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Information packet
for Jewish leaders
re: PLO involvement
in Central America

MEMORANDUM

February 5, 1982

THE PLO IN EL SALVADOR

"It was disgraceful of Reagan to call us terrorists. We are a great revolution that can never be intimidated. We have connections with all revolutionary movements throughout the world, in Salvador, in Nicaragua--and I reiterate Salvador--and elsewhere in the world."

Yasser Arafat
Associated Press
April 14, 1981

With heightened attention on the tragic state of conflict in El Salvador, it is important that the connection between the PLO and the Salvadoran insurgents, as well as the PLO connection with insurgents throughout Latin America, be highlighted.

It should come as no surprise that the pro-Soviet PLO--ringleader and coordinator of the international terrorist network--should be involved in aiding Salvadoran insurgents by providing military and political support.

The United States government is well aware of this unholy alliance. On February 21, 1981, Vice President Bush acknowledged to Israeli Foreign Minister Shamir that "the PLO is aiding leftist guerrillas in El Salvador." (U.P.I. 2/21/81) There is ample evidence that the PLO, foes of all democratic systems, especially the United States, is linked to insurgents in El Salvador.

PLO-EL SALVADOR TIES ARE DEEPLY ROOTED. Contacts between Salvadoran guerrilla leaders and Arafat, as well as members of the PFLP, are frequent.

PALESTINIAN ARMS AND TRAINING HAVE BEEN SUPPLIED TO SALVADORAN GUERRILLAS. This fact has been confirmed both by Arafat and in testimony before Congress.

THE PLO-SALVADORAN CONNECTION THREATENS U.S. SECURITY by increasing instability in the Americas and hostility to U.S. interests.

PLO-SALVADORAN TIES ARE DEEPLY ROOTED:

State Department
Letter

April 6, 1981

"The leader of the El Salvador Communist Party is Shafik Handal. Handal's parents are Palestinian emigres to El Salvador. Handal identifies himself as a Palestinian. Beginning March 18, 1981, Handal has been visiting Beirut where he quickly met with Yasir Arafat and Nayif Hawatmah, Secretary-General of the DFLP, Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the official host for Handal's visit. He also met with members of the PFLP, George Habbash's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. On public occasions, Handal has stressed the close relations between "liberation movements" in Latin America and the Palestinians. In interviews, he has noted his family's Palestinian origin and has claimed that others in El Salvador's 2,000-member Palestinian community were also in the guerrilla forces."

"Unholy Alliance"
The Jerusalem Post
August 14, 1981

"The leader of the El Salvadoran guerrillas, Shafik Handel, is also the head of the country's communist party (PECS) and the son of Palestinian immigrants. He has visited the Middle East many times and is in close contact with Qaddafi and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine."

Wall Street Journal
January 14, 1982

"Palestinian sources said that the PLO relations with the rebels in El Salvador are 'relatively deep rooted' because the leader of the Communist Party there, Shafik Handal, is of Palestinian origin. His father is said to have emigrated to El Salvador in 1921 from Bethlehem, in the West Bank area currently occupied by Israel. Mr. Handal's Salvadoran Communist Party is one of five organizations forming Farabundo Marti rebel coalition that has been battling government forces there."

(continued)

Associated Press
Foreign Briefs
December 13, 1979

"Leftist guerrillas set off a bomb in the Israeli embassy in San Salvador, causing damage but no injuries. The People's Revolutionary Army claimed responsibility for the attack Tuesday night. It said the bombing was in 'solidarity with the Palestinian people.'

The PRA also supports other leftist guerrillas which kidnapped South African Ambassador Archibald Gardner Dunn, and are demanding that El-Salvador's military junta establish diplomatic relations with the PLO."

PALESTINIAN ARMS & TRAINING:

Congressional Testimony
February 25, 1981

"There has been a massive influx of arms from Soviet and other Communist sources. Radical Arab states, the Palestinian Liberation Organization, and the terrorist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine have furnished funds, arms and training."

- John Bushnell, Acting Assistant
Secretary of State for Inter-
American Affairs

"Communist Interference
in El Salvador"
U.S. Department of State
February 23, 1981

"The DRU (Unified Revolutionary Directorate of the Salvadorean guerrillas) representatives met with visiting PLO leader Yasser Arafat in Managua on July 22, 1980. Arafat promises military equipment, including arms and aircraft.

A Salvadoran guerrilla leader met with FATAH leaders in Beirut in August and November, and the PLO has trained Salvadorans in the Near East and in Nicaragua."

U.S. News and World
Report
September 1, 1980

"Now the PLO has offered weapons and training to leftist forces in civilian-torn El Salvador, where a U.S.-backed junta is battling guerrillas of both left and right."

United Press Inter-
national
January 21, 1982

"A report from Beirut last week quoted PLO leader Yasser Arafat as saying that Palestinian soldiers were actively supporting the Salvadorian insurgency. The report triggered a furor among some Latin American U.N. delegations, diplomatic sources say."

Wall Street Journal
January 14, 1982

"While in Beirut last March, Mr. Handal said about 2,000 residents of El Salvador were of Palestinian origin. 'I wouldn't be revealing a secret if I say that there are some in our revolutionary cadre who are Arabs.'"

U.S. News and World
Report
Sept. 1, 1980

"American analysts view the growing penetration of Latin America by Arab radicals as a dangerous catalyst for increased instability in the region and eventual emergence there of national policies hostile to U.S. interests."

Associated Press
April 14, 1981

"Palestinian guerrilla chief Yasser Arafat in a bitter attack Tuesday on President Reagan vowed to support anti-American 'revolutionary movements' around the world."

Washington Post
January 13, 1982

"Arafat also stressed a mobilization by all Palestinians saying, we will soon have to face a strategic alliance between the U.S. and Israel." The PLO called on Palestinian youths several months ago to join special training programs."

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Arafat Says PLO Aids Foreign Guerrilla Units

Pilots Said to Be Serving In Nicaragua, and Troops In El Salvador, Angola

A WALL STREET JOURNAL NEWS ROUNDUP

Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, in a speech in Beirut last weekend, said that guerrillas from the Palestine Liberation Organization are serving in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Angola.

In New York, the Nicaraguan delegation to the United Nations categorically denied the statement. In Washington, a spokesman for a joint commission of El Salvador rebel organizations said he didn't have enough information to comment. Angolan spokesmen couldn't be reached.

Mr. Arafat's comments appear to confirm some elements of a U.S. State Department paper that claimed that the guerrilla movement in El Salvador was supported by Soviet allies, such as the PLO. The paper was criticized after its release for allegedly sloppy documentation.

Mr. Arafat mentioned the PLO presence in the three countries during an address to the General Federation of Palestinian Writers and Journalists, which was meeting in Beirut to celebrate the 17th anniversary of Mr. Arafat's guerrilla movement, Al Fatah.

Mr. Arafat, in a passage of his speech emphasizing the links between the Palestinian revolution and other "national liberation" groups around the world, said that PLO pilots were serving in Nicaragua, and that other PLO guerrillas were in El Salvador and the African nation of Angola.

"The Palestinian identity is one of revolutionary struggle and universal in its character, not a racist movement," Mr. Arafat said in citing the involvement in the three countries.

The PLO leader didn't explain what the pilots and guerrillas were doing, and other PLO officials in Beirut refused to elaborate on his comments. But Palestinian sources in Beirut said that relations between the PLO and the revolutionary movements in Latin America are more than a decade old, and include various forms of military support.

The U.S. paper also asserted that a Salvadoran guerrilla leader had met with PLO officials in Beirut in August and November 1980, and that "the PLO has trained selected Salvadorans in the Near East and in Nicaragua."

In Washington, the State Department hadn't any comment on PLO activity in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Angola, saying it had only seen news reports and was awaiting more information.

Mr. Arafat's reference to the presence of

PLO pilots in Nicaragua was denied by a Nicaraguan diplomat in New York.

Alejandro Bendana, deputy ambassador for Nicaragua to the United Nations, said, "There aren't any Palestinian pilots in Nicaragua. We don't have any guerrillas in Nicaragua any more except for the Samozistas (opponents of the current government). The only people in the regular army and the regular air force are Nicaraguans, and we don't have much of an air force to speak of." He said that Nicaragua is one of nearly 100 countries that recognize the PLO and that the PLO has an office in Managua with Palestinian Link

Palestinian sources said that PLO relations with the rebels in El Salvador are "relatively deep rooted" because the leader of the Communist Party there, Shafik Handal, is of Palestinian origin. His father is said to have emigrated to El Salvador in 1921 from Bethlehem, in the West Bank area currently occupied by Israel. Mr. Handal's Salvadoran Communist Party is one of five organizations forming the Farabundo Marti rebel coalition that has been battling government forces there.

Sources in Beirut said that Mr. Handal visited Lebanon last March at the invitation of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, an avowedly pro-Soviet group under the PLO umbrella. Mr. Handal was also welcomed by other PLO groups, including Mr. Arafat's Fatah.

While in Beirut last March, Mr. Handal said that about 2,000 residents of El Salvador were of Palestinian origin. "I wouldn't be revealing a secret if I say that there are some in our revolutionary cadres who are Arabs," Mr. Handal is said to have told one PLO gathering. He may have been referring to second and third-generation immigrants living in El Salvador, such as himself. The Salvadoran rebel also charged during his visit to Beirut that Israel had been sending military technicians to assist the army of El Salvador.

These Beirut disclosures paralleled some of the information in the State Department paper. That document alleged that Mr. Arafat met the Salvadoran guerrilla leaders in Managua, Nicaragua, on July 22, 1980, and promised them "military equipment, including arms and aircraft."

which his country has "the best of relations."

A PLO delegation visited Nicaragua and arranged a \$12 million loan to the regime, according to the sources. "Since then, we have exchanged several visits," said one Palestinian source.

The sources didn't provide any elaboration of Mr. Arafat's comment about PLO assistance to Angola, which has also received help from Cuban forces in its civil war against pro-Western guerrillas.

The Jewish Community of Nicaragua

Jews have lived in Nicaragua for more than a century, but the Jewish community has always been quite small. In 1972, the population was about 120. It shrank to about 50 people after the earthquake, but those who remained were determined to continue Jewish communal life. Now, there are no Jews in Nicaragua, all Jews left during and after the revolution.

Nicaraguan Jews say that the main reason for their flight is the fact that they were treated in a discriminatory manner by the revolutionary government. They claim that their properties were among the first to be confiscated; Jews who owned factories and stores were summarily ejected from the homes and places of business and the properties turned over to workers. Many accusations were made against them, without proof. Often, their individual safety was threatened.

The foregoing took place in a politically and emotionally charged anti-Jewish environment. They attribute this to the close links between the revolutionary government and the Palestine Liberation Organization, long an ally of the Sandinist revolutionary movement. Nicaraguan Jews and Israel were accused of supporting the Somoza government. This relationship moreover, explains why people of Arab descent whose business activities were similar to those of Jews were permitted to continue those activities and have been able to remain in Nicaragua.

After the earthquake, the Jewish community built a new synagogue to replace that which had been destroyed. In September, 1978 the doors of the synagogue were torched by Sandinista supporters while the congregation was worshipping. Now, the synagogue is a Sandinist building with propaganda posters covering the religious symbols at the front entrance and anti-Zionist posters on the walls.

The newspaper Nuevo Diario, which reflects government views, carried articles on July 15 and 17, 1982 which were not only anti-Zionist, but also anti-Semitic. Jews were blamed for the crucifixion of Christ, using the myth of the Chosen People to massacre Palestinians and using financial power to gain political control in the United States. The articles referred also to "Synagogues of Satan," and rehearsed old canards that "world money, the banks and finance, are in the hands of descendents of Jews, the eternal protectors of Zion."

The government of Nicaragua has refused to respond to actions taken by Nicaraguan Jews, within the Nicaraguan legal systems, seeking to recover their properties. More than two years ago, the government of Nicaragua was asked by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith to clarify the status of the synagogue in Managua, list conditions under which Nicaraguan Jews could return to their country and review the status of claims against the government filed by Nicaraguan Jews. Despite promises that the cases would be reviewed, no substantive response has been received by the Anti-Defamation League on any of the foregoing issues.

Prepared by
Rabbi Morton M. Rosenthal

March, 1983

Nicaragua ignores ADL appeals, forces Jews into exile

The Sandinist government of Nicaragua has forced the country's entire Jewish community into exile, confiscating Jewish-owned property and taking over the synagogue in Managua, according to the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

Rabbi Morton M. Rosenthal, director of the League's Latin American Affairs Department, made the disclosure in an article in the ADL Bulletin.

Rosenthal, who last visited Nicaragua shortly before the Sandinists came to power in 1979, said the government of Nicaragua has been unresponsive to ADL appeals to end "these human rights violations" and permit the return of the Jews to their country.

The forced exodus of the Nicaraguan Jewish community—numbering about 50—took place after the Somoza regime was overthrown. Their ouster was effected, the article said, by subtle and direct threats or by forcible measures.

The case of Isaac Stavisky, a textile engineer, who was out of the country at the time of the Sandinist victory, was cited as an example. Stavisky, the article said, was advised that he should not return to his country "for his own safety because he and his brother-in-law were considered enemies of the revolution."

The president of the Nicaraguan Jewish community, Abraham Gorn, was jailed after

the Sandinist victory. "Gorn," Rosenthal wrote, "who was then 70 years old, was falsely accused of stealing land and was forced to sweep streets during the two weeks of his confinement."

Six months later, he went on, Sandinists summarily ousted him from his factory and took it over. The Sandinists told factory workers to threaten to bomb his car if he returned. Mr. Gorn was quoted as saying that Carlos Arguello, minister of justice, confiscated his bank account and "then kicked me out of my home."

Despite the departure of the Jewish community, Rabbi Rosenthal said anti-Semitism still exists in the country. In July, 1982, he said that a Managua newspaper, *Nuevo Diario*, which often reflects government policy, published articles that were filled with virulent anti-Semitic statements such as a reference to "synagogues of Satan." **Synagogue turned club**

The Sandinists have also converted the synagogue in Managua into a children's social club, covering exterior stars of David with propaganda posters and adorning the inside walls with anti-Zionist propaganda.

Nicaraguan Jews, according to the article, cite the long and close relationship between the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Sandinists as a source of their problems.

The article described how the Palestine

Liberation Organization has provided weapons, training, money and even fighting men for the Sandinist battle against the Somoza regime. It quotes Jorge Mandi, a Sandinist spokesman, in an interview in a Kuwaiti newspaper in 1979, as saying "there is a long standing bloody unity between us and the Palestine revolution," and recalling that Sandinist troops fought alongside the PLO in Jordan during the Black September battles.

