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ESAU L: THE FEDAYEEN

(Annex to ESAU XLVIII: Fedayeen--"Men of Sacrifice")

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A NOTE ON SOURCES

This paper relies primarily on clandestine reporting, particularly for the internal structure and operations of the various fedayeen organizations. [redacted] The reporting is quite good on political aspects of the subject such as the maneuverings of the fedayeen groups, their internal disputes, and their ideological and tactical views. However, our information is more scanty on such important matters as the number of armed men in each group, the sources and mechanics of funding, and details of the sources and methods of delivery of arms shipments to the fedayeen.

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MEMORANDUM TO RECIPIENTS

This Annex has been prepared to accompany and document the essay, Fedayeen -- "Men of Sacrifice," published separately as ESAU XLVIII. This Annex discusses the fedayeen groups in some detail: their origins, ideological leanings, strategy and tactics, organization and funding, their ties to Arab sources of support, and efforts to unify. This Annex -- as ESAU XLVIII -- contains information available through 1 November 1970.

Constructive comment on this Annex has been received from the Office of National Estimates, The Office of Current Intelligence, and The Clandestine Service. In view, however, of the complexities of the fedayeen question, the quickly-changing scene, and the uneven quality of available intelligence, the judgments of this Annex should be considered provisional. Any comments on its data or judgments should be addressed to the Annex's author, Carolyn McGiffert Ekedahl, and to this Staff.

Hal Ford
Chief, DD/I Special Research Staff

ESAU L: THE FEDAYEEN
(ANNEX TO ESAU XLVIII: Fedayeen -- "Men of Sacrifice")

FATAH AND THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION (PLO)

Fatah - Background to February 1969

Fatah, which is today the most important fedayeen group, was founded in the 1950's by militant Palestinians dissatisfied with the inaction of other Palestinian organizations. Its name means "conquest" and is a reverse acronym derived from the Arabic words for Palestine National Liberation Movement. Fatah leaders felt that Arab hesitation to initiate war against Israel resulted from lack of will rather than military inferiority, and saw Fatah's role as that of catalyst -- raising tensions between Arabs and Israelis in order to bring about war. Fatah's military wing, Al Asifa (Storm Troops), was founded in January 1964 and by early 1965 had embarked on a campaign of sabotage raids against Israel.*

The majority of Asifa's missions were conducted by teams of four or five Asifa members who infiltrated into Jordan from Syria, then crossed into Israel for quick strikes. In late 1966, however, Asifa was also used by Syria to camouflage operations on the Israeli border by Syrian army units. This increase in raids across the Syrian-Israeli border served to raise tension and resulted in Israel's November 1966 attack on Syria

*Israel waited until May 1965 before retaliating for the first time against Asifa; at that time it destroyed two Asifa bases in Jordan in an effort to compel Jordan to restrain the fedayeen.

and an escalation in threats and counter-threats.* This scenario corresponded to one which Fatah might well have drawn up.

The founders of Fatah were reportedly members of the Muslim Brotherhood and the Islamic Liberation Party -- both conservative groups with strong ties to the oil kingdoms of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Fatah has therefore always benefited financially from the contributions of wealthy Palestinians in these countries. Somewhat ironically, however, the chief benefactor of Fatah in its early days was Syria, one of the most radical of the Arab states. This seeming paradox arose from the fact that while Fatah was politically conservative in intra-Arab matters, it was at the same time the most actively militant of the anti-Israeli Palestinian groups, and this made it attractive to the Syrians.

During the mid-1960's, and particularly from the time of the February 1966 seizure of power in Syria by a more militant Baathi group until the June 1967 war, Syria provided training, arms, publicity, and planning assistance to Fatah. In addition, the Syrian Baath government arranged contacts between Fatah and China, Cuba, and North Vietnam; this resulted in Chinese provision of some equipment, medical and financial assistance, and even some training to Fatah in this prewar period.

The June 1967 war marked the beginning of Fatah's gradual move away from dependence on Syria. Even before the war, Fatah had resisted Syrian Baathi attempts to impose control over it. The defeat of Syria and corresponding decline in Syrian Baath prestige, combined with the rise in Fatah's own prestige as the result of its actively militant approach, prompted Fatah to seek independence and to look elsewhere for help. It indeed found willing backers among Arab nations that wished to capitalize on Fatah's popularity.

*In November 1966 Israel also attacked As Samu in Jordan in retaliation for Fatah raids across the border.

Meanwhile, during the latter part of 1967 and early 1968, Iraqi units, stationed in Jordan after the June war, had reportedly been instrumental in funneling aid to Asifa in Jordan and in providing general support; this had apparently been very important before Fatah built up a popular base of support. Following Israel's attack on Karamah, Fatah's popularity increased and the relative significance of Iraqi support declined. (The Fatah spokesman Hani Hasan asserted in December 1969 that following Karamah the numbers of Fatah fighters increased from 720 to 3000.) Iraq's interest in supporting Fatah was probably evoked largely by the cooling of Fatah's relations with the rival Baath regime in Syria and Baghdad's desire to expand its influence among the fedayeen. In the summer of 1968 Iraq reportedly agreed to Arafat's request for training of Asifa members in anti-aircraft defense.

Fatah also received considerable quantities of small arms from Algeria in the fall of 1968. [redacted] this represented a decision made by Boumedienne -- not a Fatah request. In December [redacted] the [redacted] had said that Algeria had transferred its support (both money and scholarship) from the PLO to Fatah. This shift probably reflected Fatah's increasing popularity as well as a preference for Fatah's independent position over the dependence of the still UAR-controlled PLO.

In its search for funds, Fatah also turned to the USSR. On 2 July 1968, two days before Nasir's departure on a visit to Moscow, Fatah leader Arafat arrived in Cairo. Arafat had been officially named Fatah spokesman in the spring of 1968, though he had been one of the organization's leaders from its inception and had previously been regional head of Asifa. Arafat apparently now asked that Nasir intercede with the Soviets to change their position towards the Palestinians, supposedly

Yasir Arafat Chairman PLO Central Committee and Fatah

because he felt that Arab solidarity behind the fedayeen was weakened by the lack of Arab Communist support, althought it seems more likely that Arafat's chief motivation was a hope to get material assistance and an increased degree of political respectability through Nasir's intercession. In any event, Nasir agreed, and Arafat either accompanied or followed him to Moscow. There were several subsequent reports of Soviet promises of aid, but little evidence of Soviet fulfillment of any such promises. The Soviets later [redacted] claimed to have sent a shipload of arms to Fatah through Alexandria, but Arafat denied receiving them.

Fatah's move away from close ties with Syria after the 1967 war created a multitude of new problems in organization, leadership, and ideology. Fatah reportedly had about 3,000 armed and active members in the fall of 1968. Its highest governing body was a General Command composed of nine members; the Supreme Commander, Yasir Arafat, was elected by the other members of the Command.* In early 1968 Fatah reportedly moved its headquarters from Damascus to Amman and that summer opened a number of regional offices. The branch offices in Algiers,

*Other posts in the General Command were those of Arafat's Deputy Supreme Commander -- Hani Qaddumi, identified in September 1967 as in charge of finances in Kuwait; the Chairman of the Military Committee -- Faruq Nusaybah; the Chairman of the Finance Committee -- Muhammad Qattan, a leader of Fatah's Lebanese Branch and Director of the Beirut Branch of the Afro-Arab Bank; the Chairman of Coordination -- Khalid Hasan, leader of Fatah's Kuwait Branch; the Chairman of Organization -- Walid Khalidi, Professor of Philosophy at American University in Beirut and ideologist for Fatah; the Chairman of Information -- Umar Ismail Khatib, leader of Fatah's Jordan Branch; the Chairman of Members Affairs -- Zuhdi Khatib, leader of Fatah's Iraq Branch; and the Chairman of the Intelligence Committee -- Abd-al-Rahman Barakat.

Baghdad, Cairo, and Damascus each had a "Propaganda and Information Section" with responsibility for liaison with the press; a military section was also planned for each office.

By the fall of 1968 Fatah was by far the strongest of the fedayeen groups in terms of numbers, finances, operations and popular support in the Arab countries.* Its success was demonstrated by the desire of so many Arab states to support it, as well as by its ability to attract smaller organizations to merge with it.** Its weakness lay in the fact that it was a fragmented and incohesive group which had no established program and was torn by factionalism.

In the summer and fall of 1968 there were a series of disputes within Fatah, involving several issues. One concerned an attempt by the pro-Syrian wing of the organization to keep Fatah in the Syrian camp; another involved the question of unification of the Palestinian organizations and the issue of whether Fatah should risk losing some of its independence for the sake of unification. It seems clear that Arafat's leadership was under attack, and probably from the more pro-Syrian faction of the organization. During this period Arafat received considerable criticism for a variety of reasons: some Fatah members attacked him for his close ties to "reactionary" governments and the Muslim Brotherhood; some alleged he was working in his own self-interest and profiting from the contributions Fatah was receiving; others accused him

*[redacted] in February 1969 Fatah then had 75 bases in Jordan with an average of 30 fedayeen each, two bases in Syria with 150 each and three in Lebanon with 200 each.

**These included the Palestine Revolutionary Front, the "Heroes of the Sacrifice," Al'ard, based within Israel and responsible for many operations inside Israel.

of being increasingly dictatorial and of refusing to clarify the mystery of the death of Subhi Yassin.*

Such internal criticism may well have reflected resentment that Arafat was in fact gaining power as Fatah grew. But in any event he increasingly emerged as the spokesman for Fatah on all issues of importance. In an interview in Al-Sayyad on 22 January 1969, Arafat elaborated on Fatah's ideology (or lack thereof):

> What is the meaning of an ideological identity? Does it mean that I should stand up and make a statement that I believe in Marxism? ... Is this the time for defining the social content of Fatah's number? I swear by God, there are no capitalists or monopolists or bourgeoisie in the ranks of Fatah.... We are all not only poor, but have even lost our homeland.... What meaning does the Left or Right have in my struggle to liberate my homeland?

He went on to claim that the Palestinians were the most leftist people in the world -- even more leftist than the Soviet Union:

> The Soviet Union advocates a peaceful settlement for the Middle East crisis and makes proposals for that. We refuse the peaceful settlement and all other proposals.... Am I supposed to refuse Saudi money just because Saudi Arabia is a rightist? I am using Saudi

*Yassin was a leader of the "Heroes of the Sacrifice" a Nasirist fedayeen group. He was assassinated in October 1968. [redacted] he was assassinated by Fatah because the Intelligence Committee had learned that Yassin's group had joined Fatah for the sole purpose of subverting Fatah to Nasirist control.

money to buy weapons from China. How do you describe this action, rightist or leftist?

This lack of ideology has been both a source of strength and a vulnerability to Fatah. Because of it, the organization has received assistance from a wide variety of sources and has drawn to it those Palestinians motivated solely by their desire to regain their homeland. It has also made Fatah susceptible to criticism from the radical wing of the fedayeen movement, although as the movement as a whole has become increasingly aligned with the radical Arab states and the Communist world powers, Fatah has been pushed to adopt a more openly radical stance.

PLO -- Background to February 1969

The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was established in January 1964 at the Summit Conference of the Arab states in Cairo. Its creation followed Israel's announcement of completion of the Jordan River water diversion project to which Syria had responded by calling for war. The UAR, backed by Jordan, proposed the establishment of the PLO, hoping thereby to satisfy the Syrians by presenting a facade of militancy, while in fact concealing delay.

