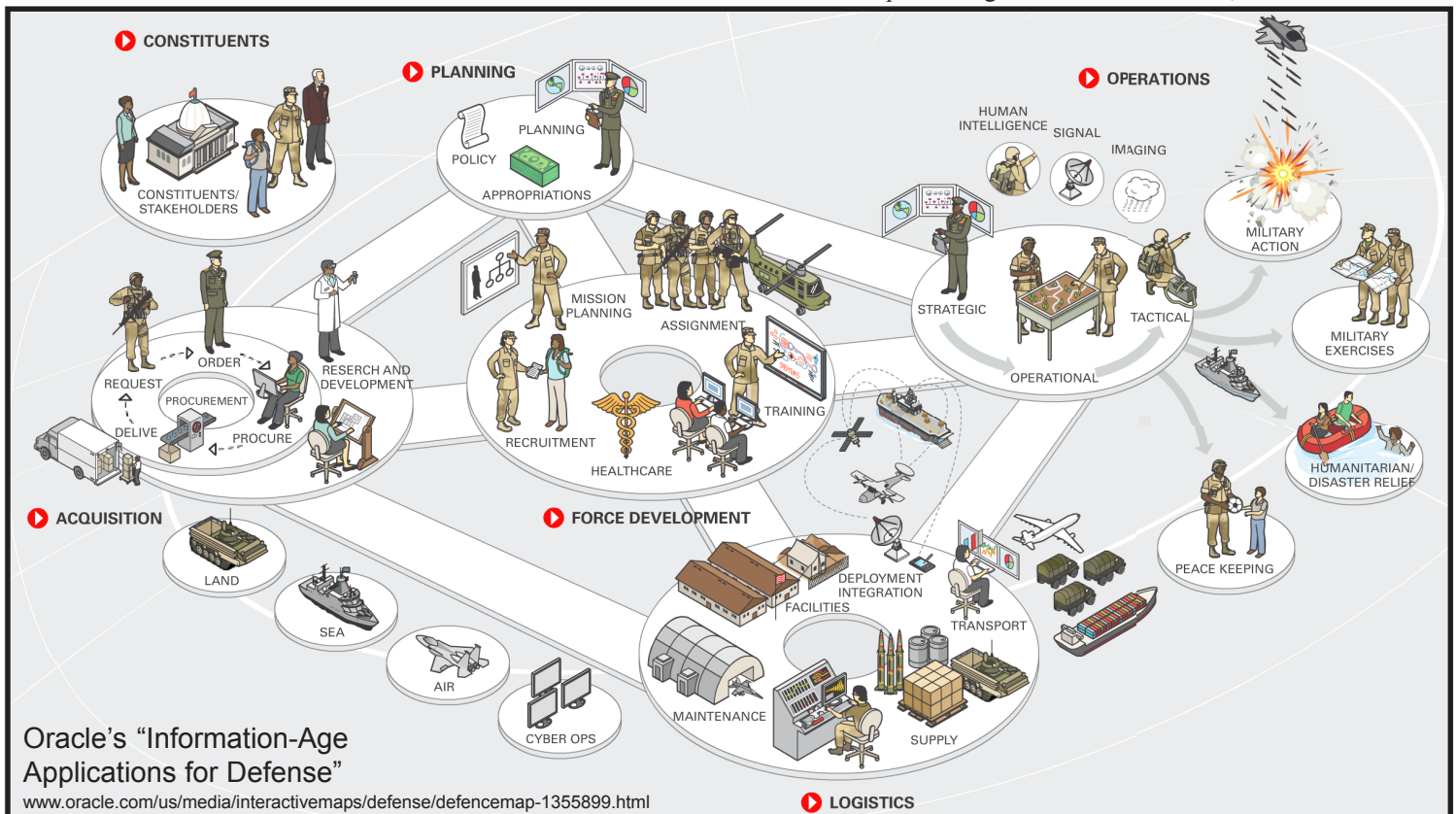
"infrastructure products that will serve as the basis for developing applications in all military computer units…. Oracle Israel will supply the database, development environment [and] retrieval products."