Nicaraguan Jews, according to the article, claim that because of the close PLO-Sandinist relationship, Nicaraguans of Arab descent have been able to remain in the country, continuing business activities similar to those engaged in by the departed Jews who went to the United States, Israel or other Central American countries.

The article states that ADL has sought to alleviate the plight of Nicaraguan Jews in ongoing discussions with Nicaraguan diplomats for two years. In New York in 1981, the League brought the problems to the at-

ention of Nicaragua's foreign minister, Miguel d'Escoto, who promised to investigate the complaints.

Subsequently, Nicaraguan officials promised to review confiscation cases but have not yet delivered any response, nor have they responded to ADL requests to state the conditions under which Jews could return to their country.

Noting that Arguello said at a recent meeting of the Human Rights Committee at the United Nations that the government would consider a request from Nicaraguan Jews that the synagogue be returned to them as a place of worship, Rosenthal said, "This is a meaningless promise in a country without Jews."

PLO serenade

The PLO is doing its best to woo Latin America.
LEON HADAR reports on its varying degrees of success.

THE ELECTION of a Latin American diplomat, the Peruvian Javier Perez de Cuellar as UN secretary-general symbolizes the growing political power of the Latin American bloc which has for many years been a source of political support for the Jewish State at the UN and in other international forums. The Latin American vote at the UN in March 1947 made the partition of Palestine possible, and for the first 25 years of Israel's existence the Latin American nations provided more than half of the votes supporting her.

Although in the decade of the 70s, Latin American support weakened as the bloc split into various political factions, the Latin American nations are still seen by both Israel and Arabs as an important political resource for the state of Israel. It is the only Third World bloc whose majority of members — 21 — maintain diplomatic relations with Israel, not to mention various degrees of economic and military cooperation.

Since the Yom Kippur War, only three Latin American nations have broken diplomatic relations with Israel: Cuba in September 1973, Guyana in March 1974, and Nicaragua following the Sandinista Revolution there.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the Latin American continent has become an important target of an international Arab campaign aimed both at eroding support for Israel there, and at winning international recognition for the PLO.

Since 1973, when quadrupled oil prices threw the economics of many of Latin America's developing countries into a tailspin, the Arab bloc has been exerting increasing pressure upon the Latin American states to move decisively into the Arab camp, the pressure being applied through oil and dollars. "The Arabs, encouraged by the 'tilt' toward the Arabs by various Latin American governments in 1973, are now pressing even harder their ongoing campaign to isolate Israel and to win political support for the PLO," says Rabbi Morton Rosenthal, director of the Latin American Department in the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, who returned recently from a fact-finding trip to several Latin American countries.

"However, while the PLO has been enjoying increasing support among revolutionary groups and regimes — mainly Cuba and the new Sandinista regime in Nicaragua — the pro-PLO campaign in several of the conservative states has reached a stalemate," noted Rosenthal. "One notices a growing resentment and concern among the public and the leadership over the terrorist and radical nature of the PLO and the danger it poses to the governments

Thus, the goal of the Arab bloc, announced at the Arab League meeting in Tunis in 1979, of ousting Israel from the region as they succeeded, diplomatically, in doing in Africa, and replacing it with PLO embassies has not been fulfilled.

Three radical Central American states did become centres of PLO political and military activity in the continent — Cuba, Nicaragua and Grenada. Post-Somoza Nicaragua is today the major centre of PLO activity in the area, aiding radical guerrillas in El Salvador and other Latin American states.

However, as Rosenthal notes, the PLO has only four offices in the region which are officially recognized by the host countries — in Cuba, Mexico, Peru and Nicaragua — although neither Mexico nor Peru accords diplomatic status to the PLO representatives. Expectations that other states, especially Uruguay and Brazil, would recognize the PLO officially, or that the liberal Catholic churches and trade unions would support the Palestinian cause, were clearly not fulfilled, according to Rosenthal who each year publishes a report dealing with the PLO position in the region.

There are indications, argues Rosenthal, that one of the countries — Peru — on June 11, 1979 authorized an official PLO office, a move that was explained as a *quid pro quo* for the establishment of the headquarters of an Arab-controlled bank, Arlabank, is having second thoughts. "Peru in which more than 1,000 terrorist acts were counted last year, like other countries in the region, is concerned that the PLO office is a trojan horse which exposes the country to terrorism and subversion," said Rosenthal.

Thus an editorial in a leading Peruvian newspaper *Expresso* on December 5, linked the PLO with "terrorism, violence and death" and commented on PLO representative Issam Beseisso's offer of Arab loans and petrodollar grants to Peru if the country would "assume a favourable position *vis-à-vis* the Palestinian cause... as in the case of Brazil."

The paper asserted that the "recent declaration of Mr. Beseisso constitutes an offense to the Peruvian people. This type of blackmail is unacceptable." It also called for the expulsion of the PLO representative from Lima, noting that it was "incredible" that Peru's previous military government had granted the PLO official the status of a "diplomatic agent."

Beseisso said in reply to the editorial that according to an Arab League summit decision in November 1979, "all economic cooperation with any country is conditional upon that country's recognition and diplomatic support of the Palestinian people."

The Peruvian Foreign Minister Arian Stella stressed in a reaction to

the editorial that the PLO representative does not have diplomatic status and that there are no plans to give it to him. He also noted that the PLO office had not been authorized by the present government, but by the former military regime.

SIMILAR CONCERNS over PLO pressures were observed by Rosenthal in other Latin American countries as a result of the increasing terrorist activity in several states in the continent. Thus, a concentrated Arab effort to gain public sympathy from, and recognition by the Colombian regime, which was carried out through a major propaganda campaign in the media, had very little effect on the government which traditionally supports Israel. Colombia has even promised to provide an infantry battalion to the international peacekeeping force in Sinai, more troops than any other Latin American country.

El Tiempo, a major Bogota daily, ran a series of lengthy articles on the PLO, as part of the PLO campaign in Colombia, stressing the suffering of Palestinian children. The articles were written by a reporter who went to Lebanon at the invitation of the PLO which also invited television reporters. An interview with PLO chief Yasser Arafat was shown along with scenes of various peaceful PLO activities in Bogota. The UN-sponsored Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian people was marked by a full-page ad in *El Tiempo* and a screening of a UN film on Palestinians.

"But all this media blitz conducted by the PLO representative did not change the Colombian position and its refusal to grant diplomatic recognition to the PLO," notes Rosenthal. He adds that another important factor determining the regime's position on the issue is the anti-terrorist campaign it is currently waging against the M-19 and other local guerrilla organizations. Seven guerrillas were killed in clashes with the government just a few weeks ago.

Beseisso was also at the centre of a pro-PLO campaign in another Andean Pact nation, Ecuador, when he requested authorization from the Ecuadorean House of Representatives to open a PLO office in Quito as the first step towards recognition of a "Palestinian state."

Beseisso met with the legislative commission on international affairs in Quito a few weeks ago. The commission's president, Alejandro Carrion, declared in reference to commonly accepted international principles of co-existence "shared by the Ecuadorean and Palestinian peoples," that "there will be a concrete response to each one of the petitions presented."

The groundwork for the PLO approach to the Ecuadorean government was laid last May, according to Rosenthal. Gil Barragan, then vice-president of the Ecuadorean (over)

House of Representatives and leader of a congressional delegation that toured the Middle East following the Ecuadorian-Peruvian border flareup of January, was reported to have stated in an interview with the Kuwaiti news agency that Ecuador supported the Palestinian cause.

When questioned whether Ecuador would permit the PLO to open an office to represent its interests in Quito, the legislator explained that "the parliament will support that question if it's approved by the minister of foreign relations."

However, Rosenthal and other Latin American observers believe that despite the fact that Ecuador, the smallest member of OPEC, made a strong overture to support the Arab cause in 1981 — a move motivated by need to expand markets for its goods, to get credit with which to finance its burgeoning internal development and to get diplomatic backing in its unresolved dispute with Peru — the Quito government would refrain from officially recognizing the PLO.

Israel, it should be noted, has aided Ecuador in a number of fields including irrigation, transportation, agricultural and rural development and military training. Ecuadoriana,

the Ecuadorian national airline, flies Boeing 727 jets bought from Israel and still serviced by Israelis.

ANOTHER ARAB PLO nation and a major OPEC member, Venezuela, has also been indicating its reluctance to authorize a PLO office in its capital, and Rosenthal stressed that such requests were rejected by the last three Venezuelan administrations.

The PLO renewed its efforts to secure such permission when shortly after the inauguration of President Luis Herrera Campins in 1979, a PLO delegation called upon Foreign Minister Jose Zambrano Velazco who had additional conversations on the issue with PLO representatives at the recent non-aligned movement conference in Havana. The Foreign minister rejected the idea on both occasions. The prospects for a PLO office in Caracas seemed very bright in February 1980 when President Herrera embarked on a 10-day tour of several OPEC countries aimed, among other things, at strengthening relations with the Arab countries.

At his first stop in Algeria, the PLO office was discussed and the Venezuelan president issued a statement supporting the Palestinian people's "legitimate national

rights." However, as a result of pressures from conservative elements in the regime and a public campaign conducted by the Jewish community, the president turned down the request to open the PLO office.

Latin American observers believe that Mexico's leadership will continue to preach solidarity with the PLO and other radical Third World movements in order to appease the radical left-wing elements in the Mexican ruling party, but that this attitude will not lead to any expansion of PLO activity in Mexico or cause problems in the good relations with Israel.

Even in Mexico, where President Jose Lopez Portillo honoured in 1976 a commitment made by his predecessor Luis Echeverria Alvarez to Arafat in 1975, and permitted the PLO to open an office, members of the regime, including the president himself have expressed wariness over the PLO's activity. "The office has been limited to only one staff member, Marwan Tabboub, a graduate of a Spanish university, who has not been granted diplomatic status," notes Rosenthal.

This is the first of two articles by the New York correspondent of The Jerusalem Post.

HEMISPHERE OF PRESSURE

PART OF THE Arab effort to win sympathy in Latin America, and to undermine support for Israel, has focused on Jerusalem's relations with the extreme right-wing regimes of Guatemala and El Salvador. Anti-Israel propaganda stressing these relations has successfully penetrated university campuses and the young intelligentsia, says Rabbi Morton Rosenthal, director of the Latin American Department in the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

Rosenthal, just back from a fact-finding trip to Latin America, says that the PLO attempt to win support among the left-orientated Catholic churches and trade unions has failed.

Two Arab Catholic priests, Father Ibrahim Ayyan, a member of the Palestine National Council and Monsignor Hilarion Capucci (who was released in 1977 from an Israeli jail after serving part of his 12-year sentence for smuggling ammunition and explosives for the PLO) were sent to meet with several Latin American Catholic priests.

"However, although many of those priests are supporters of the so-called Marxist theology of liberation and are very close to radical groups, their activity is concentrated on domestic issues and they indicated clearly, as did the heads of the major trade union, that they have no interest in the Palestinian issue and in Middle Eastern problems in general," says Rosenthal.

Even the large Arab community in Latin America, which numbers about 12 million, has not been very responsive to demands coming from Arab embassies to engage in pro-PLO activity.

"The majority of the Latin American Arabs are of Lebanese-Maronite or Syrian-Christian origin," notes Rosenthal.

"Their families fled the Middle East as a result of persecution and discrimination and you can't expect them to be very sympathetic to Pan-Arabist campaigns. Only a small group of Palestinian immigrants concentrated in Chile and Brazil has been very active in Arab lobbying efforts."

A Latin American organization called FEARAB (Federation of Arab Entities in the Americas) has been active in recent years organizing the Arab lobbying efforts in support of the PLO campaign for legitimization in Latin America. The organization which held its recent convention in Washington has not succeeded, however, in attracting major public support in most of the Latin American countries, aside from Brazil.

Among the conservative regimes in the continent, Brazil has been the most active in cultivating relations with the Arab bloc and has not made a secret of its attempt to get closer to the PLO as part of its Middle East strategy. In 1980 alone, Brazilian exports to the Arab countries reached \$1.5 billion and Brazilian industrial concerns have been winning important contracts throughout the Middle East.

One of the major highlights in the process of improving relations between Brazil and the Arab world was the 1980 visit to Brazil of the vice-president of Iraq, the country that supplies half of Brazil's oil needs. A joint communique issued at the conclusion of his five-day visit said the PLO is the "sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people." However, the government has refused until this day to authorize the opening of a PLO office in Brazil and the PLO representative remains accredited only as an Arab League diplomat.

However, during Rosenthal's recent visit to Brazil, he noticed signs that the government might be willing to change its position on the issue. Three weeks ago, the Parliamentary League for Arab-Brazilian friendship, organized by the PLO was installed in Brazil's Chamber of Deputies as part of intensive PLO effort to strengthen its position in the nation.

At the installation ceremony, Farid Sawan, the PLO representative in Brazil, read a message from Yasser Arafat expressing the latter's desire to strengthen ties with the Brazilian people and promising that Arabs "will continue the fight against imperialism, Zionist colonialism and racial segregation."

EVELYN Sommers, the Argentine-born director of the Israeli-Ibero American Cultural Institute in New York and the WIZO representative of the UN, argues that the political, economic and cultural elite in most Latin American states still supports Israel. "The Western-oriented, aristocratic elite in those countries admires Israel's achievements in agriculture, technology and culture as well as its 'macho' anti-Communist stand in the Middle East," she explains.

Sommers, who as WIZO's representative to the UN monitors the Latin American representatives' votes on Arab-Israeli issues in the General Assembly and its committees. She notes that Brazil, like other conservative Latin American countries, some of which are friendly to Israel, shifted to a more pro-Arab and "disturbing" direction during the recent General Assembly session, a development that has been reflected in statements and votes of the continent's representatives. Thus, Brazil, Chile and Mexico voted in the General Assembly in favour of a resolution rejecting the Camp David Accords, while Argentina


and Peru supported a resolution calling for the imposition of sanctions against Israel to punish it for annexing the Golan Heights.

Interestingly enough Brazil's present representative to the UN is married to the daughter of Oswaldo Aranha, the Brazilian president of the General Assembly during the 1947 debate on the partition of Palestine. He had been together with other Latin American diplomats at that time, the driving force behind the diplomatic activity at the UN that led to the birth of the state of Israel.

But despite the "disturbing" signs as a bloc the Latin-Americans have been less hostile to Israel than other Third World groups in the UN and some of its members, Jamaica, for example, which is now ruled by a new pro-Western regime, has supported Israel in the main votes on Middle East issues more than West European countries like France or Britain.

"The Latin Americans are a very proud people," concluded Sommers. "They may be interested in improving their relations with Arab countries, but they resent and reject the Arab attempt to blackmail them, to tie political and economic support to recognition of the PLO. I think they made it clear to the Arabs that they are becoming tired of their pressure on them."