In February 1965, the PLO's military wing, the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA), was placed under the United Arab Command, the new staff organization set up by the Summit Conference to coordinate the military planning of the Arab states against Israel. In 1967 the PLA reportedly numbered some 15,000 men; its troops formed special units which served as integral parts of

the armies of Syria, Iraq, and the UAR. Thus the PLA did not function separately and did not carry out military operations against Israel. In June 1965 the PLO Chairman, Ahmad Shuqayri, criticized Fatah for its militant actions and said the PLA would not engage in hostilities.

Ahmad Shuqayri
First PLO Leader

However, as tension mounted between Israel and the Arab states in late 1966 and early 1967, the prestige of Fatah, which was mounting operations into Israel, increased while that of the UAR-backed PLO declined. Shuqayri, undoubtedly operating with Nasir's approval, decided the time had come for the PLO to act. On 22 November 1966 Shuqayri announced over Voice of Palestine Radio from Cairo that PLA troops attached to the UAR, which had previously been refused permission to enter Jordan, would now do so, and would undertake raids into Israel. As late as May 1967, however, Shuqayri was still trying, unsuccessfully, to persuade Husayn to allow PLA forces to enter Jordan; it is noteworthy in this regard that Shuqayri had stated in 1966 that liberation of Palestine should begin with the liberation of Jordan, and in December of that year had announced the forming of a revolutionary council designed to overthrow Husayn; the latter responded by refusing to recognize Shuqayri as PLO head. The two were reportedly reconciled somewhat before the outbreak of war in June 1967.

The PLO did little of an active nature during the first half of 1967, though it did create a fedayeen wing of the PLA, the Palestine Liberation Forces (PLF), which never really got organized before the June 1967 war. The

PLA units attached to UAR and Syrian forces thoroughly disintegrated during the war, and the PLO's prestige sagged still lower.

In December 1967 Shuqayri was replaced as PLO Chairman by Yahya Mahhudah, a lawyer and former Communist, and in July 1968 the organization was further shaken by an attempt, possibly backed by Nasir, to replace the Syrian-oriented officers of the PLA. This involved the appointment of a new PLA Chief of Staff, Abd-al-Razzaq Yahya. This appointment caused a rebellion within the PLA by pro-Syrian officers, and Yahya himself was placed under house arrest in Damascus. Yahya indicated he would withdraw if the PLO Executive Committee and the dissident officers could work out a compromise. In September, the Executive Committee decided to compromise, and appointed a neutral officer, Musbah Budayri.

Yahya Hammuda
PNC Chairman

Abd-al-Razzaq Yahya
PLA Commander in Chief

The division in the PLO and PLA had a disruptive influence on the morale in both the PLA and its fedayeen wing, the Palestine Liberation Forces. The PLF operated from bases on the Jordan East Bank, but throughout 1967 and 1968 was not a particularly potent force. Estimates of its size during this period range from 200-500. The PLF received support from the Syrian PLA Branch (the Hittin Forces), which supplied arms, salaries, and uniforms, as well as from the PLA units (the Qadisiyah Brigade), attached to Iraqi forces stationed in Jordan after the June 1967 war.

By late 1968 the PLO was a declining organization. Designed originally to present an activist facade, it had never done much of a military nature. Even before the war it had been losing ground to Fatah, and after the war when military action became the key to popularity and prestige, the PLO suffered still more. In addition, it had begun to lose the support even of its creator, the UAR. In 1968 the PLO was attempting to change, to become a militant organization, but it could not change rapidly enough.

Fatah Takeover of PLO -- February 1969

In February 1969 Fatah gained effective control of the PLO. Although relations between the two organizations had been antagonistic in certain respects, many PLO members felt that the disintegration of the PLO after the June war made some form of collaboration essential; Fatah in turn looked with some envy at the PLO's prestige as the official creation of the Arab states.

During late 1967 and early 1968 both the PLO and Fatah made unsuccessful attempts to achieve some form of cooperation with each other, as well as with other fedayeen groups; however, neither wanted to sacrifice any of its

own independence.* A tentative step towards a degree of unity was achieved in March 1968 when the PLO, Fatah, and the third major group, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), issued a statement calling for "unification of the Palestine struggle in both the political and military fields." A new Palestine National Council (PNC)** was to be formed whose approximately 100 members would be apportioned among fedayeen groups and various Palestinian trade and labor-union organizations. Preparations for the Council which met in July 1968 were marked by hostility between Fatah and the more radical PFLP, and the meeting itself accomplished nothing. As no agreement could be reached, the former PLO Executive Committee was simply extended for another six months.

Negotiations over formation of a new Palestine National Council were dominated by Fatah, whose chief rival, the PFLP, boycotted the meetings. Fatah therefore had virtual control over the Council when it convened in early February 1969 in Cairo. Many PLO and PLA leaders did not attend and the PFLP boycotted the meetings completely. Fatah succeeded in placing three men on the 11-man Executive Committee in addition to Yasir Arafat, who became the new Chairman of the PLO, as well as its Director of Military Affairs.*** One of the first

*Each had held meetings boycotted by the other, following which they had claimed leadership of a unified movement. Shuqayri's prestige suffered further from these abortive efforts, and this was probably one of the factors leading to his removal in December 1967.

**The PNC was the supreme body of the PLO as originally established and was composed of 450 members. It dispersed as a result of the June 1967 war. In addition, the PLO had an Executive Committee charged with conducting daily business.

***Other members of the new Executive Committee were
Fatah: Faruq Qaddumi - Director of Popular Organization. Has also been identified as a member of Saiqa.
Khalid Hasan - Director of Political Affairs
Muhammad Najjar

(footnote continued on page 13)

actions of the new Executive Committee was to move PLO headquarters from Cairo to Amman, thus symbolically breaking the tie between the PLO and the UAR. The committee also appointed a group composed of Hammudah (who had replaced Shuqayri as PLO Chairman and now served as PNC Chairman), and three others to continue a dialogue with those who had boycotted the PNC. The Executive Committee also set up (in April) committees for popular organization, military affairs, educational affairs, revenue, and cultural committees.

In February, several days after the Executive Committee's first meeting, Arafat met in Amman with a group of PLO office directors* in what turned out to be an unpleasant confrontation: the officials expressed their suspicions about Arafat's personal ambitions and desire to have Fatah dominate the PLO. Although Arafat tried to placate the officials, they remained convinced that he intended to replace them.

Their suspicions were well-founded. Several months later the PLO Executive Committee ordered the reorganization of its national offices. Except for Shafiq Al-Hut,

(footnote continued from page 12)

Saiqa:	Yusuf Barzi
	Ahmad Shihabi
Independent:	Ibrahim Bakr - Vice Chairman
	Kamal Nasir - Guidance Information Officer
	Yasir 'Amr - Secretary
PLO	Hamid Abu Sittah, Director of Homeland Affairs
	Abd-al-Majid Shuman - Palestine National Fund

*The functions of these regional offices were all probably similar to those of the Beirut office -- though the latter was the most important. Its duties included liaison with the Lebanese government issuance of PLO press releases, legal aid to Palestinians in Lebanon, recruiting, fund-raising, liaison with other Palestinian organizations, and finally, as seen before, liaison with the Soviets.

chief of the Beirut office, and one other director, all national office directors were to be replaced. In addition, each office was to have a governing body called a Council for PLO Affairs on which any Palestinian member of the PNC resident in that country would sit, as would the heads of Palestinian organizations in the country; the office director would serve as committee secretary. This new set-up distributed regional PLO power more widely, giving new strength to other organizations, and particularly to Fatah.*

As Fatah took over the PLO's political apparatus, PLO policy statements merged with those of Fatah. In the month after the PNC meeting the PLO took the following public positions, synomomous with those of Fatah.

1. It rejected the November 1967 United Nations Security resolution and other peace proposals, including the Soviet timetable plan.

2. It called for the establishment of a "free, democratic" society in Palestine to include all Palestinians -- Moslems, Christians, Jews, thus "rescuing Palestine from world Zionism."**

*For example, in late April the Beirut PLO office was told that its council would include Al-Hut, Khalid Yashruti of Fatah, Yahya Ashur, Fatah's Beirut representative, and Salah Da-bagh (an independent). Al-Hut said that in spite of the new arrangement he himself would still have direct recourse to Khalid Hasan, Chief of the PLO's Political Affairs Section.

**An article published in the Italian Communist Party paper, L'Unita on 25 March 1970 and attributed to Fatah set forth Fatah's views on a future Palestinian state. It called for a secular and democratic Palestine of Christians, Jews, and Moslems, asking an end to a feeling of vengeance and to the identification of all Jews as Zionists. It said that all Jews and Moslems living in

(footnote continued on page 15)

3. It said that the future of the Arab nation was dependent on the "liberation" of Palestine and called on all Arab states to support the Palestine movement.

4. It called on all Palestine resistance groups to unite.

5. It said that the PLA should be integrated into the revolution with a view towards organizing a popular-liberation war.

Fatah Attempts to Control the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA)

While Arafat was thus shaking up the PLO's political organization, he also began a campaign to bring the PLA under his control. The PLA and PLF had boycotted the Palestine National Council meeting, but Budayri stated that the PLA would carry out directives issued by the political command if they were based on Council resolutions. One of the first actions of the PLO Executive Committee in February 1969 was to establish the Palestine Armed Struggle Command (PASC), which was to plan and coordinate all commando matters including operations. Abd-al-Razzaq Yahya, who had served briefly as commander of the PLA in early 1968, was named its chief of operations.* This organization was clearly intended to counter-

(footnote continued from page 14)
Palestine as well as those exiled from it would be entitled to become Palestinian citizens, thus rejecting the thesis that only those there before 1948 or 1918 would be acceptable. It said that pre-1948 Palestine must constitute the territory of the new state, and that the artifical structures of Israel -- and probably of Jordan (as it existed after 1948) -- would disappear.

*In March Yahya stated that henceforth all communiques issued by organizations affiliated with the PASC would be issued by PASC; he also said he was planning to unify arms procurement.

balance the PLA, whose commander Budayri reportedly resented Arafat.

In May 1969, Arafat and Budayri are said to have argued after the latter visited Lebanon without first receiving Arafat's permission. Arafat denounced Budayri both for having made the trip without authorization and for having allegedly behaved in Lebanon with improper dignity. Shortly thereafter, in June 1969, Yahya replaced Budayri and became commander-in-chief of the PLA. Fathi Sad-al-Din was named his deputy and Uthman Haddad became PLA Chief of Staff.

Meanwhile Arafat sought to bring the PLA into combat. In March 1969 he stated that the PLA must change from a "classical regular army" into the "nucleus and foundation stone of the Palestine revolutionary army," and argued that PLA forces must be moved into striking position.* In March Al Ahram claimed that PLA forces would be moved in order to be stationed with the fighting forces of the Palestine resistance organizations. It also said that the PLO had decided to allocate a majority of its budget to the PLA. In early August, the Voice of Fatah praised the first instance of PLA participation in fedayeen action. In spite of public denials, the PLA unit attached to the Syrian army, the Hittin Brigade, reportedly did infiltrate into northern Jordan in the spring of 1969. The Iraqi PLA force (Qadisiyah Brigade) was already there.

In late 1969 and early 1970 there were reports of further PLA dissatisfaction with Fatah's leadership, centering specifically on the charge that Fatah was itself acquiring new weapons and denying funds to the PLA. In December 1969 PLA officers reportedly submitted a list

*At this time about 60 percent of the PLA was attached to the UAR army (the Ain Jallut Brigade, about 5,000 men); 30 percent to the Syrian (Hittin Brigade, about 2,500); and 10 percent to the Iraqi (Qadisiyah Brigade, about 1,000 men).

of complaints to Arafat through Yahya, who submitted his resignation at the same time. Arafat rejected the resignation and promised to seek funds for the PLA at the Rabat summit conference that month. It is not clear whether the PLA did get some of the funds allocated to the fedayeen at Rabat, but in April 1970 Yahya stated that PLA pay was often delayed because Arafat insisted on signing the authorization himself and that he had refused to release PLO funds for PLA arms purchases.