Two months later, Oracle Israel won another Israeli military tender. This US$28-million, five-year contract was for Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software. The contract's first project, for Israel's Air Force, was for Oracle systems "to manage and plan budgets, procurement and maintenance." Oracle also delivered ERP systems to Israel's Ministry of Defense and IDF land forces.

In 2003, company subsidiary, Oracle Software Systems Israel, signed a three-year "procurement and maintenance agreement" with Israel's Ministry of Defense for

"software infrastructure, databases, development, analysis, information security, information management tools, [and] data storage systems."

This deal, said Oracle Israel's managing director Moshe Horev,

Oracle's "Information-Age Applications for Defense"
www.oracle.com/us/media/interactivemaps/defense/defencemap-1355899.html

Oracle founder/CEO Larry Ellison, posing in Sderot with Kassam rockets and then-wife Melanie Craft.

"strengthened the longstanding strategic partnership between Oracle and the IDF, and positioned the company as one of the IDF's main suppliers of computer solutions."

In the following year, while Israel's army carried out a large-scale effort with Elbit Systems to computerize IDF forces in the occupied territories, Oracle was contracted "to computerise major checkpoints" in the West Bank:

"As part of the project, being carried out by Oracle, Civil Administration for Judea and Samaria [i.e., the West Bank] personnel at the checkpoints have been equipped with handheld computers containing the particulars of both wanted Palestinians and those permitted entry into Israel."

In 2005, the IDF launched an estimated US$150-$200 project to unify ERP systems in all branches of the armed forces. Oracle Corp. and Germany's SAP AG had been supplying different branches of Israel's military with competing software. By 2006, after paying out about US$50-$100 million to Oracle and SAP, the IDF abandoned the project.

However, Oracle continued its ERP projects within different branches of Israel's military. In 2008, Oracle reported that its ERP upgrade for the Israeli Air Force finally "went live."

In 2007, the company's Jewish founder and CEO, Larry Ellison, visited Israel with an entourage that included "more than a dozen family members." But it wasn't just a personal trip. Ellison attended an Oracle conference "attended by 2,000 senior executives from Israel's high-tech sector." Besides

meeting with Israel's president Shimon Peres, prime minister Ehud Olmert, the Israeli military's Chief of Staff Gabi Ashkenazi, and other "military authorities," Ellison attended "a reception in his honor at the US Embassy."

During his visit to Israel, Ellison and then-wife, romance novelist Melanie Craft, squeezed in a visit with Israel's Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni to the town of Sderot, one kilometre from Gaza. While there, Ellison and company — like so many other travelling dignitaries taken on PR tours there — viewed remnants of Kassam rockets fired from nearby Gaza. These crude, hand-made rockets have killed eleven Israelis in Sderot during the past eight years. (Coincidentally, Ellison was in Sderot on August 9, 2007, the 62nd anniversary of America's 1945 atomic bombing of Nagasaki which killed about 75,000 people immediately, and many thousands more since then from radiation poisoning.)

While in Sderot, Oracle's CEO – the world's sixth-richest man with a net worth of US$28 billion – pledged US$500,000 to reinforce the local community centre against Palestinian rocket fire. As Australian investigative journalist Janine Roberts explains

"Sderot is built on the lands of Najd, a Palestinian village ethnically cleansed by Jewish militia in 1948. Most of Gaza's population is descended from such refugees."

Ellison also "received a military briefing on a hill within sight of Gaza, [and] flew to an Israeli Air Force Base in a helicopter." A year later, the Israeli Air Force, using a variety of major US-made warplanes and attack helicopters, carried out a massive bombing campaign against the trapped civilian population within the heavily-populated City of Gaza. During the Gaza Massacre, some 1,400 Palestinians were killed, about one third of whom were children.

Despite this, Oracle's commitment to servicing Israel's military has continued unabated.

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