The second of two articles. The first appeared yesterday. The author is the New York correspondent of The Jerusalem Post.

ADL
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REPORT

LATIN AMERICA

P.L.O. Activities in Latin America

Revised Edition, May 1982

ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE OF B'NAI B'RITH/823 UNITED NATIONS PLAZA/NEW YORK, NY 10017

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ADL INTERNATIONAL REPORT

P.L.O. Activities in Latin America

Introduction to the Revised Edition

This revised edition of the ADL report on "P.L.O Activities in Latin America" brings up-to-date the information contained in the first edition, published June, 1980.

The PLO has made very limited progress during the past two years in its campaign to open offices in every Latin American capital. The number of such offices increased from 3 to 5 when Nicaragua and Ecuador joined Cuba, Mexico and Peru by authorizing the establishment of PLO offices in their capital cities.

Leaders of the PLO are undoubtedly disappointed by the refusal of the vast majority of countries to agree to the establishment of offices. Venezuela and Brazil, thought by many to be prime candidates for PLO offices, have resisted very heavy Arab economic and political pressures.

The main obstacle the PLO faces in the region continues to be the widespread recognition that they are part of the international terrorist network and that the legitimization of a PLO presence would endanger the security of the nation. The security threat is acutely apparent to the military officers of countries which have experienced the scourge of terrorism. The PLO threat is also a contributing factor in the continuing governmental restraints on the PLO in Mexico and in the displeasure with the PLO expressed by officials of the Peruvian government.

The June, 1980 report cited the historic role that Latin American countries have played in support of Israel. The disproportionate support that Israel has received from the Latin American bloc of nations was brought to the world's attention in the Fall of 1980 when the Arab bloc began to press for the transfer of embassies from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv. Only then was the public made aware that of the thirteen countries that had embassies in Jerusalem, twelve were Latin American. All ultimately yielded to Arab pressures.

The government of Costa Rica recently took an important diplomatic initiative that may be emulated by other countries in the region. On May 9, 1982, the newly-elected President of Costa Rica, Dr. Luis Alberto Monge, announced that the Embassy of Costa Rica will be returned to Jerusalem.

May, 1982

Introduction

Latin America has long been an important source of strength for Israel in the United Nations and in other international fora. In UN voting crucial to Israel, during the first twenty-five years of its existence, the Latin American nations provided more than half the votes supportive of Israel.

In the early sixties, Latin American nations joined a group of moderate African states in support of UN proposals for direct Arab-Israeli negotiations, which Israel favored. During the 1967 war, the Latin American bloc was more supportive than any other bloc of nations.

In the decade of the seventies, Latin American support weakened as the bloc split into various political factions. Nonetheless, the Latin American nations are still seen by both Israel and the Arabs as an important political resource for the State of Israel. An Israeli diplomat, commenting in 1972 on Latin American support for Israel and the fact that Israel maintained diplomatic relations with all 24 Latin American countries said that "Israel is proud of its position and success there." Since then, two nations broke diplomatic relations with Israel: Cuba in September, 1973 and Guyana in March, 1974.

The importance which the Arab states attach to Latin American votes was reflected in the remarks of Egypt's Vice-Chancellor, Gamal Mansour, during a visit to Mexico in 1975. Mexico was the last of eleven countries which Mansour had visited in what he described as "an Egyptian mission of friendship for Latin America." Mansour told a reporter for Excelsior that "for the Arabs, the support of the Latin American countries is essential because they hope to obtain a majority for a resolution in the next Assembly of the United Nations...recognizing the right of the Palestinians to convert themselves into a political entity; to permit the Arabs to recuperate the territories occupied in the war of 1967 and confirm the principle that no country can acquire territories of another by force."

The Egyptian Vice-Chancellor's mission was but one of many such missions in a prolonged Arab League campaign to persuade Latin American governments to abandon their historic support for Israel and become partisans of the Arab cause. Until 1973, the Latin American governments resisted the Arab efforts and, by and large, continued various policies favoring Israel or at least maintained a posture of equidistance between the two parties to the conflict.

Since 1973, when quadrupled oil prices threw the economies of many of the developing countries of Latin America into a tailspin, the Arabs have been exerting increasing pressure upon Latin American states to move decisively into the Arab camp, the pressure being applied through oil and dollars. The Arabs have threatened to curtail vitally needed oil supplies and deny important export markets to the Latin Americans, desperately in need both of the oil and of the dollars earned by exports with which to pay for the oil.

The Arabs have couched their pressures in a more positive way. Lebanese Foreign Minister Fouad Naffah, acting as a representative of the Arab League, toured seven Latin American countries in 1973 telling the various governments that if they supported the Arab cause they could be assured of oil supplies. Said Naffah, "No underdeveloped country that backs the just cause of the Arab world will suffer from an energy shortage." He also held forth the promise of Arab investments.

The Arab League, encouraged by the "tilt" toward the Arabs by various Latin American governments since 1973, is now pressing even harder its ongoing campaign to isolate Israel from its historic friends in Latin America. The Arabs met in Tunis last year and decided to focus their efforts on Latin America as they had previously done in Africa, with the goal of ousting the Israelis from the region as they succeeded in doing in Africa. Concurrently, they decided to unleash an anti-Semitic campaign designed to undermine the status of Jews in Latin America, to nullify the political and economic support which the Latin American Jewish communities provide Israel.

The new campaign is focused on the Palestine Liberation Organization, which was chosen as the optimal vehicle for the campaign. Arab ambassadors, other high-ranking emissaries and representatives of the PLO have been crisscrossing the region in a coordinated, heavily financed effort to secure authorization to establish an official PLO office in every Latin American capital. The PLO's deputy observer at the UN told Associated Press in November, 1979 that the group planned to send a high level mission to Latin America to be led by Faruk Kaddumi because the PLO's main priority is now Latin America. Yassir Arafat has made repeated efforts to visit Brazil, which have been rebuffed by Brazilian officials. The general secretary of the Arab League announced, in May 1980, a mission to Brazil, Mexico and Venezuela to mobilize support for a Palestinian homeland.

At the present time, the PLO has three offices in the region which are officially recognized by the host countries -- Cuba, Mexico and Peru, although neither Mexico nor Peru accords diplomatic status to the PLO representatives. In several countries their are unofficial PLO offices and in others the PLO supporters are eagerly anticipating early achievement of their objective.

Their prospects seem least promising among the Southern Cone countries -- Argentina, Chile and Uruguay -- but even there the campaign of pressure and promises is intense. Throughout the continent, as in the Southern Cone, the main obstacle is the knowledge that a PLO office is a Trojan Horse which would provide a legal haven for Terrorism International and expose the host country to terrorism and subversion, forces which convulsed many of these countries in the sixties and seventies.

It merits notice that Guyana and Grenada, both nations that are aligned with Cuban policy on the Middle East, have not permitted the PLO to open offices. Jamaica, another nation that may also appear a likely site for such an office, has been similarly unresponsive on this issue.

June, 1980

Brazil

The PLO has had a representative in Brazil since 1979, functioning unofficially. However, the establishment of an officially recognized PLO office continues to be an elusive primary goal for the PLO and the Arab countries that support it. This, despite frequent statements that the much coveted recognition would be forthcoming momentarily.

The most recent such announcement was made in January, 1982 when Saudi Arabia's Ambassador, Abdullah Saleh Halabi, in an exclusive interview with the Brazilian daily O Estado de Sao Paulo, announced that the opening of the office was

Not only has the PLO been denied permission for an office, but it has been losing popular appeal since the beginning of 1982. Farid Sawan, the PLO spokesman, has had fewer speeches scheduled in Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo and now focuses his efforts in smaller cities. Observers attribute the declining popularity of Sawan and the PLO to a variety of factors. The decreased dependence of Brazil upon oil imports from Arab countries, due to increased domestic production and the success of the alcohol fuel program is a primary factor. Underlying this is the Brazilians' resentment of the tremendous diplomatic and economic pressures exerted by Arab states on behalf of the PLO; dozens of formal requests for a PLO office in Brazil have been made by Arab emissaries.

Despite official denials by Itamaraty, the Brazilian foreign office, that the Arabs were pressuring Brazil, Brazilian determination to keep the PLO at bay could not survive the 1979 visit to Brazil of Taha Muhyidinne Maarouf, the Vice President of Iraq, the country that supplies more than half of Brazil's considerable oil needs. The Iraqi succeeded in wresting a major concession from President Joao Figueredo. In a joint communique issued at the conclusion of the Vice President's five-day visit, the Brazilians said that the Palestine Liberation Organization is the "sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people." However, the government stopped short of authorizing the PLO to open an office in Brasilia.

Although the Brazilian government refused to permit the official opening of a PLO office, it attempted to mediate between the opposing pressures of Arabs and Brazilians, including military and civilian officials who fear that national security will be endangered by a PLO office. The government finessed the situation in April, 1979 by permitting a PLO representative, Farid Sawan, to function as a staff member of the Arab League office, according him diplomatic privileges. Sawan's unique status was made clear in a statement by the press secretary of Itamaraty, Bernardo Pericas, reported by O Estado de Sao Paulo on May 7, 1979. The spokesman said, "The government of Brazil hopes that the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization in this capital, Farid Sawan, as a diplomatic functionary of the Arab League mission, will respect Brazilian laws and institutions." Enjoying diplomatic privileges and immunities, Sawan should "not interfere in the internal affairs" of Brazil.

The Pericas statement was made after one of Sawan's numerous inflammatory actions. Sawan has generated many swirling storms of controversy in Brazil, antagonizing Jews, other Brazilians and the government itself.

In a speech to the City Council of Anapolis, Sawan said: "Zionism is a form of racism. The same kind of racism adopted by Adolf Hitler, the one who killed six million Jews because they did not obey the laws of the country in which they lived."

The Brazilian Jewish community, which is the second largest Jewish community in Latin America, has frequently expressed its concern and disapproval of the PLO presence. After the 1979 visit by the Vice President of Iraq, the leaders of Brazil's 160,000 Jews presented to President Figueredo a document which expressed the Jewish community's "profound preoccupation" over the possibility of a PLO office being installed in Brazil because they anticipate that it would create "a climate of total insecurity." The leaders expressed their desire that the President prevent the installation of an office and stop the activity of the PLO representative, who had been working unofficially, because both threaten the destruction of "a tradition of more than 400 years of fraternal harmony among Brazilians of

Arab and Jewish descent" and would establish a "permanent climate of national strife."

Brazilian officials were angered by Sawan's role in organizing a public demonstration against the establishment of formal diplomatic relations between Israel and Egypt. The PLO representative and the Ambassadors of Libya and Iraq led a group of 500 demonstrators on a protest march against the Egyptian Embassy in Brasilia. A special riot unit was called out and the police sealed off the Embassy area. The respected daily Jornal do Brasil denounced the demonstration as a lamentable incident which "could have degenerated into violence endangering the immunity of foreign diplomats."

Sawan wrote a booklet, "Menahem Begin: History of a Terrorist" which was so offensive that the Brazilian government forbade its distribution. Nonetheless, Sawan distributed copies to university students. Israel's Ambassador described the book as "pure and simple anti-Semitic propaganda in the style of a certain great European power" and demanded that Itamaraty take "adequate measures" against the PLO representative. The attack on Begin resulted in Itamaraty warning Sawan and the Arab League office that they face possible expulsion for violating Brazilian law by publishing a book which is offensive to the head of a friendly state.

Sawan has made inroads among Brazilian politicians, as well as university and labor circles. He organized a Parliamentary League for Arab-Brazilian Friendship in the Federal Chamber of Deputies. Nearly 100 members of the Brazilian Congress have joined the League, which in December, 1981 announced that it intended to become a parliamentary bloc.

The primary focus of opposition to the PLO is among the Brazilian military who are aware that the PLO has long used Brazil as a base for subversion in Brazil and other countries of Latin America.

The Jerusalem-based correspondent for O Estado de Sao Paulo reported that Rubkhai Haloum arrived in Brazil in 1970 with an Algerian diplomatic passport. From his Brazilian base, he quickly established contacts with the Tupamaros of Uruguay and the Montoneros of Argentina, offering those terrorists training in PLO camps in the Middle East in exchange for their collaboration with Palestinian terrorists in Latin America. His actions that year led to the Palestinian terrorists' attack on the Israeli Consulate in Paraguay and a grenade attack against the Honorary Consul of Israel in Guatemala. Dutch authorities subsequently detained Haloum in Amsterdam as he boarded an airliner scheduled to depart for Brazil because he was carrying a suitcase with "various cartons of explosives." Haloum was replaced by Salah Zawai who came to Brazil from Caracas.

In Brazil, Haloum established a relationship with the Vanguardia Popular Revolutionary (VPR) group. The Jornal do Brasil of December 26, 1979 reports that VPR guerrillas are being trained in Lebanon. A group of young Brazilian militants of the extreme Left, members of the VPR, went through guerrilla training in the Palestinian camps belonging to the PFLP, the radical Marxist organization headed by Dr. George Habash. The Brazilian paper based its report on the Israeli newspaper Yediot Aharanot, which carried an article written by their London correspondent, Yohanan Lachev, who has good links with Western intelligence agents, and Robert Moss, an English specialist in intelligence publications who reports for The Economist.

Moss, who participated in an international conference on terrorism held in Jerusalem, has occasionally affirmed that Libyan and Iraqi diplomatic representatives in Brasilia are responsible for financing the activities of subversive groups in different countries of Latin America.

Yediot Aharanot reported that in 1977 the VPR concluded a tactical alliance with PFLP whereby Brazil's militants were to be trained in its camps. The paper also stated that the current PLO representative in Brazil, Farid Sawan, is responsible for an elaborate plan to promote training of young Brazilians who would promote a revolution in their country or would follow the example of Iranian volunteers who joined the Palestinian guerrillas against Israel.

Salah Zawai, who preceded Sawan in Brazil, laid a foundation for this by forming a group whose initial activity was the collection of money and political mobilization in the Brazilian/Arab community for the PLO's activities in Brazil.

Similar reports have emanated from other sources. In June, 1979, two Sao Paulo newspapers, O Estado de Sao Paulo and Jornal de Tarde, reported that Al Fatah was using Brazil as a point of contact with Latin American terrorists. That same month, La Opinion of Buenos Aires reported that PFLP was working clandestinely in Brazil.

A spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Relations, has acknowledged that the Brazilian government knew that the PLO had representatives in the country in the early 70's, but disclaimed any knowledge of their contacts with other terrorist groups.