In any case, the conflict between Arafat and the PLA continued.* [redacted] the PLA, considering itself the last bastion of opposition to Fatah domination, formed a general staff in early 1970 (consisting of Yahya, Colonel Samir Khatib, and several others), determined to accept only those orders of the PLO Executive Committee with which they agreed. Although this report has never been substantiated, some degree of independence was evidently thereafter exercised by the PLA, for in April 1970 Arafat reportedly sent a letter to the PLA, saying that he was the commander-in-chief, complaining that the PLA had not been reporting to him, and warning that if this recurred, appropriate action would be taken.

The conflict between Fatah and the PLA was exacerbated in 1969-early 1970 by negotiations going on with the Soviet Union over the proposed visit of a delegation to Moscow. In September 1969 the Soviets reportedly

*The relationships between the PLO and PLA are further complicated by the fact that the PLA units depend for support on the PLO and on the Arab countries in whose armies they serve. Thus, their allegiances are divided. Depending on the country in which they are serving, the PLO local commanders may in fact have little say in the matter. The UAR, for example, seems to keep tight control of PLA units attached to its army; those attached to Syrian and Iraqi units appear to have more leeway.

invited Yahya and Khatib to visit Moscow, but indicated that they did not wish any members of the PLO Executive Committee to come, inasmuch as they were political figures. By December, however, this invitation had been extended to the PLO Executive Committee and included Arafat.

There was some delay about accepting the invitation, apparently due to a debate over whether a delegation should go and if so, who should be in it. It looks as if Arafat did not wish to send a delegation at all, but was finally persuaded by other members of the Executive Committee. Arafat's reluctance at this time to visit Moscow was in sharp contrast to his eagerness in 1968. This change may have indicated his skepticism about receiving any aid or political support, or may have reflected concern that either the Saudis or Chinese might cut back their support to Fatah as a result of such a visit.

Having been forced to yield on the issue of accepting the invitation, Arafat tried to keep Yahya off the delegation. The PLA, however, indicated that it would not participate at all if Yahya did not go, and Arafat capitulated. Yahya himself has confirmed this account, and afterward claimed that the Soviets told the delegation in Moscow that they could not give any assistance to the commando organizations unless they united, but that the Soviets could assist the PLA, which was a legally constituted army, and were in fact prepared to provide the PLA with weapons, to be delivered via Syria.

According to this same source, Yahya also charged after the Moscow visit that Fatah was trying to destroy the PLA, citing Fatah's efforts to have the Palestine Armed Struggle Command contingent in Lebanon, which had been drawn from the PLA, replaced by Fatah units so that Fatah could control the Lebanese refugee camps. Furthermore, Yahya said, in March 1970 the PLO Executive Committee (controlled by Fatah and Arafat) had decided to withdraw the Palestine Liberation Forces from the PLA's control and subordinate it to the Executive Committee. Yahya refused to comply, and told Arafat that if the PLO persisted in its efforts to destroy the PLA there would be an armed rebellion.

In early July 1970, Arafat issued an order relieving Uthman Haddad as PLA Chief of Staff and accusing him of mutiny.* At the time, Haddad was in Damascus; he refused to accept the dismissal and received the support of a number of PLA and PLF units, particularly those in Syria. Haddad charged that Arafat had dismissed him after Haddad had protested orders given by Arafat banning the payment of wages to the Hittin Forces. In an interview on 4 July, Haddad also charged that a recent decision to put transfers and appointments of PLO commanders under Arafat's control was a prelude to dissolving the PLA. He asserted that commanders and officers of the PLO did not recognize Arafat as army commander. On 7 July a PLO delegation met with Arafat in Amman and demanded that Haddad be retained, that the PLA budget be approved, that the PLA be independent, and that Arafat's decisions contrary to the army's regulations be repealed. The following day a PLO spokesman reaffirmed the decision to fire Haddad. Yahya, who apparently was no friend of Haddad, remained aloof from the dispute.** A near-mutinous situation was apparently created in the PLA as a result of Haddad's dismissal.

Thus, while Fatah's takeover of the PLO's political machinery was fairly complete by mid-1970, its efforts to achieve control over the PLA had not succeeded. In fact, one of Arafat's tactics had backfired. He had appointed Yahya Commander of the PASC and then of the PLA, obviously hoping thereby to establish his own control over both. Yahya had since shown himself independent of Arafat and desirous of keeping the PLA independent. And

*[redacted] Haddad had joined in a plot to get weapons to the Communist fedayeen group, the Partisan Forces, against Arafat's wishes.

**In the summer of 1969 Yahya indicated that having regained command of the PLA and PLF, he now intended to eliminate these officers who had abused him during his previous brief tenure. He specifically mentioned Haddad who had recently been named chief of staff.

these relationships have been further complicated by an apparent split within the PLA between Yahya and a Syrian-backed faction headed by Haddad.

Fatah Retains its Identity

In the process of assuming control of the PLO's political apparatus, Fatah has retained its own identity and independence, even though its structure has changed somewhat. Its rapid growth in 1969 put considerable strain on its organization. By March 1969 the Fatah General Command had reportedly been replaced by a central committee,* under which there were two "wings," political and military. According to a Jordanian security report, Khalil Wazir, Arafat's brother-in-law, headed the political wing, assisted by Salah Khalaf (later described as second-in-command of Fatah and a sympathizer with radical views). This wing reportedly included an intelligence department run by Hani Hasan, a group for organizing youth, and an information office responsible for propaganda and communiques. The latter office runs the organization's radio propaganda program, Voice of Fatah, which broadcast from Cairo until mid-1970 when Nasir suspended its operations. It also publishes Fatah's journals, including both Al-Asifa Magazine and the Magazine of the Palestine Revolution. It is probably also responsible for the daily paper Fatah, which was originally a daily bulletin, and later expanded

*Included in the Central Committee were:

Arafat	Mamduh Sabri Abu Saydam
Khalil Wazir	Mahmud Maswadih
Hani Hasan	Salah Khalaf
Khalid Hasan	Muhammad Najjar
Faruq Qaddumi	Mukhtar Ba'ba
Hani Qaddumi	Da'ud Qutub

Of these only Arafat, Hani Qaddumi, and Khalid Hasan had been on the General Command in early 1968.

to become a four-page paper during the June 1970 crisis in Jordan.

By late 1969, Fatah's regional units had become even more complex. [redacted] the organization chart of the regional apparatus in Saudi Arabia resembled a pyramid: the group, the smallest unit with four members each, reported to the flank composed of four group representatives; four flanks comprised a sector; four sectors a local committee; and four local committees a district secretariat committee headed by the "secretary general of the organization." Each district had an information committee and a revolutionary discipline court to deal with violations of regulations, conflicts, and so forth. Each district also had a coordination committee composed of the "secretary general of the organization," the information official, the watch official (head of the coordination committee's Revolutionary Watch Committee charged with the district's security), the financial official, and the general mobilization official. This committee reported to the regional committee, the highest Fatah organization in each country.

During the spring and summer of 1969, there were reports of continuing conflicts within Fatah, including tactical disagreements, ideological disputes, and the daily frictions arising from the administration of a growing army.* In July dissent was reportedly expressed by Fatah military figures in Jordan who resented Fatah orders to coordinate their operations with Jordanian authorities; this group reportedly had ties with Fatah's organization in Syria.

The major internal struggle, however, seemed to revolve around the ideological position of Fatah. A group of "fanatics" within Fatah apparently began to

*One of Fatah's leaders, Hani Hasan, said that Fatah's problem was rapid growth, which had rendered inadequate Fatah's control and guidance structure.

voice increasing opposition to the "bourgeois" leadership represented by Arafat. This revolutionary opposition, including both left-wing Baathists and Marxist-Leninists, argued for dissociation from non-revolutionary regimes and the use of tactics similar to those used in Cuba and in Vietnam. This apparently meant that they wished Fatah to establish and operate from bases within the Israel-occupied territories, despite the demonstrated difficulty if not impossibility of doing so.

Probably related to the development of this radical opposition within Fatah was the receipt of several reports during the summer of 1969 of secret Fatah organizations being established in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Jordan. The Jordan group was said to be charged with assassinating persons considered liable to harm the Palestinian cause. When Arafat learned of the Jordan group's existence in early September 1969, he reportedly ordered the arrest of its organizers.

In late 1969 and early 1970, there were more reports of dissatisfaction with Arafat's leadership and of plans and attempts to assassinate Arafat. One source said that some members of the General Command felt that he had poor strategic and tactical judgment, and that he was blocking unification of various fedayeen organizations. On 31 December the Middle East News Agency (MENA) in Damascus reported that the Lebanese rightist paper Al-Jumhuriyah had said a reshuffle would soon occur in Fatah. This change would supposedly reflect Fatah's need to assume a more revolutionary posture, for which a new political and military leadership was necessary.

Apparently, the pressure on Arafat's leadership was intensified in the summer and early fall of 1970, with the pressure again coming from so-called leftists in the organization who reportedly advocated refusing to cooperate with Arab states and adopting a more radical line particularly in right-wing Arab countries. A more conservative faction headed by Arafat is said to favor continuing Fatah's strategy of limiting tactics to fighting Israel and not interfering in the internal affairs of Arab states. In late October, Isam Sartawi of the

Active Organization for the Liberation of Palestine* indicated that the conservative faction in Fatah remained predominant.

Various reports have suggested that Arafat has been challenged by his second-in-command Salah Khalaf, and the weight of the evidence seems to confirm conflict between Arafat and Khalaf.** On 4 November 1970 the Fatah organ Fatah criticized those who had "capitulated" during the Jordan crisis in September and called for their removal. This may have been a reference to Khalaf, one of four fedayeen leaders captured during the fighting who accepted a Jordanian cease-fire proposal subsequently renounced by Fatah.*** [redacted] Khalaf was in fact replaced as Fatah's deputy chief and head of intelligence in late October.

Internal strains within Fatah are likely to continue, and continuing pressure on Fatah's "old-guard," conservative leadership can be expected from the younger, more leftist members. If Arafat were one day to be removed as Fatah's leader, the organization could be expected to take a more radical position in terms of the Arab world. Finally, Arafat himself, if subjected to sufficient such pressures from within the Fatah organization, could conceivably be forced leftward against his own inclination.

*This is a small fedayeen group; see pages 54-56.

**While [redacted] has attempted to discount the reports of such infighting as "intended for public consumption," he has not provided any suggested reasons or purpose for such pretense, and this interpretation therefore seems thin.

***The newspaper may also have been criticizing Kamal Nasir, long-time Fatah and PLO spokesman who was reportedly removed from his post in the fall of 1970 for making unauthorized statements.

Fatah's Tactics and Operations

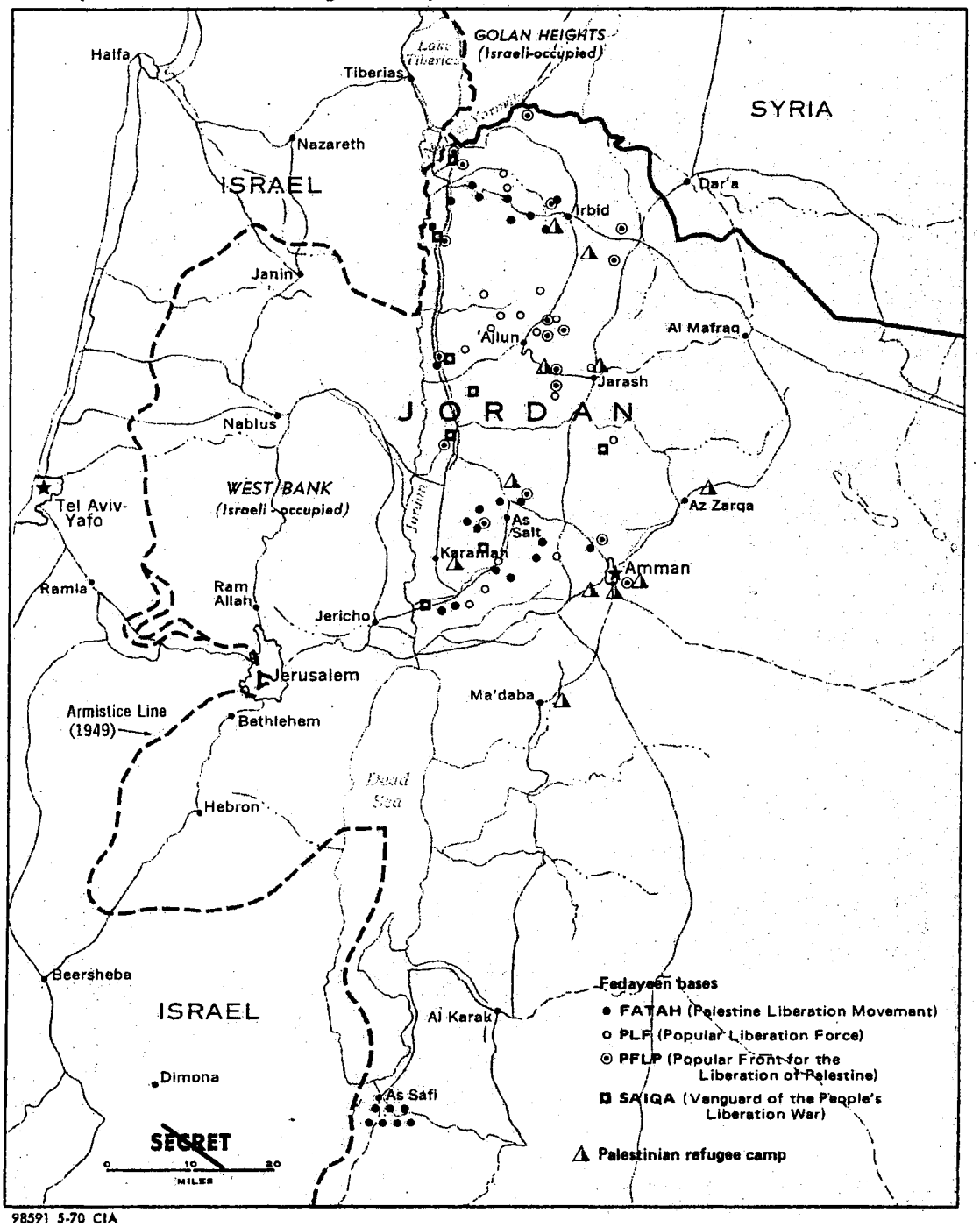
As seen before, Fatah's initial approach to military operations had been to infiltrate small teams of men into Israeli territory; these groups then carry out mine-laying and other sabotage operations, usually against military targets (patrols, outposts, military vehicles), but often, in terrorist fashion, against the civilian population as well.* This strategy has been a complete military failure. The Israelis report that they have killed an estimated 1800 fedayeen ** and captured 2500 more since the June 1967 war. The Israelis reported only some 300 killed by the fedayeen. The significance of these figures is clear when it is considered that Fatah had an estimated 7,000 armed men in the fall of 1970, and the Palestine Liberation Forces, which use the same tactics and often cooperate with Fatah, had an estimated 1,000. Since the Jordan civil war of September 1970, neither of these groups (nor any other fedyaeen organization) has conducted any operations.

The various rumors that Fatah was about to depart from its traditional tactics have not been substantiated. In the spring of 1969 and again in the spring of 1970, there were reports that Fatah planned to assassinate Arab leaders who were working for a peaceful settlement. While several of these reports came from high-level members of Fatah, Arafat himself has consistently rejected such tactics and Arafat seems still to have the upper hand in the organization.

*On 3 January 1970 Pravda carried Fatah's estimates of its operations. It had reportedly conducted some 2,442 operations in 1969, compared with 59 in 1966 and 727 in 1968. Pravda did not specify a number for 1967.

**Of these only some 30 ever penetrated Israeli territory and 185 the occupied territory; the rest the Israelis claim to have killed on or near the cease-fire lines.

Fedayeen Bases and Refugee Camps in JORDAN's East Bank



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Fatah maintains offices in all the Arab countries* as well as in a number of European countries, including France, Germany, and various East European states. In 1969 and 1970 it sent delegations to numerous countries to negotiate the opening of offices. Iran and Turkey have reportedly turned down such requests;** Malayasia in April 1969 approved the opening of a Fatah office. As part of its effort to gain international recognition and assistance, Fatah has invited groups of Americans and Europeans to participate in training and indoctrination courses in the summers of 1968 through 1970. According to the New York Times (27 August 1970), Arafat has also had dealings with the Black Panthers, has met with Eldridge Cleaver in Algiers in the summer of 1970, and has trained some Panthers at Fatah camps in Jordan in 1969.

While openly operating offices in a number of countries, Fatah also engages in intelligence operations. According to Hut, the PLO representative in Beirut, Fatah has intelligence units in various Arab countries, Western Europe, and the U.S.; most of the members of these groups have been trained either in China or the UAR. Fatah's operation in Amman is said to be the most efficient, having successfully penetrated Jordanian police, army, and intelligence services. Fatah is said to be trying to recruit foreigners with access to Israel, thus facilitating operations there. Fatah is said to have a political operation in England which is organized into four and five-man cells run on a functional basis, it

*The PLO also has offices throughout the Arab world. In addition, it has a New York office which in early 1970 was trying to gain the support of dissident groups in the United States. The PLO was also engaged in 1970 in trying to establish offices in Latin America.

**This may be due to the fact that Fatah has reportedly been recruiting Turkish and Iranian nationals as trainees; both governments have arrested a number of the recruits and charged them with planning acts of sabotage.

reportedly maintains a monthly publication in the United Kingdom called "Free Palestine", supports demonstrations and meetings, and handles recruiting.

Fatah's Funding

Fatah's budget is sizeable. In addition to the salaries it pays its soldiers and officials, Fatah pays allotments to families of "martyrs" (those killed in action). Fatah also must pay for most of its arms. In 1969 Fatah was reportedly unable to balance its budget despite receipt of promises of increased aid. The largest source of Fatah funds (reportedly supplying some two to four million dollars annually) is Saudi Arabia. The fund-raising mechanism in that country is a committee called the Committee for Aid to the Families of Martyrs; it collects what amounts to a forced deduction of five percent from the salaries of Palestinians in Saudi Arabia and a one percent deduction from Saudi salaries. The government does not contribute officially, but King Faysal and other members of the royal family make personal contributions.

Fatah's financial dependence on Saudi Arabia has put some limitations on the organization's freedom of action. For example, following his visit to Moscow in early 1970, Arafat felt compelled to visit Saudi Arabia to explain this visit. There had reportedly been a drop in contributions in the weeks following his Moscow trip. Arafat defended Fatah's relations with Communist countries as necessary to insure a supply of essential arms, but assured the Saudis that Fatah remained aloof from socialist doctrine and kept control over left-wing elements in Fatah's organizations. The Saudis are reported to have remained unreassured but were unwilling at this time to discontinue aid, fearing this would weaken conservative influence on Fatah. In late 1970, however, there were several reports that Saudi Arabia was increasingly disenchanted with Fatah and was cutting back in its fund-raising operations.

The extent of Kuwait's contribution to Fatah and the PLO is not clear. While both are reported to have

benefited from various Kuwaiti taxes and deductions as well as from an official Kuwaiti budget contribution, as of the spring of 1969 Kuwait was reportedly refusing to release the funds it held for these organizations. Fatah receives sizeable contributions from the gulf oil sheikhdoms, mostly Qatar and Abu Dhabi; most of this money comes from deductions from the salaries of Palestinians. Before the revolution in Libya in late 1969, that country had been giving Fatah about 2.8 million dollars from its annual budget per year in addition to private donations. Following the takeover, the new government, in typically flamboyant fashion, promised the PLO $56 million in addition to personal donations; the time period was not specified. In early May 1970 Prime Minister Qaddafi is said to have decided that Libya would contribute about $10 million quarterly to the fedayeen with about two-thirds of that going to Fatah and the rest to be distributed to other groups. However, Libya's leaders are famous for emotional promises and there is some question whether or not they will carry through.

Until recently the radical Arab states were less forthcoming in their contributions to Fatah and the PLO. Of all the radical Arab states Algeria has emerged as Fatah's best friend. It has given the organization both continuous propaganda support and international diplomatic backing.* Algeria is reportedly one of the main centers of Fatah training, and has served both as arms broker and arms conduit for Fatah. In addition Algeria has itself supplied arms to Fatah; in August 1970, a shipload of arms was sent as a gift to Fatah from Algeria and Morocco via Latakia. In August Boumedienne reportedly agreed to continue supporting Fatah and even to send a "few" Algerian troops to Jordan.

*In the summer of 1970, for example, the Algerians made representations to both Iraqi and Syrian officials to stop supporting their own organizations and support Fatah instead.

The rival radical Baath regimes of Iraq and Syria have become somewhat sporadic and unreliable contributors to Fatah. In the spring of 1969, Iraq reportedly cut off all aid to Fatah in order to give all its aid to the PFLP. However in late 1969 Fatah leader Hani Qaddumi indicated that Iraq had agreed reluctantly to assist Fatah, but that it preferred to concentrate its support on its own fedayeen group, the Arab Liberation Front (ALF). He said that Fatah had the same problems with Syria, which now wished to concentrate on Saiqa. However both these countries continued to train Fatah members at least through the summer of 1970.

At the Arab states' summit conference held in Rabat, Morocco, in December 1969, Arafat won a major victory in that aid to the Palestinian movement was one of the few items agreed upon. The Rabat conferrees reportedly decided to allocate some 26 million pounds to the fedayeen, only four million less than Arafat had requested; the bulk of this was to go to the PLO.

Fatah's relations with the UAR have fluctuated over the years. The two have a mutually suspicious and antagonistic relationship, as each sees the other as a challenge to its own popularity and dominance. While not enthusiastic about Fatah and not supporting it openly, the UAR has permitted Fatah to function; it is the strongest of the Palestinian groups in that country and has dominated the local Palestinian trade union groups. Moreover, as indicated earlier, the Voice of Fatah was permitted to operate from Cairo.

However, following Nasir's acceptance of the U.S. peace proposal in July 1970 and Palestinian criticism of that move, Nasir halted the Palestinians' use of radio facilities and reportedly put fedayeen in the UAR under close surveillance, even deporting some extremists. Nasir also indicated he had ceased aid to the fedayeen and would not resume it until he had reached an agreement with them.

Even before this, Fatah had never received more than limited and sporadic aid from the UAR.* Thus in early 1969 Nasir had conveyed to Arafat his dismay over certain anti-Soviet views being publicized in fedayeen circles. As a result the next shipment of arms was less than had been promised. Arafat indicated that he felt obliged to take the hint in order not to lose more aid. The UAR has provided Fatah with considerable training, conducted in Lebanon emphasizing intelligence and security services. The UAR has also trained Fatah members as frogmen and pilots, though they reportedly stopped the latter in July 1970.