The Arab population is estimated at more than three million people, the vast majority of Lebanese Christian ancestry and not sympathetic to the PLO. In the beginning of 1982, the Brazilian daily newspaper O Estado de Sao Paulo organized a debate on "The Palestinians and the PLO." This gave rise to a suggestion that a Committee for Peace in the Middle East be formed by Arabs, Jews and others interested in opening lines of communication among the various groups to minimize the antagonism engendered by PLO propaganda.

Southern Cone Countries

The three Southern Cone countries - Argentina, Chile and Uruguay - have been basically unsympathetic to the PLO cause, in large measure because the military men who govern these countries view the PLO as a terrorist organization that poses a threat to their nations' security.

Argentine officials have on various occasions publicly denounced ties between the PLO and Argentine terrorist organizations. In May, 1981 General Cristino Nicolaide said that an Argentine terrorist network, which authorities uncovered, had been trained by the PLO in Lebanon to assassinate key Argentine government officials.

General Albano Eduardo Harguindeguy, as Minister of Interior in May, 1978 told the Italian journal Il Tempo that there is no doubt about the connection between Argentine terrorists and other international terrorist groups. He cited the financing of terrorism by an "oil country" which gives money to the PLO who, in turn, divides it with the Red Brigades, the Baader-Meinhof group, the Montoneros, the ERP, and the Tupamaros... He added that the majority of Argentine terrorist leaders are exiled in Europe where they get money from Arab countries.

The link between the PLO and Argentine terrorists was first brought to public attention in 1978 by Gente magazine of Buenos Aires. It published a photo of Yassir Arafat surrounded by Mario Firmenich and Fernando Vaca Narvaja, two key leaders of the Montoneros, the largest and most effective Argentine urban guerrilla group. The magazine article entitled "The Profession of Terror" said, "behind this union and those smiles, hundreds of deaths are hidden."

In late August, 1980 Foreign Minister Carlos Washington Pastor indicated that Argentina might be inclined to recognize the PLO if its leadership were moderate. His remarks sparked an editorial in La Prensa of Buenos Aires saying that "our country's attitude with regards to the conflict in the Middle East was not always appropriate in light of the fact that we know of the existing connection between the PLO and the subversive guerrillas, among which are the Montoneros."

Mexico and Central America

Mexico

During a Middle East tour in 1975, Mexican President Luis Echeverria met with Yassir Arafat and promised him that the PLO could open an office in Mexico. The Lebanese Ambassador expressed the Arabs' gratitude by presenting President Echeverria with his country's highest medal and nominating him for the Nobel Peace Prize. President Lopez Portillo, although reluctantly, honored the commitment made by his predecessor and, in 1976, permitted the PLO to open an office in Mexico. Reflecting the new President's wariness of the PLO, the office was limited to only one staff person, who was not granted the diplomatic status promised by his predecessor.

The first director of the office was Marwan Tahboub, a graduate of a Spanish university. He was replaced by Dr. Ahmad H. Sobeh, who made his first official appearance at the July 31, 1981 meeting of the Mexican Union of Electricians. Official requests to add staff for the office have been denied by the Mexican government, but the director relies upon the assistance of a group of "volunteers" to carry out the propaganda work of the office. Gloria Lopez Morales, who reportedly worked for the PLO in Rome, edits the magazine Medio Oriente Informa (Middle East Report) published in Mexico. Ikram Antaki, a Syrian born anthropologist now living in Mexico, authors numerous articles that appear in newspapers. A third collaborator is Ignacio Gonzalez Janzen who visited Lebanon where he met Arafat and subsequently became a militant. He wrote a book entitled, "The Palestinian Revolution." Among the others who help the PLO office are two "progressive Jews."

The PLO office, in cooperation with the Association Mexicana de Amistad con el Pueblo Palestino (AMAPP), have used cultural events as the vehicle for spreading their message. To penetrate university circles in Mexico, the PLO has recruited exiled leftists, revolutionaries and radical intellectuals who found haven in Mexico.

In May, 1981, the PLO supporters organized the "Palestinian Cultural Month" with four events geared to university students. Each was a pretext for the showing of two propaganda films: "The Palestinian People Have Rights" and the "Children of Palestine." The former film, produced by the U.N. Permanent Committee on the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, has a definite pro-PLO slant. The latter presents handicapped children, claiming that their physical condition is "a result of Zionist aggression."

In June, 1981, there was a seminar on "The Palestinian Problem" at the Acatlan Campus of the National University. The two main lectures were the "Historic View of the Palestinian Problem" and, "The Palestinian Resistance." Once again, the two films mentioned above were shown.

In July, 1981, the PLO published large paid advertisements in several newspapers attacking "Zionist aggression" and asking the Mexican government to condemn Israel and ban the sale of oil to Israel. The PLO-recruited signators of the ad included members of the leftist political parties, trade unions and others. Four days later, another PLO ad called upon the Mexican people to join in solidarity with the Lebanese and Palestinian people.

The PLO has also targeted labor unions, and official and non-official political parties, such as, The Socialist Unified Party of Mexico (PSUM), which supports the PLO openly; the Socialist Workers Party (PST); the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT), which demonstrated in front of the Israeli Embassy during Yom Kippur of 1981, protesting the Israeli attacks on Lebanon; the Mexican Workers Party (PMT), an unofficial party but an open supporter of PLO activities in Mexico.

On July 31, 1981, the Mexican Union of Electricians and the PLO sponsored a meeting attended by some 500 people. Mrs. Martha Tamayo, who was then President of AMAPP, delivered an address in which she compared Prime Minister Begin to Hitler. PLO literature was displayed on tables at the meeting.

The dissemination of books and other literature attacking "Zionism as Racism" is a primary PLO tactic. Among the books distributed are: "The Palestinian Revolution and Camp David", published by the PLO in Mexico, "The Palestinian Revolution" by Ignacio Gonzalez Yanzen and "Meeting with Yassir Arafat" by Ikram Antaki. The PLO office has also distributed literature of the United Nations which is favorable to the Palestinian cause, as well as several magazines.

November 29, 1981 marked the International Day of Solidarity of the Palestinian People. A meeting was held at the auditorium of the Union of Mexican Telephone Workers attended by members of leftist parties as well as representatives of countries like the Soviet Union, China, Vietnam, and of revolutionary movements like the Sandinistas and the Liberation Movement of El Salvador.

Nicaragua

Nicaragua is the center for PLO operations in Central America and Panama. From the sanctuary afforded the PLO by the Sandinista victory, PLO cadres using false passports have infiltrated the region, providing both arms and training to guerrilla forces. This base of operations became even more secure when, on July 22, 1980, the revolutionary government granted the PLO formal diplomatic recognition and authorized the opening of a PLO office in Managua. This coincided with the visit of Yassir Arafat for the celebration of the first anniversary of the revolution, marked by proclamations of "revolutionary solidarity" among the PLO, Nicaragua, and groups from such diverse places as Vietnam, East Timor and Grenada.

While in Nicaragua, Arafat publicly boasted that the Sandinista forces had received military training in PLO camps. Sandinista leaders have also acknowledged publicly their long and close relationship with the PLO. Jorge Mandi, a Sandinista spokesman, told a reporter for the Kuwaiti newspaper Al Watan (August 7, 1979) about the Sandinistas' links to the Palestinian guerrillas:

"There is a long standing blood unity between us and the Palestinian revolution...Many of the units belonging to the Sandinista movement were at Palestinian revolutionary bases in Jordan. In the early 1970's, Nicaraguan and Palestinian blood was spilled together in Amman and in other places during the 'Black September' battles."

Mandi gave specific examples of cooperation with Arab terrorists: "A number of Sandinistas took part in the operation to divert four aircraft which the PFLP seized and landed at a desert airfield in Jordan. One of our comrades was also wounded in another hijack operation in which Leila Khaled was involved. She was in command of the operation and our comrades helped her carry it out. It is natural, therefore, that in our war against Somoza, we received Palestinian aid for our revolution in various forms..." The PLO reportedly trained as many as 70 Sandinistas in North Africa and the Near East from 1968 to 1978.

The links between Sandinistas and the PLO were publicly proclaimed in two joint communiques in 1978. The first, signed in Mexico City on February 5, 1978, affirmed "the ties of solidarity existing between the two revolutionary organizations" and attacked the only democracy in the Middle East as "the racist state of Israel." On March 6, 1978, in Havana, Cuba, the Sandinistas signed a joint communique with the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (a more extreme constituent member of the PLO) declaring war against "Yankee imperialism, the racist regime of Israel and the dictatorship of Anastasio Somoza..."

The PLO has also served the Sandinistas by introducing them to radical Arab states which have become a source of vitally needed financial and military aid. One Latin ambassador called the infusion of arms and financial support an "Arab offensive" which has no precedent in Central America.

At the moment that the Reagan administration and Congress were debating whether to give the Nicaraguan government \$75 million in aid, Libya announced a \$100 million aid program for Nicaragua. This announcement followed the visit by Interior Minister Tomas Borge to Tripoli where he lavished praise upon Libyan President Qadaffi. Libya is also reportedly considering joint agricultural ventures in Nicaragua involving more than \$300 million.

The London Daily Telegraph of December 2, 1981, reported that the PLO had loaned the Sandinista government some \$12 million. It observed that this loan gives some credence to the PLO's boast that it is "the richest liberation organization in the world." The PLO holdings have become so large that Arafat reportedly engaged a business consultant, a professor at the American University in Beirut, to advise the PLO on effective financial management.

Algeria has shipped the revolutionary government as many as 30 Soviet-made tanks and large quantities of arms. During the revolutionary struggle, the PLO was a major source of arms for the Sandinistas. The interception in Tunis of a plane-load of weapons sent by the PLO to the Sandinistas (U.S. News and World Report, July 23, 1979) was conclusive proof of a supply operation which U.S. intelligence officials viewed as part of a Russian scheme to use the PLO to channel arms to other revolutionary groups in Central America.

The degree to which the PLO is currently involved in training Nicaraguan forces is "not clear" the deputy director of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency,

Admiral Bobby Inman, told reporters in March, 1982. He said that reports about PLO advisors helping to build the Nicaraguan armed forces training them for the "export of revolution" had not been "confirmed with a degree of certainty."

Yassir Arafat, in a January, 1982 speech in Beirut, said that guerrillas from the PLO were serving in Nicaragua and El Salvador, as well as Angola. A Kuwaiti press report quoted Palestinian sources, shortly after Arafat's 1980 visit to Nicaragua, saying that Col. Mutlag Hamadan of the PLO led a military training mission to Nicaragua for instruction in the use of Eastern bloc weapons.

El Salvador

PLO leader Yassir Arafat has publicly affirmed that Palestinian soldiers are actively supporting the insurgent forces in El Salvador. The report from Beirut in January, 1982 triggered a furor among some Latin American delegates to the United Nations, who were angered by the fact that Palestinian pilots were serving with the rebels' Nicaraguan-based air force.

Ambassador Mauricio Rosales of El Salvador sent a note to the PLO's United Nations observer, Zehti Labib Terzi, stating that his government and other countries in the region were shocked and surprised by the report. He added that PLO's help for the insurgents violates international conventions against interference in a nation's internal affairs, and specifically cited the United Nations Charter.

A year earlier, on February 19, 1981, the United States' Department of State had disclosed that the PLO and Iraq were aiding the guerrilla movement in El Salvador. According to the State Department, the Salvadoran guerrilla leaders received \$500,000 in cash from Iraq, and Salvadoran guerrillas were being trained by the PLO. The State Department report also said that leaders of the United Revolutionary Directorate (DRU) met with Arafat in Managua, Nicaragua, on July 22, 1980 at which time "Arafat promised military equipment, including arms and aircraft." The report also said that "a Salvadoran guerrilla leader met with Fatah leaders in Beirut in August and November and the PLO had trained selected Salvadorians in the Near East and Nicaragua."

The leader of the Communist party in El Salvador, Shafik Handal, serves as a key link between the guerrillas, the PLO and other Arab radicals. Handal, whose parents are Palestinian immigrants to El Salvador, has claimed that others in El Salvador's 2,000-member Palestinian community are also in the guerrilla forces.

Handal has made numerous trips to the Middle East and other regions. In March, 1981 he went to Beirut where he met with Arafat and Nayif Hawatmah, Secretary-General of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) the official host for his visit. In his quest of arms and financial aid, Handal has also visited Cuba, Russia, Vietnam, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Hungary and Ethiopia.

Handal is not the only guerrilla leader to make the pilgrimage. In March, 1982 Salvador Cayetano Carpio, head of the largest guerrilla group in El Salvador, Popular Forces of Liberation, held talks with PLO leaders in Southern Lebanon, including, according to PLO sources, Yassir Arafat and his chief military aid, Khalil al-Wazir.

The Salvadoran guerrillas have reciprocated the PLO support in various ways. In December, 1979 leftist guerrillas set off a bomb in the Israeli Embassy in San Salvador, causing damage to the building. The People's Revolutionary Army claimed responsibility for the attack, saying that the bombing was in "solidarity with the Palestinian people." According to the Associated Press, the PRA was demanding that the El Salvador military junta establish diplomatic relations with the PLO.

Costa Rica

Shortly before taking office on May 8, 1982, President Luis Alberto Monge announced that his government would develop an energetic and extensive policy of internal security in response to the growing terrorist threat to the nation. Speaking to a group of mass media executives, he denounced the existence of very dangerous groups "which can blow us up at any moment." He specifically named the Palestine Liberation Organization.

President Monge also expressed concern about Libya's threat to the nation's security. Costa Rica's official National Security Agency (ASN) recently confirmed that young Costa Ricans, ideologically disposed to Communism, are being sent to Libya to receive terrorist training. The ASN reported in April, 1982 that, moving in groups of three, young Costa Ricans clandestinely leave for a six-month training period in Libya. The security agency also linked the Libyans to secret terrorist training camps now operating in Costa Rica.

The PLO-Libyan threat to national security is a major factor in the current review of Costa Rican foreign policy toward the Arab states. It is widely anticipated that the new government will move away from what one Costa Rican journalist called the "universalist tendencies and contradictions of the Costa Rican foreign policy" under former President Rodrigo Carazo Odio. One significant measure was announced shortly after the new administration came to power - Costa Rica, traditionally one of Israel's most consistent supporters, will return its Embassy to Jerusalem.

The former administration's embrace of the Arab states was alarming to many Costa Ricans. This was reflected in the nation's newspapers in late June, 1980 when a San Jose daily carried the headline, "International Fear That a PLO Office Will Operate in Costa Rica." The stories broke on the eve of the scheduled arrival of an Arab delegation. The Arabs were reportedly to offer financial support for The University of Peace, a pet project of President Rodrigo Carazo Odio, in exchange for permission to open a PLO office.