Finally, Fatah has received considerable aid from the Communist Chinese over the past five years, particularly light arms and training. Fatah members also train in Cuba, and in the spring of 1970 a group of Fatah commandos became the first Arab group to graduate from Havana military college. Fatah members reportedly go in groups of 15 to 20 men to both countries on a regular basis. Two teams have gone to North Vietnam, but Fatah leaders are said to have felt that there was too much propaganda and not enough training in the DRV's courses.

*A high-level UAR source said in mid-1969 that the UAR supplied less than 5% of Fatah's small arms as compared with Algeria which supplies 15%.

THE ARAB NATIONALIST MOVEMENT (ANM) AND ITS FEDAYEEN WINGS

ANM

In the late 1940's a group of young intellectuals at the American University in Beirut organized the ANM, the first of the Palestinian organizations. Motivated by the formation of Israel and the expulsion of the Palestinians from their homeland, the ANM's basic ideology reflected what its title implies -- a desire for the union of all Arab states, a wish to exclude foreign influence from the Arab world, and the compulsion to eradicate the state of Israel. By the late 1950's, when many students had returned to their own countries, the movement had established branches in various Arab countries. The organization was never cohesive and its national chapters formed local alliances on an opportunistic basis.*

In 1955 the leader of the international ANM, George Habbash, a Palestinian Christian who had been working in Jordan, was forced to leave that country because of his involvement in subversive activities. He spent a year in Syria, then returned to Jordan with Syrian financial assistance to organize his group. Expelled from Jordan again in 1959, he went to Damascus where, during the period of the

George Habbash
Leader PFLP

*There are ANM affiliates in some 11 Arab states, but not all are particularly significant. It was a regional unit of the ANM which gained power in South Yemen in November 1967, the first and only such success for the ANM to date.

Egyptian-Syrian union, the ANM came under the aegis of Egyptian intelligence, and many ANM members became UAR intelligence personnel. In August 1959 a conference of regional ANM units met in Lebanon and adopted a pro-UAR policy; at this time the conference also established the Supreme Command to function as a coordinating body.

When the Egypt-Syria union dissolved in 1961, ANM headquarters moved to Beirut from Damascus, although the UAR continued to finance the ANM, at least until 1966. In 1965 the UAR tried to force the merger of the ANM with its newly-formed, Egyptian-dominated, inter-Arab group, the Arab Socialist Union.* However, the ANM continued to function on its own. This caused difficulties with Egypt and by early 1967 Nasir had broken with the ANM.**

After the June 1967 war, the ANM became torn by factionalism, with one group wishing to adopt a more radical course advocating revolution throughout the Arab world, while the other wanted to concentrate on the liberation of Palestine. The latter faction (which will be referred to in this context as moderate) was led by George Habbash, but in the spring of 1968 Habbash was imprisoned in Syria, thus creating a leadership vacuum in the AMN. Naif Hawatmah, a Jordanian ANM member and a Marxist-Leninist, was more than willing to step into the breach.

*This is not to be confused with Nasir's internal Egyptian party of the same name.

**The attitude of the ANM toward Nasir himself was somewhat ambivalent through the years. While many of its members saw Nasir as the only Arab leader of sufficient stature to offer hope of uniting the Arabs, his efforts to assert Egyptian dominance served to disillusion them. In the aftermath of the June 1967 war, many ANM members saw Algeria's Boumedienne with his uncompromising "continue to fight" policy as a more attractive alternative.

Elected a delegate to the ANM National Congress in 1968, Hawatmah captured the support of many delegates and when the new leadership was elected, a majority were Hawatmah backers. Habbash's supporters refused to accept this takeover and a provisional leadership was elected in which the Habbash faction had a one-man majority. For the rest of 1968, however, Hawatmah continued to gain strength in the ANM. Following Habbash's escape from prison in late 1968, the remains of the ANM has been split into two hostile factions, with the "moderate" faction headed by Habbash primarily devoted, at least in theory, to resolving the Palestine issue and deferring political activity in the Arab world as a whole; and a radical wing under Hawatmah devoted to the development of a Marxist movement in the Middle East, with the Palestine issue treated as only one part of a larger goal. This rupture virtually destroyed the ANM, but the local political parties derived from the original organization and totally independent of it continued to function, though some split along lines similar to these dividing the international ANM. The split in the ANM did have a significant effect on the ANM's paramilitary structure.

Background on the ANM's Fedayeen Wings

Before the June 1967 war, the ANM had a paramilitary organization of about 50 men who had received some training in Egypt. In the fall of 1967 this group, called the Venegeance Youth (VY), merged with two others -- the Heroes of the Return (an independent group led by Faiz Jabir) and the Popular Liberation Front, led by Ahmad Jabril, to form the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). Habbash, leader of the moderate wing of the ANM, also assumed control of the new paramilitary PFLP. The PFLP performed various operations within the occupied territories and before the organization split again in late 1968, had issued 54 communiques.

In the spring of 1968, Habbash was arrested in Syria, the Syrians apparently feeling that he and the

ANM/PFLP were plotting a coup against the Baath regime in Syria. In an effort to allay this suspicion, the ANM and PFLP both issued statements claiming that they were not connected with Habbash; the PFLP statement also denied its involvement in any plot to overthrow the Syrian regime.* While Habbash was in prison in Syria, the factional battle within the ANM developed; according to one unconfirmed report, the Hawatmah group was in fact being supported by the Syrians, who wished to destroy Habbash and his organization.

In the midst of this political battle over the ideological course the ANM should pursue and the incarceration of the PFLP's leader, the paramilitary function of the ANM was being obscured. In the fall of 1968 Ahmad Jabril, whose group had been one of the three original components of the PFLP, announced his withdrawal from the PFLP and the ANM and the formation of a new fedayeen group which he chose to call the PFLP General Command. Jabril was a former officer in the Syrian Army and had received money through a Syrian general to form a Palestinian organization; by the time of the June 1967 war his group numbered between 100 and 150 men. His departure from the PFLP was prompted by what he felt was an ANM attempt to dominate the PFLP ideologically.** He

*The ANM had in fact participated in a Beirut-based organization of Syrian exiles called the National Progressive Front (led by Akram Hourani). The Damascus regime feared the intentions of this group. The ANM separated from the group in July 1968 when Hourani admitted a right-wing Baathist, Amin Al-Hafiz, to membership.

**Jabril claimed that the ANM had insisted that he and his group subordinate themselves to the direction of the ANM. He also charged that the ANM was planning to interfere in the affairs of other Arab states and that military officers were being replaced by ANM ideologues more interested in getting political power than in resolving the Palestine issue.

charged that the ANM was using its original paramilitary group (VY) to gain control of the PFLP, and in October 1968 he led an attempt to expel the VY from the PFLP; the Heroes of the Return sided with the VY, however, and it was as a result of this rebuff that Jabril himself left the PFLP.

In November 1968 Habbash was dramatically rescued from his Syrian captors by some PFLP followers, reportedly while being transferred from one person to another. By this time the PFLP was in a shambles; Jabril had withdrawn and the Habbash and Hawatmah supporters were vying for control of both the ANM and the PFLP. Although the fact of a split was indisputable, each group claimed its right to the title and assets of the organization. [redacted] Habbash supporters in Jordan in January used the military forces available to them to intimidate Hawatmah's group, in an effort to assure the election of Habbash loyalists to control of the Jordan ANM organization. Hostility increased when Habbash elements "arrested" about 14 members of Hawatmah's group and held them prisoner in PFLP headquarters in Amman. In mid-February, the Habbash faction issued a statement claiming that it had expelled Hawatmah and his followers from the PFLP and that the latter must chose another name. Following another clash, Arafat was asked to mediate. He reportedly threatened to destroy the Habbash group if it did not cease this warfare and also successfully put pressure on Habbash to release the fourteen prisoners he held.

Arafat is said to have argued that it was impossible to unite the PFLP and that the two factions must part officially, with Habbash, as founder of the PFLP, keeping the title. Both Habbash and Hawatmah agreed, and this solution was announced on 23 February. Hawatmah and his new group of some 90 members set up a temporary central committee and took the name of the Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PDFLP).

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)

Strategy

The PFLP in which Habbash thus secured his control defines its ideology as revolutionary Marxism-Leninism. Habbash has said that a future state of Palestine would have Marxist-Leninist principles, and that the PFLP would be the leader of the revolution. Habbash supports the view that a revolution must eventually occur throughout the Arab world; for example, he has said that after Palestine's liberation (a process he says will take from 20 to 30 years), not only will Palestine be free of Zionism, but Lebanon and Jordan will be free of "reaction" and Syria and Iraq of their petit bourgeoisie. However, this revolutionary ideology appears to be secondary for Habbash, the real raison d'etre of the PFLP being the elimination of the state of Israel, a goal which Habbash feels must take precedence over attempts to change the remainder of the Arab world.*

While denying that its goal at any one time is primarily the overthrow of incumbent regimes, the PFLP does not feel it has any obligation to help sustain the governments in power in what it considers reactionary countries. It therefore feels free to undermine Jordan and Lebanon and to reject any agreements made between these countries and other fedayeen. Habbash judges his allies on the basis of their degree of hostility to Israel. Thus, in June 1970 he stated that "our best friend is China," because China wants Israel erased from the map.

*In a LIFE magazine interview in June 1970 Habbash appeared to shift his emphasis somewhat: what he wanted was a Vietnam war, not just in Palestine but throughout the Arab world. He went on to say that the whole Arab nation should enter the war, and that within three or four years, revolutionary forces in Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon would rise to the aid of the Palestinians.

In order to achieve its goal of destroying the state of Israel, the PFLP has stated that it will conduct an all-out, world-wide struggle against Israel and her supporters. Limited by its small size and lack of money and arms, the PFLP has relied on spectacular international actions, such as plane hijackings,* to gain its increased attention and support; it is the group responsible for most of the international terrorist operations attributed to Palestinians. Its most noteworthy operation to date has been the attempted hijacking on 6 September 1970 of four planes (three successfully) and the successful hijacking several days later of another. While the international reaction was overwhelmingly unfavorable, the PFLP gained world-wide attention while it negotiated for release of its hostages.

In June 1970 Habbash used the classic argument of the terrorist to justify PFLP actions:

> We believe that to kill a Jew far from the battleground has more of an effect than killing 100 of them in battle; it attracts more attention. And when we set fire to a store in London, these few flames are worth the buring down of two kibbutzim. Because we force people to ask what is going on, and so they get to know our tragic situation.

*Before the February 1969 split in the PFLP, the organization had carried out the hijacking of an El Al flight to Algeria (July 1968) and the attacks on El Al planes in Athens (December 1968) and Zurich (February 1969). Since the split it has claimed credit for blowing up a section of the Trans-Arabian pipeline (May 1969), hijacking a TWA flight to Damascus (August 1969), bombings of the ZIM shipping lines office in London (August 1969), Israel embassies at the Hague and Bonn (September 1969), and the El Al office in Brussels (also September 1969).

The PFLP further justifies these operations in terms of military strategy, arguing that Israel is an island whose only communication lines are across the sea and in the air and that the disruption of these lines is good strategy.

In July 1970 a PFLP leader, Ghasson Kanifani, further explained the tactics of his organization: world public opinion is divided into three groups: (1) pro-Israelis whom it would be hard to influence, (2) people influenced by Israeli propaganda who must be neutralized, and (3) left-wing circles sympathetic to national-liberation struggles, who can be won over. Kanifani argued as PFLP operations are designed to win supporters, that the organization allegedly adheres scrupulously to the principle of not harming neutrals, unlike other groups.

There have been numerous reports during 1970 of planned PFLP operations, some of which have been borne out. In early March 1970 Habbash threatened attacks against US interests in the Middle East; on 28 and 29 March there were a number of rocket attacks on US official and private installations in Lebanon, reportedly carried out by the PFLP. In late March 1970 a member of the PFLP Politburo said that the PFLP had plans to kidnap diplomats, especially those of Britain and the US, in the Latin American manner. During the June 1970 government-fedayeen crisis in Jordan, the PFLP held a number of US, British, and West German citizens hostage until their demands were met by King Husayn, and they have kidnapped various officials subsequently.

Other threats of imminent PFLP plans have not materialized, at least as yet. These include reports that the PFLP planned to engage in sabotage within the United States, that it would attack US and British oil operations in Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf, that it would turn to sabotage of international shipping, that it would carry out a world-wide terrorist campaign

against US personnel and interests, and that it would send teams to New York to assassinate key individuals involved in peace talks at the UN.

In addition to its international terrorist operations, the PFLP has claimed successful terrorist operations within Israel: e.g., the mining of an Eilat school bus (March 1968), the blowing up of a Tel Aviv bus station (June 1968), and the bombing of a coffee-house in a settlement near Tel Aviv (April 1970). The organization has also carried out frequent mine-laying operations and ambushes against Israeli military forces in occupied and Israeli territory, but these activities are strictly secondary to its terrorist operations.*

Following the Jordan civil war, there were a number of reports that the PFLP had been badly hurt, was losing members, and was considering a change in tactics. [redacted] the PFLP was forming a secret organization charged with political assassinations in Arab countries and the destruction of enemy interests; another reported that Habbash was in Beirut setting up a base for launching sabotage attacks against US, British, and West German interests in Lebanon; still another indicated that the PFLP would go underground as a terrorist organization targeted against Arab states and Western interests, but that eventually it hoped to lead a mass uprising.

*This seems true despite Habbash's claim in June 1970 that the PFLP is responsible for 85% of the military activity within Israel, almost 100% in Gaza, and 50% in the rest of the occupied territory.

[redacted] on the other hand, indicated that the PFLP now planned to moderate its tactics and was moving toward reconciliation with Fatah. Because its actions during the Jordan crisis had alienated most other groups, the PFLP was faced with extinction, and thus felt it had to cooperate with the others. This is supported by reports that as a result of Chinese criticism, Habbash had sent a letter to Arafat in October, expressing his support for Fatah's positions in Jordan. Ibrahim Bakr, at a press conference on 6 October, said that Habbash had indeed written Arafat in support of PLO Central Committee decisions, presumably including acceptance of the cease-fire in Jordan.

These reports that the PFLP planned to go underground and that it planned to moderate its policies for the time being are not necessarily contradictory. The organization was clearly in trouble following the Jordan crisis; faced with extinction, it may well have elected to try to get along with the more powerful groups in order to protect itself and, at the same time, to reorganize its terrorist operation and plan for the future.

Organization

Estimates of the PFLP's size range from between 200 to 500 men in early 1969 to an estimate of 1000 in October 1970. It seems likely that the PFLP gained recruits as a result of its sensational terrorist operations; yet it has apparently suffered severe casualties in the September 1970 Jordan civil war. Estimates of the size of the PFLP (and of the PDFLP) are complicated by the existence of political groups which have derived from the old ANM organization. One such group in Lebanon is said to have in addition to its political membership, several thousand armed members, who are distinct from the PFLP fedayeen. The PFLP is generally considered to be among the most intellectual of the fedayeen groups, probably because of its ANM background.

The PFLP has a Political Command (or Political Bureau) and a Military Command, both headed by Habbash and both located in Jordan, where Habbash has spent most of his time.* Both headquarters and Habbash move about frequently for security reasons. In addition, there is said to be a Political Committee in Lebanon responsible for general PFLP strategy. The PFLP also has an Ideological Committee, and publishes a monthly magazine Al Hadaf in Beirut.

While the PFLP has often appeared to be initially a oneman operation, there have been several recent indications that Habbash's supremacy within the organization is now being challenged, primarily by Wadih Haddad, a member of the Political Bureau. In February 1969 Haddad was identified as being in charge of the PFLP office in Beirut. By the spring of 1970 the organization's funds were said to be held in his name in a Beirut bank, and he was reportedly refusing to authorize expenditures for "foreign operations" which he felt were too costly. [redacted] claimed that Haddad had "ignored" a PFLP decision (probably a Habbash decision) to expel him from the PFLP. According to another report of mid-1970, Haddad is responsible for PFLP paramilitary operations as well as all overseas operations and heads a select group in charge of hijacking.** This assertion was supported in September 1970 when Haddad served as the PFLP spokesman following the coordinated hijackings.

*Prominent members of this command are Professor Walid Khalidi of American University in Beirut and Hani Hindi, a pro-Nasirite previously identified as the PFLP's intelligence head.

**The PFLP prepares its terrorist operations thoroughly. Members travel on "borrowed" Arab papers which are frequently forged. Women and children are used extensively in its operations.

This evidence suggests that Haddad has considerable power within the PFLP and that Habbash's pre-eminent position is being challenged. The fact that Habbash was in North Korea at the time of the September hijackings and negotiations indicates that he was not immediately in charge of this operation. An unidentified PFLP spokesman has stated that Habbash's absence during the operation should not have surprised anyone, since the PFLP is a Marxist-Leninist organization which allegedly adheres to the principle of collective leadership and does not have a personality cult. In the past, however Habbash had spoken for the group*.

Hani Hindi
A PFLP Leader

Two months before the September events, in late July 1970, other evidence had been received indicating that Habbash's position was being eroded. A report at that time revealed disagreement within the PFLP over the position to be taken on a Jordan-fedayeen agreement. Habbash supposedly opposed acceptance of the accord worked out by the Unified Fedayeen Command, while the PFLP Ideological Committee favored outward acceptance to give the PFLP time to maneuver but continued pursuit of an ideological path opposed to the agreement. The committee felt that Habbash's actions were egotistical and detrimental to the PFLP, and there reportedly was talk that Habbash must be "eliminated."

*According to a Baltimore Sun report of mid-September, Hani Hindi, who had participated with Habbash in founding the ANM, was one of a group making decisions during Habbash's absence. Another was a "Captain Sadafi," believed to be in charge of PFLP military operations. Still another [redacted] described Salah Rafat and Haddad as the PFLP strong men. He called Rafat the main planner of PFLP operations and executions.

Funding

Lack of funds has plagued the PFLP since its inception, and particularly since the February 1969 split which resulted in the loss of much of its ANM funding. As of July 1970, the financial position of the PFLP was said to be deteriorating as Iraq and the Sudan had reduced their direct payments. In May 1970, the PFLP had reportedly received about $850,000 from Libya without Premier Qaddafi's knowledge. All Libyan payments to the PFLP were reportedly stopped in July 1970, however.*

[redacted] has stated that the PFLP has since been financed mainly by individual contributions from Palestinians. This assertion was supported in mid-June 1970 by Abu Khalid, the PFLP representative to the Palestine Armed Struggle Command, who said that the PFLP was being funded only from personal contributions, not from any state funds (including those of the Soviet Union).

Thus, indications were that by mid-1970 the PFLP was receiving little aid from Arab governments. Before this, PFLP relations with various Arab states had fluctuated as these states tried to manipulate and control the organization. As indicated above, for many years the UAR was the major source of funds of the ANM, and many ANM officials were in fact UAR intelligence agents. For this reason, the UAR might have been expected to try to gain control of the PFLP; that such an attempt was made is suggested by a Habbash statement

* [redacted] the subsidy was stopped because Libya believed the PFLP was involved in the late March attempted coup in that country. According to another report in May, the Libyan regime had seized PFLP leaflets accusing Libya of interfering in internal Palestinian affairs by supporting Fatah.

in July 1969 that he had twice met with Nasir in the preceding months and that Nasir had indicated sympathy for the PFLP and a willingness to support it financially. However, Habbash also showed that the assistance actually given was very slight -- just a few small arms and medical supplies.

Other [redacted] supported Habbash's statement that despite promises of help the UAR has done nothing. This reflects the UAR's reported suspicions of the PFLP's extremist orientation and its disapproval, stated on various occasions, of the PFLP's terror tactics. The UAR thus reacted negatively, for example, to the May 1969 sabotage of the trans-Arabian pipeline. In December 1969, Cairo requested the PFLP to stop its terrorist attacks on Israeli installations abroad, on the ground that such attacks harmed Arab relations with countries in which attacks occur, and also because Arab planes were vulnerable to Israeli retaliation.

Habbash has had a continuing flirtation with Iraq, which reportedly received him warmly following his 1968 escape from Iraq's rival Baath regime in Syria. At that time, Iraq reportedly promised him weapons, but Habbash later said the quantity actually delivered was "modest." According to one source, Iraq had reduced its payments to the PFLP by the summer of 1970; according to another, it had stopped them completely because it felt the PFLP was by then courting the Iraqi regime's rival Syria. There is evidence that despite Habbash's previous residence in Syrian jails, he was in fact looking for help from Syria in mid-1970 because the PFLP's financial situation had grown so poor.

Habbash had also looked outside the Middle East for help. While he has expressed warm friendship for the Communist states, they have not provided him with much support. Some PFLP members have been included in fedayeen groups receiving training in China, but no other aid has thus far been forthcoming from Peking. In September 1970 Habbash visited North Korea and China

in an attempt to get support; he reportedly got some promises of financial and military assistance from both countries -- but not as much as he had hoped for. He also is said to have received considerable criticism from the Chinese for his "adventurism" and "infantile leftism."

Although one report in 1968 claimed that Czechoslovakia was sending aid to the PFLP, it seems more likely that the "aid" was in fact purchases of arms; during 1968-1969 several sources reported that all PFLP arms were purchased privately for cash -- in Czechoslovakia, Italy, Algeria, and the UAR, and Lebanon. In September 1970 a group of six PFLP commandos were reported to be about to leave shortly for training in the Soviet Union, but a "hitch" developed and the group had not left by mid-September. The "hitch" may have involved the hijackings or the crisis in Jordan in September.

The Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PDFLP)

Strategy

In purely ideological terms, the PDFLP is one of the most radical of the Palestinian fedayeen groups. In July 1969, its leader Naif Hawatmah described it as a

Naif Hawatmah
Leader PDFLP

revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party wholly independent of the major Communist Parties (i.e. those of China and the Soviet Union) and not responsive to the control of any government. However, the PDFLP views the Palestinian struggle as inseparable from the liberation struggle in the rest of the world and advocates cooperation among all forces hostile to "imperialism" and "reaction," particularly those of the Communist bloc.

The PDFLP issued a statement in November 1969 calling on the "masses" to rally to destroy imperialist interests in the Middle East and to overthrow Arab reactionary regimes. At a December 1969 demonstration held by the PDFLP in Amman, Hawatmah appealed to all underdeveloped countries to participate in a national liberation movement stemming from the "will and power of the masses;" the PDFLP particularly urged its brothers in Kuwait, Algeria, Iraq, and Jordan to overthrow their governments. At its August 1970 annual conference the PDFLP again called for the immediate dissolution of the Jordanian regime by means of a civil war and urged the establishment of a "revolutionary authority" in Jordan to mobilize the country against the Rogers peace plan. This conference also decided that the PDFLP relationship with each non-Arab country would depend solely on that country's willingness to oppose a peaceful solution to the Palestine question. While efforts to introduce an overtly pro-Maoist line and to label the USSR an enemy of the revolution were overruled, the conference did denounce the Soviets for their support of a peaceful solution.