Controversy was heightened when Ambassador Yamuni, Costa Rica's representative in several Arab capitals, told reporters that Costa Rica had officially recognized the PLO and quoted from what was purportedly an official document of the Foreign Ministry. Foreign Minister Bernard Neihaus was compelled to disavow the Ambassador's statement, saying "We do not recognize the PLO..." It is highly improbable that the Monge government, its economy destroyed by high oil prices and its internal security threatened by unprecedented terrorism, will have any reason to do so either.

Panama

Supporters of the PLO, under the banner of the "Panamanian-Arab League of Solidarity with the Palestinian People and the PLO" (LIGASOPOLP), are continuing

intense efforts to gain support among the Panamanian people. The first Secretary General of LIGASOPOLP was Carlos Perez Herrera, a cousin of the late General Omar Torrijos, former commander of the Panamanian National Guard and eminence gris of Panamanian politics.

Since the death of General Torrijos in 1981, there has been a diminution of governmental support for the PLO. With General Ruben Dario Paredes as leader of the National Guard, the government is now trying to unify the country and often stresses the contribution of various minorities to Panamanian society. PLO propaganda, often anti-Semitic and directed against the Panamanian Jewish community, is seen as disruptive and contrary to government policy.

LIGASOPOLP operates out of a storefront office on the main street of Panama City. Its principal spokesman is Salama Khaled, who is often referred to as the PLO representative in Panama. The Libyan Embassy is the principal source of funding for the office, and is also responsible for the anti-Semitic propaganda circulating in the university and among trade union members. In 1981, the attendance at the three major LIGASOPOLP public events was very sparse.

In December, 1979, the Panamanian Jewish community made representations to their government and published a full-page ad in the daily La Estrella de Panama, under the heading in bold letters: "WE DENOUNCE THE LAMENTABLE AND UNNECESSARY FACTOR OF SOCIAL DISTURBANCE IN PANAMA."

The sparsely-worded ad made five points:

- 1) A poorly-disguised office of the PLO has been established in Panama, spreading hatred, division and terror in the country;
- 2) The activity carried out by that group does not defend any cause, but attacks, in a violent and dangerous manner, social harmony in Panama;
- 3) The National Government has permitted and still permits the various activities of this organization, of which the most prominent representatives are functionaries of the Central Government;
- 4) The PLO is internationally recognized for looting, causing pain and spilling blood;
- 5) The representatives of the Jewish community of Panama will not remain passive in the face of these ugly and undignified deeds and situations.

The ad concluded with two requests directed to the National Government:

- 1) Eradicate in a definitive manner every vestige of the PLO in Panama; and
- 2) Honor its public promise to prevent the presence of the PLO in Panama, with the purpose of preserving national unity and social peace.

Although LIGASOPOLP is still functioning, it no longer enjoys support at the highest levels of government as it did several years ago. There are no indications that the government will formally authorize a PLO office, thus keeping its promise to prevent a PLO presence in Panama.

Cuba

The PLO first surfaced in Latin America in 1966 when Havana, Cuba, became the site of the First Conference of the Organization of Solidarity of the Peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America (OSPAAL). Although Fidel Castro and the PLO clashed on ideological lines at that conference, they soon worked out their differences and began a close cooperative effort which continues to this day.

By 1968, Cuban intelligence and military personnel were assisting the PLO on training missions in North Africa and Iraq. In 1969, Cuban national liberation officers were in joint training with PLO officers in the USSR, and in June of that year, Cuban members of the training class went to Egypt where they conducted a joint raid into the Israeli-occupied Sinai desert, as subsequently reported by the Paris newspaper Le Monde.

Fidel Castro met with PLO leaders in Algeria in May, 1972 to discuss stepped-up coordination of activities. As a result of that meeting, the PLO undertook to augment Cuban training of Latin American guerrillas with specialized instruction in Lebanon, South Yemen and Libya. To further strengthen the PLO-Cuban connection, the PLO opened its first Latin American office in Cuba on December 18, 1974. Since the PLO established its office in Cuba, it has been at the heart of revolutionary struggles in Latin America.

Cuba has reciprocated by consistently supporting the PLO in the international arena. This support was publicly acknowledged by Yassir Arafat in an interview in the August 23, 1981 edition of Granma, the official Cuban newspaper. Arafat thanked "Cuba, the Cuban leadership, the Cuban people, the Communist party and government, especially dear Comrade Fidel Castro, who supports us....They are on the side of all just causes, with the cause of the Palestinian people at the top of the list." He spoke in the name of "the Palestinian people, the Palestinian revolutionaries and the revolutionaries of the Palestine-Lebanese joint forces with which we are in the front line."

At the "Fourth United Nations Seminar on the Question of Palestine" held in Havana in September, 1981, the Cuban Minister of Higher Education and member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, Fernando Vecino Alegret, gave the keynote speech in which he reaffirmed Cuba's firm support for the "heroic struggle" of the Palestinian people against Zionism and imperialism. Columnist Jack Anderson has described Vecino as "Castro's spymaster and general troublemaker" whose agents maintain two guerrilla training camps in Mexico, one run by the PLO and the other by a Cuban Army major.

At that meeting, a document - drafted and approved by consensus - urged that the United Nations maintain an increasing support for the Palestinian people. Delegates to the convention advocated among other things, making more information about Palestine available in Latin America and creating centers for Palestine studies in the region.

The close ties between Cuba and the PLO continue. In March, 1982, Fidel Castro urged all Non-Aligned countries to show strong support for the PLO. "It is necessary," he said, "that we join the moral and political weight of our voices and actions to prevent the U.S. and Israel from carrying out the destruction of the Palestinian people..."

A delegation of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, led by Nayef Hawatmeh, general secretary of the organization, met with Fidel Castro and key members of the Political Bureau and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba on March 22, 1982. Those who accompanied Hawatmeh included Abou Adham, member of the Front's Political Bureau and Charaf Odeh, representative of the Front in Latin America.

Andean Pact Nations

Peru

Peru was the first of the Andean Pact nations to authorize the establishment of a PLO office; this step was taken on June 11, 1979. Many observers were surprised by the government's decision; there were no obvious benefits and many key personalities in the military government were opposed to it. The best possible explanation was that the PLO office was the quid pro quo for making Lima the headquarters site for Arlabank, a bank organized with Arab, Latin American and other foreign capital.

Whatever the motives which prompted the former military government to permit the PLO to operate in Peru, it is apparent that the current democratically-elected government of President Belaunde Terry prefers that there would be no PLO office in Peru. Last year, and again in March 1982, Peruvian Foreign Minister Arias Stella publicly stated that the PLO has no diplomatic status in Peru and will not be granted such status. He pointed out that the office had been authorized, not by the present government, but by the previous military regime.

The PLO office in Lima is registered with the government of Peru as an office of information. There are many Peruvians who believe that the conduct of the PLO representative, Issam Besseiso, has not been consonant with the purposes of an information office, and that many of his activities have been improper. Last year, for example, Besseiso, joined a group of Iraqi diplomats who visited the country and participated in a meeting at the Government Palace with President Belaunde Terry. This activity caused great concern because Besseiso has no diplomatic standing and his presence at the Palace was not previously announced to the President. Last year he met with the then Minister of War, Jorge Muniz, and presented himself as the PLO Ambassador. In February, 1982 he announced in a press statement that he had met with the current War Minister, General Cisneros Vizquerra.

His presence in Peru is particularly evident around universities and within political parties. Besseiso participated in the XVII Congress of the Peruvian Student Federation held in June, 1981 at the University of San Marcos. He has also spoken before union leaders at the headquarters of the Communist Party - Unidad, at the request of Communist leader Gustavo Espinoza.

Besseiso has traveled extensively throughout the country. Last year he was in the province of Ayacucho where he met with student leaders at the University of Huamanga. In Arequipa he was designated "illustrious guest", an honor which only a week later was denied to Premier Manuel Ulloa. In Piura, his presence and activity caused such political turmoil, that it prompted the Mayor's resignation. As a result of his visit, a "Committee of Solidarity with Palestine" was formed, which released a press statement which ended by claiming "victory to the liberation of Palestine and Peru from Zionist and Imperialist oppression."

From his base in Peru, Besseiso has traveled to Ecuador, Venezuela and Bolivia, in an effort to obtain permission for the establishment of a PLO office in each of those countries. His December, 1981 trip to Ecuador, where he met with the Minister of Foreign Relations and other officials, resulted in government authorization for a PLO office in Quito.

According to the Peruvian newspaper Oiga of March 22, 1982, Besseiso met with the manager of the daily El Observador, Jose Garaycocha, and offered him a loan of several million dollars. It is also alleged that prior to the May, 1980 general elections, Besseiso met at the homes of Peruvian citizens of Arab descent with leaders of some political parties and offered them financial assistance from the PLO in exchange for diplomatic recognition of the organization. Last year, the Lima daily Expreso linked the PLO with "terrorism, violence and death" and denounced as "unacceptable blackmail" Besseiso's offer of Arab loans and petrodollar grants if the country would "assume a favorable position vis-a-vis the Palestinian cause..." El Comercio asked why the PLO is in Peru and called its presence "undesirable."

Ecuador

Ecuador became the second of the Andean Pact nations to permit the opening of a PLO office. The Parliament unanimously approved the PLO representative request in December, 1981, shortly after he met with its Legislative Commission on International Affairs. A similar request by two PLO representatives had been rejected in November, 1979.

The parliamentary decision may have been timed to deflate Arab anger in the wake of numerous reports, which were recently confirmed, that Quito is to acquire 12 Israeli Kfir combat planes, with 12 more on option.

Some observers interpret the move as a signal to the Arab world that the aircraft deal with Israel will not lead to a change in Ecuador's equidistant position on the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Observers also attribute the move to Ecuador's desire for expanded markets in the Arab world, credits with which to finance its internal economic development and the desire for diplomatic backing in its unresolved territorial dispute with neighboring Peru.

Ecuador, the smallest member of OPEC, has long had friendly relations with Israel and benefitted from Israeli technological assistance programs.

Venezuela

As the key country among the Andean Pact nations and a member of OPEC, Venezuela has long been the focus of intense Arab efforts to secure authorization for a PLO office. The current government and both of the two previous administrations have been pressured to grant permission for such an office, but to date, the pressures have been resisted.

It seems unlikely that a new request will be made until after the presidential elections to be held in December, 1983. The PLO will probably then renew efforts to secure an office, as it did shortly after the inauguration of President Luis Herrera Campins in 1979. At that time, a PLO delegation urged acceptance of the PLO upon Foreign Minister Zambrano Velazco in Caracas and, subsequently at the

The Foreign Minister, in an interview published in the Caracas daily El Nacional of November 4, 1979, said that the government, sensitive to various pressures on the issue and wishing to avoid bringing the Arab-Israeli conflict to Venezuela, decided, at least for the present, not to allow a PLO office to open in Venezuela.

Supporters of the PLO encouraged by the possibility of having a PLO office in Caracas, launched an intense and expensive campaign to create a climate suitable for the hoped-for change in policy. Shortly after the 1979 election, their telegram to the newly-elected president, urged that Venezuela not become a replacement for Iran as the primary source of petroleum for Israel. The telegram, which was signed by fifty prominent individuals, appeared as a half-page ad in various newspapers on February 23, 1979.

The Libyan government attempted to pursue a new approach in 1981 by channeling funds to the College of Humanities at the Central University of Caracas. With those funds, university officials attempted to purchase satellite time for a live T.V. interview with Qadaffi, who planned to discuss his Green Book over Venezuelan national T.V. The cancellation by the government of the Qadaffi broadcast seemed to deflate the pro-PLO efforts in Venezuela.

However, a symposium on the Green Book was held in Caracas between November 12-15, 1981. It was billed as an international convention on democracy and socialism. Sixty countries were represented at the conference at which free copies of the Green Book, in three languages, were distributed among the participants. The symposium did not receive the press coverage that was expected, and the participants took this opportunity to blame the lack of media coverage on Zionist intervention.

Bolivia

The Bolivians have remained firm in their refusal to countenance an official PLO presence despite intense PLO lobbying, with a stream of emissaries arriving in quest of a quick decision by Bolivian authorities. The Bolivian daily Siglo Ltda. of March 27, 1980 observed that "Bolivia has long been the object of attention, pressures and offers of fabulous economic aid in order to gain the opening of a PLO office in our country."

The paper attacked the Arab campaign as one which violates the principle that "sovereignty is not merchandise which one negotiates or uses as an instrument of speculation, to intensify the offers. They talk of investments of hundreds of millions of dollars from the Arab world in exchange for this concession." The editor bases his opposition not on altruistic motives but on "larger interests" which would be endangered if the PLO gets its desired center "in the heart of Latin America in order to repeat here that which it has done in various other parts."

The editor observes that on a world scale, the nations that support international terrorism are those of the Soviet bloc, radical Arab states and Iran. He identifies the PLO as the group which has "participated actively in blood baths, usually of those who are innocent" and wonders what "miracle" has turned it into "a pacific organization" whose sympathies are now concentrated "in a suspicious manner on Bolivia."

The editorial concludes with a plea to the authorities not to act precipitously because "Bolivia is a nation of peace and order and it must not convert itself into a center of international agitation."

That same editorial reflects the fact that the Arabs are offering economic incentives to individual politicians as well as to governments. "Various political leaders, forgetting their Christian faith, have made and continue to make pilgrimages to Mecca to obtain, once again, economic support for their electoral activities." PLO support for politicians, particularly those of the Left, is commonplace in Latin America. PLO dollars and propaganda are directed to university students, workers and residents of the poorest sections of the cities. As in Venezuela, where PLO activists are also reportedly involved with guerrilla groups on the Colombian border, they are linked with the continent's revolutionary forces. Business Week reported on May 3, 1982 that the PLO radio had said that Abu Jihad, Yassir Arafat's deputy, recently met with a delegation of Bolivian Leftists who are operating clandestinely.

Colombia

Supporters of the PLO, in a concerted effort to gain public sympathy, are engaging in a major propaganda campaign. The PLO invited journalists to Lebanon. El Tiempo, one of the two most important newspapers in Colombia, ran a series of articles on the PLO last November, stressing the suffering of the Palestinians based upon the reporter's visit to Lebanon. A popular television reporter who also went to Lebanon did a lengthy broadcast which included an interview with Yassir Arafat. An ad campaign requesting the support of the Colombian people for the Palestinians and criticizing Israel was carried out in Bogota and other major cities, in March, 1982.

There is increasing concern about the PLO-guerrilla connection in Colombia. Colombian journalist Ligia Riveros interviewed the "leader of Group 4" (Semana - Jan. 14, 1982), the Colombian arm of the Organization of Latin American-Arab Guerrillas. He claims that the group, now operating in all Latin American countries, also has members who are not of Arab descent, but sympathize with the Arab cause. Their stated goal is to achieve the union of the Arab world, in order to fight Jewish and American imperialism. The guerrilla leader said that his group has terrorist training camps in Colombia.