The official military strategy of the PDFLP is all-out protracted people's war, and Hawatmah has said that the Middle East must be turned into a second Vietnam. The PDFLP in principle also agrees with the PFLP contention that Israeli and US interests anywhere in the world are suitable targets for terrorist attacks. However, the PDFLP has carried out very few such efforts and differs with the PFLP in arguing that it must wait until it grows stronger before undertaking sustained operations. At the present time it has neither the financial nor organizational capability to carry out many terrorist attacks, much less a people's war.

Organization

In December 1969, the PDFLP was reportedly reorganized. As of July 1970, the group's nominally highest organ was said to be a General Council composed of elected representatives from the front's various units.

The General Council is essentially the legislation body, drawing up general policy, approving internal laws, and so forth. It meets annually unless called into emergency session and in theory is supposed to select the central committee, which in turn selects the Political Bureau, in fact the most powerful organ of the front. This group runs the front on a day-to-day basis and is headed by a Secretary General (Hawatmah).* This structure is obviously modeled on that of the Communist parties, and as in their case, power which is supposed to flow upward actually is concentrated at the top.

The PDFLP has a number of committees set up to investigate organizational and disciplinary matters and to administer plans and programs. Again in Communist parties, the smallest unit is the cell, which reports to a local committee which in turn reports to an area committee. There is, for example, a local committee in every PDFLP military base, and the base commander is in charge

*Other members of the Political Bureau as of early 1970 were Salah Rafat, reportedly head of the PDFLP's military wing; Adib Rabbu (alias Yasir), in charge of information and propaganda; Bilal Hasan, PDFLP representative on the PLO Executive Committee and PDFLP spokesman who is also the brother of Khalid and Hani Hassan, both Fatah leaders; Abu Layla (this is his alias), and Muhammad Qitmutu. Another reported member, Sami Dahi, had reportedly been marked for liquidation by the PDFLP in May 1970 for torturing and executing PDFLP members without proper investigation. A report of the August 1970 annual conference indicated that Bilal Hasan and Khalid Hindi had resigned from the Political Bureau because they disagreed with decisions taken by the conference. This report listed both as members of the new central committee however, as well as Dahi, who had apparently been cleared of the charges of unauthorized torture brought against him.

of the local committee and is also a member of the area committee. Within the organization there is an extensive set of internal controls and penalties.

Estimates of PDFLP armed strength vary considerably, but the most likely seems a maximum of a few hundred fighting men. According to one source, at the time of the PFLP split in February 1969 the PDFLP originally had only 30 members, most of them leading members of the ANM, but by the summer of that year the group numbered 600 commandos, a probably somewhat exaggerated figure. An August 1970 report put PDFLP strength at only 240 commandos and some 3900 "members", the latter figure perhaps an indication of the extent of political support throughout the Middle East.* An October 1970 estimate, on the other hand, put armed PDFLP strength at 700. The PDFLP fedayeen are said to be very young -- between 15-20 for the most part -- and not very impressive.

The PDFLP was said to be in a state of disorganization following the Jordan civil war because it had failed to fulfill its image as the revolution's "progressive vanguard" against the regime and thus lost mass support. During the fighting, Hawatmah was

*Like the PFLP, the PDFLP backs an ANM-derived group in Lebanon. This group has some 1,000 members, 200 of whom are armed, and supports the Chinese and the pro-Peking Lebanese Communist splinter party. They are also friendly with the Syrian Baath. In early 1970, a source reported that the Lebanese left wing group descended from the ANM (equivalent of the Palestinian PDFLP) had founded its own party called the Lebanese Socialist Organization, and that it was headed by (among others) Muhsin Ibrahim, editor-in-chief of Al Hurriynh, which serves as the organ of both groups. The two are thus closely linked.

apparently not in close contact with other PDFLP leaders, and he interpreted their decisions as an attempt to undermine his authority. He therefore went to Syria in early October to re-establish his claim to leadership. As of late October Hawatmah and other PDFLP leaders were said to be running the organization from Damascus, which had now become the PDFLP base of operations. The group was said to be in grave financial difficulties.

Funding

The PDFLP has indeed had continuing financial problems. As of mid-1969 the group was reportedly receiving no funds from any state and was dependent on small contributions from PDFLP branches in other Arab countries, particularly Kuwait, contributions from Arab students and Europe and US universities, and fund-collecting in Jordan. Hawatmah stated in mid-1969 that PDFLP commandos received no salary, only food, lodging, and clothing, and that each PDFLP base must be self-sufficient, collecting gifts and contributions from the population. By the spring of 1970 PDFLP contributions had reportedly fallen off further, due to Jordan's general economic situation, and the organization was having trouble simply meeting expenses. As a result, many PDFLP activities had been suspended. At this time the fund was said to be in debt, unable even to buy weapons.

The acquisition of arms has thus also been a long-standing problem for the PDFLP. Before the February 1969 formation of the joint fedayeen Palestine Armed Struggle Command, through which it was briefly allowed to purchase some arms, the PDFLP was forced to pay black-market prices in Jordan. In June 1969, a PDFLP leader confirmed that the PDFLP was

again having trouble getting arms because no Arab government would supply them.*

When the PDFLP separated from the PFLP, it reportedly appealed to both the Cubans and Chinese for help. Cuba offered only to train commandos. The Chinese are also said to have refused help, save some training, until the PDFLP showed what Peking considered a more disciplined Marxist-Leninist approach. By this, Peking apparently meant, specifically, the establishment of a base of operations inside the occupied territories and an end to terrorist operations, termed "adventurism" by the Chinese. In June 1969 a PDFLP leader, Muhammad Qishli, stated that in the final analysis the Chinese could not help the Arabs, that only the USSR could, even though the Soviets opposed a military solution to the Palestine issue.

Qishli's statement represented the start of a gradual shift in PDFLP emphasis and revealed a divergence between the PDFLP's theoretical position (pro-China) and its practical position (it wanted Soviet help). In March 1970 Hawatmah said he rejected a Chinese invitation to visit Peking because he was hopeful of receiving Soviet aid.** The PDFLP was not included in a PLO delegation which visited China in March 1970.

*PDFLP relations with most Arab states have been bad, save possibly for Syria. The UAR closed the PDFLP office in Cairo in June 1969 because the PDFLP was said to be carrying out subversive activities against "bourgeois" Arab regimes.

* In March 1970 a PDFLP delegation was in Moscow to try to negotiate a direct shipment of arms through Latakia, but the PDFLP had received no such shipment by the summer of 1970.

In late June 1970 a PDFLP source stated that the PDFLP had originally opposed the February PLO visit to Moscow because it considered the Soviets to be "rightists," but that it had subsequently shifted to an "independent position" advocating acceptance of aid from any source, presumably because it now hoped the Soviets would furnish such assistance. However, several sources confirmed that as of June 1970 no Soviet aid had been received. The PDFLP source indicated that although a shift in tactics had occurred, the PDFLP remained opposed to the USSR in principle for a variety of reasons, including the Soviet positions on a peaceful settlement and the existence of Israel. Other PDFLP sources have indicated disapproval of Soviet willingness to aid the "reactionary" Fatah and have asserted that the Soviets could not train PDFLP members politically because the PDFLP considered itself more Marxist-Leninist than the Soviets.

The PDFLP received some assistance from Fatah early in its life. This unlikely alliance was the result of Arafat's desire to undermine Habbash, his most obvious competitor for leadership of the fedayeen movement. The PDFLP and Fatah were far too different, however, for the maintenance of a close relationship. In mid-1969 a PDFLP said that PLO-PDFLP relations were no longer close, that the Fatah-dominated Palestine Armed Struggle Command had stopped supplying it with arms and had forbidden PDFLP members to discuss ideology at PASC meetings, because the PASC did not want to be associated with the radical political and ideological platform of the PDFLP.*

*The PDFLP "froze," i.e., suspended, its relations with the PASC in December 1969.

As it turned from Fatah, the PDFLP established a brief alliance with the Syrian fedayeen organization Saiqa. In December 1969 Hawatmah and PDFLP leader Muhsin Ibrahim met in Syria with Salah Jadid, Secretary General of the ruling Syrian Baath Party, who promised aid if the PDFLP paper Al-Hurriyah would stop criticizing Syria. It is not known whether or not the Syrians did provide support, but this flirtation was the logical consequence of the brief alliance of the PDFLP's rival -- the PFLP -- with Syria's rival, the Iraqi Baath.

PFLP General Command

In October 1968 Ahmad Jabril withdrew from the PFLP, presumably taking with him the same elements he had brought into the PDFLP in December 1967. He named his new splinter group the PFLP General Command. His contention was that the ANM had gone against its original agreement not to try to impose its ideology on his fedayeen group and he charged that the ANM was more concerned with interfering in the internal affairs of other states than it was in fighting Israel.

The Command is very small (probably less than 100 members), but is highly trained and reportedly possesses a high technical proficiency, particularly in electronics. According to a mid-1969 report, the Command has three sections -- a military wing headed by Jabril; a political wing headed by Fadil Sharuru; and a financial wing headed by Zaki Shihabi with responsibility for collecting funds.

The Command has disavowed any desire to overthrow Arab governments or undermine their authority, and has usually taken a relatively moderate stand toward the Jordan government. On the other hand, it has been a member of the Unified Fedayeen Command created in February 1970 to withstand Jordanian pressures. Furthermore Jabril and the Command took a very intransigeant position during the September 1970 civil war, and were reluctant to accept the cease fire.

The Command is said to have suffered severe losses during the Jordan civil war and eventually decided to scrupulously observe the terms of the cease-fire in order to try to rebuild its forces. It had a contingency plan to go underground if the Jordanians tried to liquidate it.

The General Command has had a constant financial problem and has made numerous requests for assistance to various sources. Jabril visited Iraq in 1969 in an effort to get arms, and Iraqi forces in Jordan reportedly agreed in early 1969 to provide the Command with some weapons. Immediately following Jabril's break with the PFLP in 1968, the UAR reportedly gave his group some 150 weapons. Despite speculation at that time that Jabil was being backed by the Syrians, there has been no subsequent indication of Syrian support for his group. In August 1970 a Command representative was in Damascus seeking aid, but was told that no fedayeen action against Israel by any group would be allowed from Syrian territory.

Two Command delegations also visited Saudi Arabia in mid-1969 in an unsuccessful attempt to get funds. Jabril was said to be considering another effort in August 1969 and planned to base his petition on what he called the new, conservative approach of the Command (i.e., more pro-Saudi), following the defection of the pro-Nasir wing of his group (now the Arab Palestine Organization). He also planned at that time, however, to threaten sabotage of the Tapline pipeline if the Saudis refused, stating that only his group had the expertise to do this and had instructed the PFLP before that group's successful sabotage of the line in May 1969. There is no evidence that his entreaties and threats succeeded with the Saudis.

In 1969 the Command did manage to purchase some arms in Eastern Europe. When negotiations with Bulgaria broke down, 150 Kalashnikov rifles were purchased from the Poles by Jabril's deputy Muhammad Bushnag. The rifles were to be shipped to the Command through Iraq.

The General Command initially shunned the international terrorist tactics advocated by the PFLP in favor of more traditional guerrilla operations in Palestine, including planting mines, attacking Israeli guard patrols, and setting up ambushes for Israeli vechicles. However, as the financial situation of the group deteriorated, its leaders began to consider such actions as a means of advertising its importance.*

In February 1970 the Command carried out the most infamous international fedayeen terrorist operation to date: the bombings of two European airliners. One, an Austrian plane, managed to land safely, but all on board the Swiss airliner were killed. The General Command initially claimed responsibility for the bombings and those involved were subsequently identified as being affiliated with it. In spite of the subsequent denial by the joint fedayeen body that any of its member organizations had participated in the actions, it seems clear that the Command was responsible.