Observers believe that Colombia will not change its policy of opposition to the PLO because of the terrorist threat at home and its traditional friendship for Israel. While government troops are now engaged in a vigorous and often deadly anti-terrorist campaign, a battalion of Colombian troops are now serving with the international peace-keeping force in the Sinai, the largest body of troops from any Latin American country.

Conclusion

In assessing PLO activities in Latin America, it is well to use more than one criterion since the PLO operates at two levels: diplomatic and terrorist. To governments in the region, it represents itself as a de facto government of the Palestinian people and in this role seeks diplomatic recognition and authorization to maintain an office in each capital city. At the same time, it maintains clandestine links with guerilla organizations and assists them in their subversive activities.

Using the standard of the number of quality of PLO offices, it is apparent that the PLO has made little progress in the region. During the last two years it was able to add only two offices. At the same time, its Peruvian office has fallen into disfavor with both the new government and the populace.

Very few governments in Latin America are prepared to accept the PLO as a quasi-governmental entity. Of the five that have permitted the establishment of an office, only two -- Cuba and Nicaragua -- have accorded the PLO representatives diplomatic status. Their reluctance to accept the PLO, despite promises of economic benefit and persistent diplomatic pressures exerted on behalf of the PLO by the Arab states, is rooted in the nature of the organization. Governments in Latin America know that the PLO is a terrorist organization which poses a very real threat to their national security interests; they do not accept the PLO as a governmental entity.

As a guerilla organization, the PLO has fared much better in Latin America. Rejected by governments, it is warmly embraced by those attempting to overthrow governments by force of arms. Its agents, working in collaboration with Cuba and the international terrorist network with the silent sponsorship of the Soviet Union, have penetrated all of Central America, Panama and most of South America. In these countries, the PLO assists the revolutionary and terrorist forces with arms, training and finances, and sometimes has its men fighting alongside them. Through intimidation, they have exacted financial support from many people of Arab descent who live in the region and silenced those who are opposed to the PLO and its methods.

The PLO's principle objectives in Latin America continue to elude them. The Latin American states have not broken relations with Israel; even the revolutionary government of Nicaragua maintains diplomatic relations, although it has refused to permit the ambassador of Israel to present his credentials. There are only five PLO offices, far short of the goal of an office in every capital. The Jewish communities of the region remain strong and committed to continuing their relations with the State of Israel.

Prepared by:

Rabbi Morton M. Rosenthal
Raquel Schuster-Herr

THE ROLE OF THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION (PLO) IN NICARAGUA

Communism recognizes no borders. The communists see the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), like the forces of Cuba, as part of a world liberation army.

It is not surprising therefore that the forces of the PLO, along with those of the ever more openly communist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLO), were deeply involved in the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua.

In 1966 Cuba sponsored a conference in Havana of the Organization of Solidarity of the Peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America (Ospaal). PLO representatives attended and participated.

In 1968 a secret agreement was drawn up between Cuba and the PLO under which Cuban military and intelligence personnel were sent to bases in North Africa and Iraq to assist the PLO in training guerrilla recruits from the Western Hemisphere.

By 1969 Cuban and PLO recruits were being trained together at Soviet military establishments at Simferopol in the Crimea and outside Moscow. Officers of the Cuban Intelligence Service (DGI) took part in raids into Israeli-occupied Sinai from Egypt.

Castro met with the PLO leaders in Algiers in 1972 and they arranged to have Cuban training teams sent to Palestinian bases in Lebanon, Libya and South Yemen where an increasing number of revolutionary recruits from Latin America were trained.

In recent years the PLO has established offices in Havana, Managua, Panama City, Kingston (Jamaica), San Jose (Costa Rica), Georgetown (Guyana), Mexico City, Sao Paulo (Brazil), Bogota (Columbia), and Caracas (Venezuela).

Many of the Sandinista leaders and fighters were trained at PLO bases in Jordan. Some of them fought for the PLO against Jordanian forces during the "Black September" battles when King Hussein expelled the PLO from Jordan.

Since Cuban forces are engaged in military activity throughout Africa and the Middle East, it is not surprising that PLO forces are active in Central America and the Caribbean.

The first stage of the Nicaraguan revolution has been successful and a democratic regime, with communist participation, has been established. The second stage is the seizure of monopoly power by the communists, and this will come to pass when the forces the communists need for this operation have been created.

These forces are primarily: 1) The creation of a united militia under communist control; and 2) The formation of revolutionary block committees, similar to the Cuban Committees for the Defense of the Revolution to supervise and control the Nicaraguan people. These forces are being created under the leadership of Tomas Borge, the communist Minister of the Interior, and we may be assured that the forces of the PLO are playing a significant role. They will also have their part to play when the second revolution comes.

Forces of foreign communists play an important role in protecting the communist leaders of newly conquered countries. They do not feel popular dissatisfaction with the leaders as national troops do since they have few contacts with the people. There is a language barrier and their families are far away. The Soviet leaders feel they can trust foreign communist forces more than native ones. During the days of the Comintern, it was an operating principle that the top communist in each country must be a foreign national. This principle has now been extended to the military forces that exercise final control in a country.

enemy of the creeping RED machine is the U.S.A. A young farmer I know in a small mountain village does not know where the U.S. is on the globe, yet his communist comrades have convinced him that the "Imperialist Yankees" must be wiped off the face of the earth. That is why that young farmer has deserted his work as a volunteer Christian pastor in his village. The external encirclement comes about through the deceit of the Deceitful Masters.

This external encirclement is not coming to pass only through power moves by the REDS. No, they use music, economics, friendship, poetry, theater, news items, and every aspect of daily life to seduce and deceive the Third World.

Internal demoralization in the U.S. not only serves the U.S. Communist Party, but it is magnified, distorted, and proclaimed to the Third World by the Deceitful Masters. Hence, though we feel we can fight communism with politics, foreign aid, and armaments, we must learn how they use every aspect of life in the world to rally the masses around Lenin. This series of articles will illustrate the daily life in the communist party and of the disciples of Lenin in a Third World nation. (It could be any one of them).

The party here has recently surfaced after 50 years underground. The new above-ground activity includes weekly meetings which are held in regional offices all over the land, and are open to the public. Some have signs, while others are just a small door on the street which leads to offices, print shop, and meeting room. We often see the RED machine only as a bunch of hard-core devils bent on killing. But a typical meeting here in the capital begins as dignified as any church service--at least until the speakers begin. While we wait for the meeting to start, the 3- and 4-year-old children of the comrades are playing in the aisle. These children all know each other very well for they have their own Communist Children's Pioneer Groups. Quite often the meetings are attended by a 60-year-old lady who has to lead in her blind 35-year-old son. In the rear of the room are always the members of the communist youth party--a group of college students as clean cut as any dreamed of all-American boy. One of these told me a few weeks ago that he left his church to join the Leninists for he felt more unity and purpose here. Then up front near the speakers are always three elderly men in 30-year-old suits with their Soviet-style hats. Three men, who have accomplished nothing in life, but see the party as one last "fling" for power and self-esteem, are desperate opportunists. Another old opportunist is dressed better, for his best friends among the comrades are two college gals who sit with him each week, and look upon him as their symbol of a sage communist counselor. Everyone is here for personal reasons--a longing for friendship, a search for power and esteem, vengeance against life, the need for a specific goal in life, or just a need for cheap entertainment.

All types of personal internal lures lead these people off the street, into this room, and into the Party. But, once inside, their personal selfish thoughts are coated with the Master's brainwashing which brings them to believe that the communist goals are their own. That the Russians are the Masters in this plan of deception is clear when the meeting comes to order. The speakers walk in, everyone stands, they clap the unique communist patented applause, and a "cheer leader" in the rear leads everyone: "Long live the Bolshevik Revolution", "Long live the Soviet Union", "Long live communism", and "Down with Yankee Imperialism". Here are these people who have been led to believe that Bulgaria's Communist Party defeated Hitler almost single handed, with just a little help from Stalin, shouting as if they were experts on the Bolshevik Revolution and Imperialism!

A deceived Third World serves the Soviets as an unknowing human bomb which they plan to use to fulfill the dreams of Lenin and of every heartless gear in the communist machine--the dream of destroying our American way. Each of us who cherish our freedom, our Christian faith, and our U.S.A. can do our part to neutralize the RED machine's human bomb. The fact that the halting of internal demoralization will slow external encirclement is the "Why" behind this series.

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F: Cuba

BETRAYAL OF AN IDEAL: CUBA'S
CAMPAIGN AGAINST ISRAEL

by Harris O. Schoenberg

May 1977

Dr. Schoenberg is the Deputy Director
for UN Affairs of the B'nai B'rith
International Council.

The early relationship between Revolutionary Cuba and Israel has been characterized as "correct" and "almost cordial, at the official level,"¹ with Israeli specialists helping the Cubans develop their agriculture and technology. In 1963 Premier Fidel Castro declared three days of mourning upon the death of Israel's President Itzhak Ben Zvi, and when Algerian Premier Ahmed Ben Bella responded: "whoever respects a dead Israeli in that way has no right to come to an Arab land," Castro cancelled a scheduled visit to Algeria,² his first important ally in Africa. Although some 12,000 Jews or about 90% of the Cuban Jewish community fled the island, largely for economic reasons, a free and open Jewish life was and still is possible for the remnant of 1,500 or so.³

After the June war of 1967, the Cuban Government came under strong pressure from Arab and Soviet sources to break off its contacts with Israel. But Fidel Castro refused, maintaining, according to a sympathizer, that "the destruction of Israel was not part of a socialist program, as socialism was understood in Cuba."⁴ In fact, the Castro Government adopted the position that it would not break diplomatic relations with any country that had not harmed Cuba.⁵ And this was confirmed to Gabriel Doron, Israel's Minister in Havana between 1968 and 1970.⁶ Dr. Ricardo Subirana y Lobo, a Jewish supporter of Castro and self-proclaimed socialist-Zionist, continued as Cuba's Minister in Israel.

It thus came as a shock to the people of Israel and their friends all over the world when it was dramatically announced at the Algiers Summit Conference of Non-Aligned States in September of 1973 that Cuba was breaking relations with Israel. Not only is Israel the only country which Cuba has singled out for such treatment, but since Algiers, Cuba has been second to no other state in its expression of unrelenting hostility towards Israel and of total support for the extremist program of the Palestine Liberation Organization (P.L.O.). Beyond Cuba's political abuse of Israel, its armed forces have served with and trained Arab forces and terrorist groups committed to Israel's destruction.

This abrupt about-face in Cuba's policy, entailing the sacrifice of Israel, came at a time of continued economic difficulties for Cuba and "unspeakable ... political oppression,"⁷ as confirmed by reports of the Organization of American States and various human rights agencies.

Castro was no doubt anxious to divert attention from domestic problems as well as to spread his influence abroad. He was losing ground in Latin America -- the coup in Chile which brought down the Allende Government was to come just two days after his Algiers speech -- and was looking for gains elsewhere. Whether the idea

to seek them among the increasingly influential constellation of mostly Third World states held together under the rubric of "non-aligned" was his own or the suggestion of his Soviet patrons will perhaps never be known. But it is clear that at the end of 1972, Castro incurred a major new debt to the USSR, which he reported to the Cuban people in early January 1973.

In a radio and television speech monitored in Miami, Castro announced his return from Moscow with five new economic agreements which he said offered "extraordinary" new economic aid to Cuba. Among the provisions of the new agreements were the following: the combined Cuban debt to the Soviet Union through 1972, including trade deficits and unpaid credits, would be deferred until 1986, then repaid over the next 25 years at no interest;⁸ the Soviet Union would provide new credits to cover Cuba's 1973, 1974 and 1975 trade deficits, which would also be repaid without interest after 1986; the Soviet Union agreed on the amount of goods to be exchanged between the two countries during the 1973-1975 period; the Soviet Union would give Cuba a new \$330 million credit for the country's capital development during 1973-1975, and this sum would be repaid as of 1976 at a "low" interest rate; and the Soviet Union agreed to pay until 1980 11¢ a pound for Cuban sugar, 2¢ more than the then current high world market price of 9¢ a pound, and \$5,000 for each ton of Cuban nickel and cobalt.⁹ In return for this bonanza, the Cuban Government was ready to serve Soviet interests in the Third World.

By June 1973 Cuba had begun training South Yemeni pilots to fly the then advanced MIG-21 jet fighters that the Soviet Union was supplying the Marxist oriented South Yemen¹⁰ as the initial stage in its plan to win strategic dominance in the Red Sea area, vital to the oil supply of the NATO allies.

But Cuba's big opportunity to act as the Soviet stalking-horse came in September of that year at the Fourth Summit Conference of Non-Aligned States, held in Algiers. According to The New York Times, Castro "acted as the strongest spokesman for the Soviet Union" and nearly wrecked the conference when he tried to stop states friendly to America from speaking.¹¹

The chairman of the conference, President Houari Boumedienne of Algeria is reported to have been outraged.¹² Colonel Muammar al-Qaddafi who, along with Boumedienne, is now one of Castro's closest friends in the Arab world, complained that Cuba should not have been invited to the Algiers summit, since Cuba was not non-aligned.¹³ Ironically, when challenged by Qaddafi, Castro adopted the Soviet policy of breaking with Israel in order to prove that Cuba was indeed worthy of membership among the non-aligned.

power station in Cuba with an initial output of 400 megawatts and an eventual capacity of 1,700 megawatts.²⁵ By 1977 Cuba was reported to be receiving from the USSR about \$3 million per day, or about a billion dollars a year.²⁶

While these travels and communiques are a clear indication of Cuba's stance, it is at the United Nations that Cuba has most readily and consistently demonstrated enmity for Israel and championship of the PLO, with its program of destruction for Israel. In 1974 and 1975 Cuba appeared as unofficial sponsor of the PLO. This special relationship was first evidenced during the 1974 Palestine debate, when it was the Cubans who showed the newly arrived PLO delegates around the UN building.²⁷ When Yassir Arafat was unable for presumed security reasons to stay in New York during the night following his UN appearance, he flew to Havana, where he was warmly greeted by Castro.

During UN debates there has been full cooperation between Cuba and the PLO, on procedure as well as on substance. During one debate in the Special Political Committee of the General Assembly, the Cuban delegate asked that the entire PLO statement be reproduced. This was necessary, the Cuban said, in view of the importance of the PLO statement and because the Palestinian people were the "victims of Zionist racism and aggression."²⁸

In the debate on Palestine in 1975, the Cuban Ambassador to the UN made a particular point of fully endorsing the program of the PLO,²⁹ and chose to serve on a new UN Committee dedicated to the implementation of the PLO program.³⁰

Following the failure of the initiative outlined in the March 1975 Havana Declaration of the 17 member Steering Committee of the Non-Aligned States to take "punitive measures against Israel including dismissal from the UN,"³¹ the Cubans were particularly active over the summer and fall of 1975 in the move to have the UN endorse the PLO Covenant provision that equates Zionism with racial discrimination. They were among the only three non-Arabs to sponsor the resolution, and it is said, although it cannot be documented, that a Cuban assisted the PLO in drafting the text. In the General Assembly the Cuban Ambassador quoted approvingly from the text of the Political Declaration of the 5th Ministerial Conference of Non-Aligned States held in Lima, Peru in August 1975. That Conference "most severely" condemned Zionism "as a threat to world peace and security" and called upon all countries to oppose Zionism as a "racist and imperialistic ideology."³²

In the Security Council debate on Entebbe in July 1976, Cuba condemned Israel's rescue mission as a "flagrant violation" of the UN Charter, as a "criminal violation of the sovereignty and terri-

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In the Security Council debate on Entebbe in July 1976, Cuba condemned Israel's rescue mission as a "flagrant violation" of the UN Charter, as a "criminal violation of the sovereignty and terri-

torial integrity of an independent and non-aligned country," as an "intolerable affront to international peace and security" and "as a patently aggressive and bloody act." Israel's action, the Cuban representative declared, was "consistent with the traditional aggressive and racist policy of the Government of Israel." Cuba condemned the "official terrorism practiced by Israel" and called on the Security Council to condemn the Jewish State and request "that Israel indemnify Uganda for the damages caused."³³

In 1976 Cuba toned down its statements on Israel in line with the Arab policy of creating a facade of moderation. But in the spring of 1977, Premier Castro's joint communiques from Africa were evidence of a return to Cuba's unrestrained hostility.

Has the sacrifice of Israel paid off for Castro in his bid for leadership of the Third World radicals? It appears so. From an isolated position at the Algiers Conference, Cuba has gone on to host the Steering Committee of the Non-Aligned States in 1975, and in 1976 a UN sponsored seminar on liberation in Africa³⁴ -- which also managed to condemn Israel. Most important, Moscow's reliable client will play host in Havana in 1979 to the next summit meeting of non-aligned states.

At the same time, Castro's new devotion to the worst enemies of Israel has raised questions among progressive forces, liberals and men of good will regarding his commitment to Cuba's revolutionary principles. In 1967 Cuba's UN Ambassador condemned "any political proclamation whose aim is the annihilation of any people or state..." and Castro himself declared that he was "shocked" by the "lack of revolutionary principles" as disclosed in Arab propaganda. "True revolutionaries," he noted "never threaten a whole country with extinction. We have spoken out clearly against Israel's policy, but we do not deny her right to exist!"³⁵

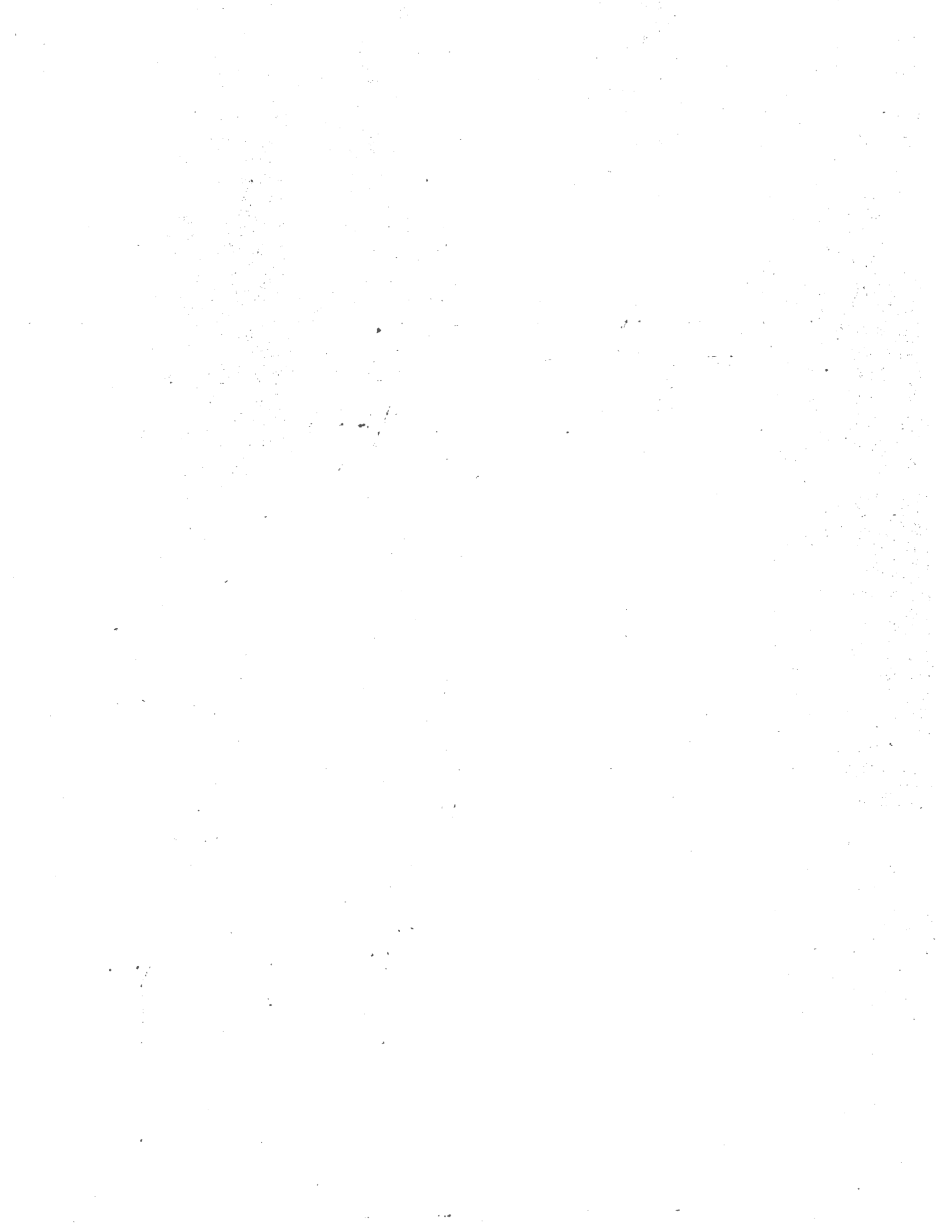
It would appear that Premier Castro is no longer shocked by extremist PLO propaganda which denies the legitimacy of the Jewish State. Most recently, at the May 1977 session of the UN Economic and Social Council, the Cuban representative was the only non-Arab League delegate to demand that the anti-Semitic UN resolution equating Zionism with racism be included on the agenda of a UN sponsored world conference on racism scheduled for 1978.

Premier Castro, who once refused to permit others to define Cuba's national and revolutionary objectives, has proved faithless to this determination. The man who once declared that his revolution would be "as Cuban as the palm tree" has allowed the enemies of the Jewish State to undermine its native roots.

فلسطين الثورة

EGYPT





FOOTNOTES

- 1 Paul Jacobs, "Letter from Cuba," New Outlook, March-April 1975, p. 41.
- 2 Jewish Telegraphic Agency Daily Bulletin (hereafter cited as JTA), September 11, 1973.
- 3 See Lavy M. Becker, "Cuban Jewry: 1973" Congress Bi-Weekly, June 15, 1973, pp. 21ff.
4. Jacobs, op. cit., pp. 41-42.
- 5 The Jerusalem Post, September 10, 1973.
- 6 JTA, September 11, 1973.
- 7 Jack Anderson, "Castro's Terror," The New York Post, April 7, 1974.
- 8 Cuba's debt to the Soviet Union for the decade 1962-1972 was estimated, exclusive of military aid, at over \$4 billion.
- 9 The New York Times, January 4, 1973, p. 10.
- 10 The New York Post, June 26, 1973.
- 11 The New York Times, September 10, 1973, pp. 1 and 6.
- 12 Idem.
- 13 The Jerusalem Post, September 10, 1973.
- 14 The Washington Post, April 3, 1974.
- 15 The Washington Post, March 4, 1977.
- 16 The New York Times, March 6, 1977.
- 17 Idem.
- 18 The New York Times, March 5, 1977.
- 19 The New York Post, May 10, 1977, p. 10
- 20 The International Herald Tribune, March 14, 1977.

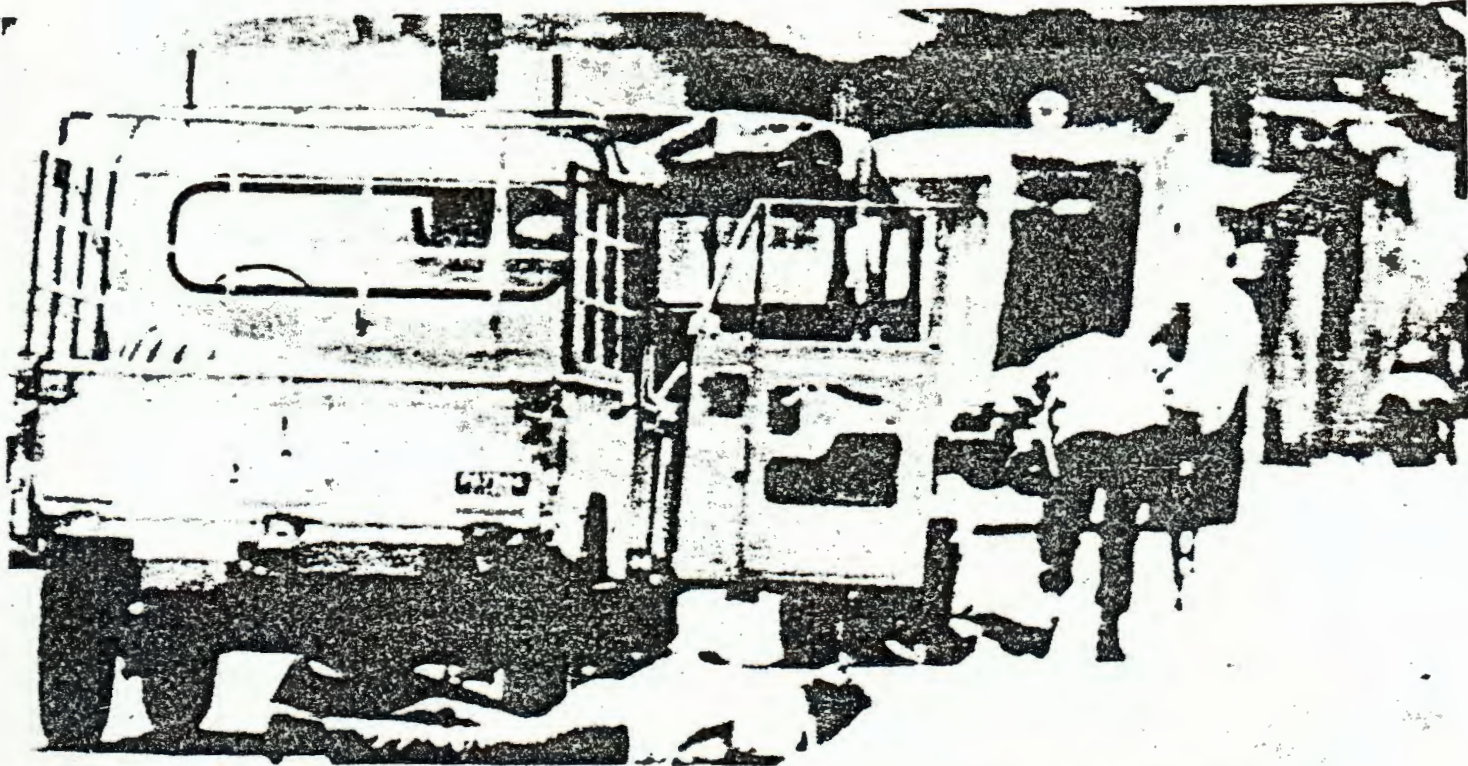
- 21 UN Document A/32/69 of 27 April 1977 (Emphasis added.)
- 22 Idem.
- 23 The New York Times, April 7, 1977 and April 9, 1977.
- 24 The New York Times, April 9, 1977.
- 25 Idem.
- 26 The New York Post, April 28, 1977.
- 27 The New York Post, October 23, 1975.
- 28 UN Document A/SPC.977.
- 29 UN Document A/PV.2398 of 7 November 1975.
- 30 See Harris O. Schoenberg, The UN Palestinian Committee and Its Report: Diplomacy or Deceit? New York: B'nai B'rith International Council, 1976, especially pages 4 and 6.
- 31 The New York Times, April 1, 1975.
- 32 UN Document A/PV.2398 of 7 November 1975.
- 33 UN Document S/PV.1943 of 14 July 1976.
- 34 The New York Times, March 19, 1976.
- 35 Maurice Zeitlin, "Cuba and the PLO," The Nation, March 20, 1976, p. 338.

- 21 UN Document A/32/69 of 27 April 1977 (Emphasis added.)
- 22 Idem.
- 23 The New York Times, April 7, 1977 and April 9, 1977.
- 24 The New York Times, April 9, 1977.
- 25 Idem.
- 26 The New York Post, April 28, 1977.
- 27 The New York Post, October 23, 1975.
- 28 UN Document A/SPC.977.
- 29 UN Document A/PV.2398 of 7 November 1975.
- 30 See Harris O. Schoenberg, The UN Palestinian Committee and Its Report: Diplomacy or Deceit? New York: B'nai B'rith International Council, 1976, especially pages 4 and 6.
- 31 The New York Times, April 1, 1975.
- 32 UN Document A/PV.2398 of 7 November 1975.
- 33 UN Document S/PV.1943 of 14 July 1976.
- 34 The New York Times, March 19, 1976.
- 35 Maurice Zeitlin, "Cuba and the PLO," The Nation, March 20, 1976, p. 338.

The PLO Is At Work Subverting Latin America

By BELDEN BELL

Nicaragua X30



Violent uprisings continue to break out in Nicaragua as leftists attempt to oust the Somoza-led government.

As savage fighting raged across Nicaragua in recent weeks, almost all emphasis on the subject of "outside" support for the FSLN or Sandinista guerrillas has focused on Communist Cuba. And, certainly, the hemispheric proximity of Fidel Castro's world-terrorist-exporting police state would encourage such an emphasis. Castro, indeed, has a major ax to grind with the pro-U.S. government of Nicaraguan President Anastasio Somoza.

Nicaragua, under the leadership of the Somoza family, has long enjoyed a reputation as a major anti-Marxist bastion in Latin America. Nicaragua supported American military efforts to unhorse the Marxist Arbenz regime in Guatemala and offered a staging ground for the later-disastrous Bay of Pigs invasion of the Cuban mainland.

Castro's retaliation has taken the form of providing training, weapons, dollars and finally sanctuary for the Sandinista terrorists operating across Nicaraguan borders. Radio Havana has on many occasions openly confirmed its support of the guerrillas operating to overthrow the constitutionally elected government of Nicaragua and terrorists released from Nicaraguan jails in exchange for hostages kidnapped at gunpoint by the "Frente" have demanded safe passage to a Cuban sanctuary.

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With this natural focus on the "Cuban connection" underlying current attempts to overthrow the Nicaraguan government, another critical international development has gone virtually unnoticed by the media—the emergence of a strong PLO support base for the Sandinistas.

The world press gained an inkling of this new, unholy alliance in early February 1978, when the Nicaraguan FSLN delegate to Cuba, Jose Benito Escobar (subsequently killed July 15 while resisting arrest in the terrorist "hotbed" city of Esteli after clandestinely entering Nicaragua from Cuba) joined with his PLO counterpart in a historic communiqué from Mexico City.

In this February 5 communiqué, Escobar, on behalf of the FSLN and Issam Sli of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine emphasized "the bonds of solidarity which exist between the two revolutionary organizations" and condemned U.S. "imperialism" for supporting Israel and Nicaragua.

On February 11 the Guatemala morning newspaper, *La Nación*, reported that "Palestinian elements have offered to fight at the side of Nicaraguan guerrillas against the Anastasio Somoza regime." In the *Nación* report the FSLN reportedly warned that "just as Somoza hired mercenaries the FSLN guerrillas have offers from the Palestine Liberation Front."

The Mexico City communiqué, which condemned the "racist State of Israel," was released at the Continental Conference of Latin America and the Caribbean for Peace, Sovereignty and Economic Independence; a body supported by Moscow's international "peace and disarmament organ," the World Peace Council, operated directly by the Communist Party Central Committee and the KGB.

Following Escobar's death in July, the new FSLN delegate to Havana,

Mauro Acosta, participated in the Solidarity Conference for the Peoples of Africa and Asia "... in their fight against Zionism and apartheid." The conference was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

This now-established PLO link to the Sandinistas is just one of many contacts worldwide between Palestinian groups and other members of the transnational terrorist and revolutionary movements which include the Japanese Red Army, responsible for the Lod Airport massacre, the German Baader-Meinhoff group, which aided the PLO in the 1972 Munich horror, and the Czech secret police which helped the PLO assassinate Jewish leader Charles Jordan in Prague in 1967.

As in the case of Fidel Castro and his Communist Cuban regime, there is an explanation for the strong interest of an Arab terrorist organization in aiding the overthrow of a small, Latin American government a hemisphere away from the troubled sands of the Middle East.

Currently, Israel has reportedly been selling military arms to various Latin American governments who have been cut off from U.S. and other free world sources. Limited aid and economic programs also exist between the Jewish state and several hemispheric governments, including that of Nicaragua.

In contemporary circumstances, Nicaragua has responded by supporting Israel in the United Nations and other international forums. The Managua government was one of a small bloc of nations which voted against the resolution condemning Zionism as a type of "racism."

To understand the origins of PLO hatred for Nicaragua we must move back a few decades in history to the time of Israel's birth as a sovereign nation. An interesting chapter in the

(Continued on page 19)

events leading to that successful nationhood are described in a book written by the flamboyant mayor of Jerusalem, Teddy Kollek with the assistance of his son, Amos Kollek. Recording these momentous events in *For Jerusalem, A Life*, Kollek details the enormous threat faced by the soon-to-be created new nation of Israel from hostile neighboring Arab states.

Clearly, though the Jewish Agency possessed adequate financial resources to purchase a sufficient defense system, the not-yet-official state of Israel could not legally purchase arms to prevent an anticipated Independence Day attack. The requirement was to find a country willing to purchase arms for Israel under its own name but with money supplied by Israel's friends. The country which finally agreed to take this considerable political risk was Nicaragua.

President Somoza, father of Nicaragua's present leader, provided letters to Nicaraguan envoys in key European nations authorizing arms purchases and the transportation of these weapons to shipping ports. Vital Nicaraguan passports were also provided Kollek and the Israeli agent doing the actual purchasing. The Nicaraguan letters covered some \$3 million worth of machinery and arms which represented a considerable sum at that time. Wrote Kollek:

"Somoza... had to sign the letters. It was a perfectly honorable deal, perfectly proper. They couldn't imagine anyone doing otherwise but they cooperated because of their strong basic sympathy to our cause. Our agreement included the understanding that Nicaragua would vote for Israel in the U.N. whenever the occasion arose, a point to which they pledged themselves out of genuine conviction (and indeed, Nicaragua has remained a true friend of Israel over the years)."

At least one direct connection between the PLO and the FSLN was established nearly a decade ago when one FSLN terrorist, Pedro Arauz Palacios, a convicted murderer, kidnapper and robber, was provided with Cuban intensive guerrilla warfare training after hijacking a Nicaraguan airliner in November 1969. After leaving Cuba in 1970, Arauz, according to later courtroom testimony from captured FSLN guerrillas, traveled to other Arab countries and received additional guerrilla training from the Al-Fatah.

In addition to Arauz, two other prominent Sandinista "hit-men" have apparently received Al-Fatah terrorist training. Thomas Borge, the sole surviving founder of the FSLN terrorist operation, was one of those freed by Nicaraguan authorities on August 24 in response to the FSLN attack on the National Palace in Managua. Borge subsequently received a hero's welcome in Cuba where he arrived on September 25, via Panama. Borge, a convicted murderer, had earlier received guerrilla training in Cuba and was a confidant of Eden Pastora, the notorious "Comandante Cero" who led the attack on the National Palace.

During his trial, Borge confirmed earlier Al-Fatah training for himself and other Sandinistas. According to Borge's testimony, contact with Al-Fatah was maintained through a Paris connection, Francisco Rosales.

Another Al-Fatah "trainee" was Eduardo Contreras who was to lead the 1974 Christmas assault on the home of a former Nicaraguan cabinet minister in which three persons were gunned down by the attackers and 41 held hostage. In that instance, the terrorists negotiated a cash ransom, release of 14 imprisoned fellow terrorists and an aircraft to fly them to Cuban sanctuary.

Contreras, too, received a hero's welcome and was introduced as the "man who will one day impose a Communist regime on Nicaragua." Contreras' dreams of glory were interrupted when he returned to Nicaragua in 1976 and was shot and killed while resisting arrest. Contreras' "classmate" in the Al-Fatah terrorist training program, Pedro Arauz, was killed the following year in a shoot-out with the National Guard.

Borge, a star Al-Fatah pupil, currently travels with impunity between Cuba, Venezuela, Panama, Costa Rica and Mexico.

Colombian Marxist terrorists, the so-called "M-19 Movement," have been closely associated with the PFLP (Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine) and on May 10, 1978, kidnapped the Nicaraguan ambassador in Bogotá in what may prove to be the first actual act of "transnational terrorism" in which the FSLN-PLO Latin American operation have carried off a concerted act.

Columnist Joseph Weisburg, writing for the July 13, 1978, edition of *The Jewish Advocate* discusses the Sandinista-PLO alliance and reports on the Kollek historical observations. Concludes Weisburg:

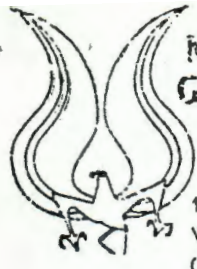
"This loyal relationship [by Nicaragua] to Israel could well be a factor in the announcement several months ago of the joining of forces of the PLO with the FSLN of Nicaragua to wage war on U.S. imperialism, the 'racist' state of Israel and the Somoza government.

"The two terrorist organizations have also formed common cause in the fight against the governments of El Salvador, Guatemala and other anti-Communist regimes in Latin America.

"Jews of the world are well aware of who are the enemies of Israel. It is equally important that they should know who are her friends."

It is thus apparent that the strong friendship and history of cooperation between the governments of Nicaragua and Israel have reaped serious consequences for both states. Allied against both are the increasingly combined resources of the Communist and PLO terrorist "granaries." Nicaragua's ultimate "sin," of course, in the eyes of both enemies, is her strong ties of friendship to the United States. The U.S. remains the strongest international supporter of Israel and still represents the major barricade to the world domination ambitions of the Marxist powers.





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NICARAGUA NEWS

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Nicaraguan Status as Israel's Friend May Be Jeopardized by Latin-PLO Tie

By MELECH BEN-MOSHE

Special to
The Jewish News

The embattled Central American nation of Nicaragua has now become the latest "cause celebre" of the terrorist Palestine Liberation Organization and its split-off faction, the "Rejection Front."

The appearance of a "PLO-Latin American Connection" has a great significance to Israel and her supporters which should not be overlooked.

Nicaragua has been ruled by the Somoza family since the 1930s, often with an authoritarian hand. Today, it is the number one target of Communist subversion in Latin America. Nicaraguan Marxists, Jack Anderson, the New York Times, and the Washington Post notwithstanding, have vowed to impose a Cuban-styled dictatorship on their own country.

Known as the "Sandinistas" (the Sandinista Front for the Liberation of Nicaragua-FSLN), this terrorist movement and its Cuban-backed predecessor, failed miserably to incite the people against their government.

Only in recent months have the FSLN gained some psychological victories through their acts of terrorism and guerrilla warfare.

The FSLN, which has always had the backing of Moscow and Havana, is a "transnational terrorist" group, that is, it has working ties to other terrorist organizations around the world, including the IRA, the Basque ETA and the PLO. In fact, many leading members of the FSLN have received training in PLO camps in the Middle East and Cuba, including Pedro Arauz Palacios and Eduardo Contreras as was revealed by captured FSLN founder Tomas Borge.

Intelligence sources have placed FSLN representatives at international terrorist meetings in Belfast, Dublin, and Lebanon where they met with the IRA, the Basque ETA, the American Indian Movement, and the Tupamaros of Uruguay. However, the PLO has been the common denominator in each of these meetings.

The PLO and RF have been trained by the Soviet KGB and their Cuban counterparts, the DGI, during the past decade, a little known facet of the Communist role in promoting international terrorism.

The PLO has maintained a close working relationship with such "transnational terrorists" as the Japanese Red Army (Lod Airport massacre), the Baader-Meinhoff Gang (a KGB-financed group that supported the PLO during the Munich Massacre); and the KGB-dominated Czech secret police, the STB. The STB allowed a PLO assassination team to kill Jewish Joint Distribution Committee leader Charles Jordan in Prague several years ago.

Now the PLO and the RF have moved into Latin America via Cuba and the Sandinistas. On Feb. 5, 1978, the PLO and FSLN issued a "joint communique" in Mexico City which, according to Radio Havana, was to "emphasize the bonds of solidarity which exist between the two revolutionary organizations."

The communique attacked the "racist state of Israel" for its military and economic aid to anti-Communist Latin American countries, for serving as an enclave of North American "imperialism" in the Middle East, and specifically for Israel's aid to the government of Nicaragua.

This communique was released at a major Moscow front meeting called the "Continental Conference of Latin America and the Caribbean for Peace, Sovereignty and Economic Independence." It was sponsored by Moscow's international "peace and disarmament" organ, the World Peace Council, an organization reportedly run by the Central Committee of the Communist Party and the KGB. The communique was signed by the PLO representative for Latin America, Issam Ali, and by Jose Benito Escobar, a member of the Sandinista National Board.

A few days later, on Feb. 10, the Guatemalan newspaper La Nacion reported that "Palestinian elements have offered to fight at the side of Nicaraguan guerrillas against the Anastasio Somoza regime." This reported offer came just at the time of internal turmoil in Nicaragua following the assassination of leftist opposition leader Dr. Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, which in turn was followed by FSLN acts of terror.

According to La Nacion, a clandestine FSLN communique stated that "just as Somoza hired mercenaries (Green Berets), the FSLN guerrillas have offers from the Palestine Liberation Front." No other details were available then.

On March 6, the Sandinistas and the Marxist-led Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PTLP), led by Moscow-trained Nayef Hawatmeh, issued a similar communique datelined Havana, declaring war on "U.S. imperialism" as the common enemy of both groups, against the "racist regime of Israel," and against "the dictatorship of Anastasio Somoza in Nicaragua."

All this pointed to a new theater of operations for the PLO and the RF with a distinctly "Latin American connection." Bottled up by events in Lebanon, the PLO has taken to a massive bombing campaign in Israel and a threatened terror campaign in the U.S. It has also been crippled by internal factional fighting, strict anti-terrorist measures in Europe, and the attendant problems of the Israel-Egypt peace initiatives.

Thus Latin America and the Western Hemisphere present a new area of operations for the PLO and its sympathizers which include not only the Cubans and Panamanian government, but the Colombian Communist Party and the FSLN. Israeli and Jewish persons, as well as physical objects, are logical targets for the "PLO-Latin American Connection."

One clue to this possible shift of PLO target areas is the fact that Armando Ulises Estrada, once Castro's key contact to the PLO,

is back in Havana working with the FSLN. Another clue is the expanding contacts of the PLO in the U.S. with radical groups.

Intelligence sources report more attempts by members of the Baader-Meinhoff Gang and the Japanese Red Army to enter the U.S. and establish ties to such terrorist groups as the "Weathermen" and similar groups.

Just why Nicaragua should be a target of the PLO is best explained in the autobiography of Jerusalem's mayor, Teddy Kollek, entitled "For Jerusalem." He revealed that Nicaragua played a major role in obtaining arms for Israel during the crucial period of its creation in 1948. Kollek met the late Gen. Anastasio Somoza in Nicaragua to plead Israel's case.

According to Kollek, "Somoza as well as the foreign minister cooperated because of their strong basic sympathy with our cause. Our agreement included the understanding that Nicaragua would vote for Israel in the United Nations whenever the occasion arose, a point to which they pledged themselves out of genuine conviction."

Nicaragua has consistently supported Israel in the UN to this day, and was one of a handful of states to vote against the resolution condemning Zionism as a form of racism.

In fact, Nicaragua gave the newly born country of Israel military and economic aid to the tune of \$8 million, a lot of money for a small country to give. Today Israel is repaying that friendship by supplying the government of Nicaragua with military aid, its own weapons, despite the misleading claims of Jack Anderson that it is really U.S. weapons being sent illegally to President Somoza's forces.

Somoza is no saint, nor does he claim to be, but he is much better than the planned Communist dictatorship that the FSLN have in mind, not to mention their anti-Israel, pro-PLO stance. Israel knows this; the United States does not.