*In April 1970 the Command was said to be considering trying kidnapping, bank robbery, or extortion to gain funds.

SMALL, INDEPENDENT FEDAYEEN GROUPS

Active Organization for the Liberation of Palestine (AOLP)*

Isam Sartawi
Leader AOLP

In early 1969 a group led by Isam Sartawi split from Fatah.** Sartawi indicated that he was disaffected by what he considered Arafat's refusal to appoint anyone who was not a member of the Muslim Brotherhood to a leading position in Fatah. This charge may have contained one element of truth as Fatah had its origins in the Brotherhood and many of its leaders have maintained ties to it. Another source indicated that Sartawi believed revolutionary Arabs from all nations, not just Palestinians, should be recruited.

Another of the reasons reported for Sartawi's departure was a desire to unify those Palestinians who support either the Syrian or Iraqi Baath. One source reported that the AOLP had formed ties to Iraq and was subordinated to Iraqi forces in Jordan, while another maintained that as of December 1969 the AOLP had remained independent of both Syria and Iraq. Both these apparently contradictory reports might have been true. In mid-May 1970, Sartawi said that a misunderstanding had developed with Iraq -- that the latter had promised financial support, but that because the AOLP then refused to submit to Iraqi control, he feared Iraq would renege. In addition, the

*Also known as the Action Committee for the Liberation of Palestine.

**In the summer of 1969 Fatah issued numerous statements attacking the creation of new organizations; the AOLP denounced these attacks, saying Fatah was trying to liquidate other groups.

Iraqis had by then established their own guerrilla force, the ALF, and no longer needed the AOLP. In the summer of 1970 the AOLP seemed to be taking a somewhat pro-UAR position, defending Egyptian acceptance of the Rogers cease-fire proposal.

In a pamphlet published in the spring of 1969 the AOLP called for a popular war of liberation in which all Arabs should participate, provided the Palestinian issue played a leading role. It called for unification of commando work and resistance to any attempt to liquidate the fedayeen. In December 1969, the AOLP issued another statement explaining its refusal to join the Palestine Armed Struggle Command, which it attacked as having a "closed political leadership" controlled by the PLO. It also charged the PASC with claiming credit for operations actually carried out by the AOLP. It called for the formation of a revolutionary council of participating organizations to elect a political leadership which would then unify the military wings of the various groups into one army. On the other hand, the AOLP did join the Unified Fedayeen Command (UFC), established in Jordan in February 1970, evidently believing that this organization might be more independent of PLO/Fatah control than was the PASC. In November 1970 there was reporting that the AOLP had been dissolved as an independent organization and subsumed by Fatah. If so this was imposed forcibly on the AOLP by Fatah; Sartawi would never accede voluntarily to such action.

In mid-May 1969 Sartawi claimed that his group numbered 400, but this was probably an exaggeration and it is doubtful that the group numbers more than 100. Sartawi stated that the AOLP had carried out thirteen commando operations in the occupied territory. The AOLP also claimed responsibility for an attack on an El Al airliner in Munich in February 1970 and in an interview in Stern magazine in March, Sartawi stated that the AOLP is pledged to pursue the Israeli enemy wherever it can. Sartawi has subsequently attacked both the West Germans (for imprisoning the AOLP fedayeen captured after the

attack on the plane), and the Yugoslavs (because a separate group of AOLP commandos were subsequently arrested as they boarded a Yugoslav plane to leave West Germany). The Yugoslavs, somewhat worried about the possible effect of this criticism on their standing with the Arabs, talked about this with PLO Beirut representative Hut, who told them not to worry about Sartawi's "silly propaganda."

Popular Struggle Front (PSF)*

The PSF was founded after the 1967 war as a small, independent group by Arab nationalists and originally operated directly from the occupied West Bank. Increasing pressure from the Israelis forced most of its members to flee in mid-1968 to the East Bank, where they then temporarily merged with Fatah. A few months later, however, the group separated from Fatah and began to coordinate its activities with the Palestine Liberation Forces (the PLO's fedayeen wing), becoming dependent on that organization for arms and supplies.** According to one source, Iraq also supports the PSF, and PSF commandos are also reported to have received some training in Cairo.

The PSF main office is in Amman and in early 1969 was headed by Khalil Marai. The total number of men in all its bases in Jordan was reported to be about 200, as of February 1969; another source made the same estimate in April 1970.

*Sometimes referred to a Palestine Popular Struggle Front (PPSF).

*On 25 October 1968 the group issued its first communique claiming credit for a fire at Lydda Airport; as of 8 February it had also shared two PLF communiques.

In February 1969 Bahjat Abu-Gharbiya became the leader of the PSF.* A former member of the PLO Executive Committee, Gharbiya reportedly resigned in February as a protest against Fatah's takeover of the PLO. According to one source, Gharbiya is a Marxist, but little else is known about him.

Bahjat Abu-Gharbiya
Leader PSF

In September 1969 the PSF joined the Palestine Armed Struggle Command, but in early March 1970 it circulated a memo calling for the strengthening of the Unified Fedayeen Command and the elimination of the PASC. Like other small fedayeen groups, the PSF feared Fatah plans to liquidate it and was therefore anxious to undermine the Fatah-controlled PASC.

In November 1969 the PSF claimed credit for an explosion at the El Al office in Athens and in April 1970 Gharbiya stated that the PSF was responsible for the 25 April explosions in the El Al office in Istanbul and the Pan Am office in Izmir. At that time he defined PSF strategy as follows:

> At this time...we are compelled to direct our blows, as forcefully as possible, in accordance with a studied plan, against America in particular, the leader of imperialism.

*Other earlier leaders of the group were said to be Dr. Sami Ghushih, Khalil Safyan, Khalil Marai.

He argued that striking the enemy in remote areas would help escalate military action inside the occupied territories.

In July 1970 six PSF members hijacked an Olympic Airlines flight from Beirut to Athens, and held the crew and passengers hostage pending release of seven fedayeen terrorists imprisoned in Greece. This exchange was duly negotiated through Red Cross mediators and the PSF became the first Arab terrorist group to win release of convicted and detained saboteurs through another terrorist act.

Arab Palestine Organization (APO)*

On 5 August 1969, an official spokesman for the PLO announced that the Palestine Armed Struggle Command had admitted a group calling itself the "PFLP General Command -- Wing A Independents". This group was led by Ahmad Zarur, and originated as a dissident, pro-Nasir faction of the PFLP General Command. Zarur's attempt to retain the General Command name failed when General Command chief Jabril threatened to wipe out Zarur's group if the name was not changed. The title of Arab Palestine's organization was thus adopted. Shortly thereafter, Jabril indicated that Zarur and his group had defected some months before; he indicated that the PFLP General Command itself had now become more conservative politicallly (in the context of being more pro-Saudi) without Zarur's leftist faction. In the summer of 1970 the APO briefly supported Nasir's acceptance of the US cease fire proposal.

The APO is apparently very small (under 50) and has not done much. In August 1969 it did claim credit for a bombing at the Israeli pavilion at the International Fair in Izmir, Turkey.

*Also called the Arab Palestine Liberation Organization (APLO)

Popular Organization for the Liberation of Palestine (POLP)*

Little is known about this group except that it is said to be fanatically pro-Communist and to support the Chinese line. A 1970 report indicated that this group was set up under Syrian auspices in 1967, and that it joined the PDFLP in June 1969. A February 1970 Damascus MENA report confirmed that the POLP had been affiliated with the PDFLP, but revealed that POLP had now broken with that organization. Leaders of the POLP (Muhammad Fayyad, Ibrahim Khraysha) are said to be former Communists, and in the spring of 1970 POLP was reportedly attracting disaffected pro-Soviet Communists and other disillusioned Palestinians as well as pro-Chinese Communists.

POLP headquarters are said to be in Jordan, and in February 1970 the group joined the Unified Fedayeen Command. It has conducted no known guerrilla or terrorist operations.

DEPENDENT FEDAYEEN GROUPS

Vanguard Organization for the Popular Liberation War (Saiqa)

As one of the principal supporters of militancy against Israel, the Syrian Baath regime has been a consistent backer of fedayeen activities. The Syrians, however, have carefully limited and supervised operations launched by commandos from Syrian territory and tried to keep control over organizations which they support, simultaneously encouraging the fedayeen to run rampant through the neighboring Arab states of Jordan and Lebanon.

*Also called Arab Peoples Organization for the Liberation of Palestine (APOLP).

Following the 1967 war the Syrians began training their own soldiers in guerrilla warfare. In the fall of 1967, they reportedly arranged for a number of Chinese officers to come to Syria to conduct such courses. In addition they sent a group of Syrians to China for a 30-day training course.*

In this early postwar period the Syrians were also still giving extensive support to Fatah. In 1968, however, as Fatah turned away from Syria because of reluctance to submit to Damascus' control, the Syrians began to put their emphasis on a new, totally Syrian-controlled fedayeen group composed of Palestinians resident in Syria. This was Saiqa. Syria authorized the collection of funds for Saiqa (probably mostly from Palestinians in Syria) and in mid-1968 Saiqa reportedly had three training camps in Damascus. Saiqa soon established a presence in Jordan, and by the spring of 1968 there were said to be some 150 Saiqa members in the northern Jordan Valley and the Irbid area. While these men had been initially told to cooperate with the Jordanian government and other fedayeen groups, especially Fatah, they reportedly knew that their eventual goal was to penetrate and control such groups.

In the fall of 1968 a split occurred in the Saiqa organization, and the original leader, Tahir Dablan, an ardent Baathist and ex-colonel in the Syrian army, formed a new group called The Contingents of Victory (Nasr). The reason for the rupture is not clear; one report held that Dablan felt the Syrians had let him down and that he was now looking to the UAR for support. Another source blamed the split on a leadership struggle between Dablan and Namir Hafiz. When Dablan's group began operations in a restricted area south of the Dead Sea, his operations were halted by the Jordan Army. An open confrontation

*In July 1970 a Saiqa delegation visited Peking as well as North Vietnam. The delegation was headed by Mahmud Maaytah, Saiqa and Baath National Command leader.

between Dablan and Jordanian authorities then occurred in November 1968; PLO and Fatah sided with Jordan and Dablan's group was destroyed.

The Saiqa organization had been hurt by the split, but the Syrian regime steadily reinforced the Saiqa encampment north of Irbid in Jordan. By early 1969 the reports spoke of some 1,000 officers and men being trained by Saiqa. Both indicated that despite numerous communiques from Damascus, Saiqa had been very inactive against Israel. Several PLF officers expressed concern that Saiqa was in Jordan primarily to undermine Husayn. This conclusion was supported by a [redacted] report that Syria was stockpiling arms (mostly of Soviet origin) at Saiqa bases, then distributing them to Baath Party elements in Jordanian cities; in addition, Saiqa was said to be training local Baath members in the use of these arms.

Another [redacted] report of late 1969 indicated that Saiqa's military commander in Jordan was Dafi Jamani, (alias Abu Musa), and that the military organization was divided into a Northern Sector (headed by Hajim Hindawi alias Abu Marwan), a Central Sector (headed by Mahmur Mu'ayta alia Abu Walid), and a Southern Sector (headed by Ali Tarawnih). Each sector has a base (or several bases) which were then broken down into companies, groups, and five-man squads.

A Saiqa spokesman said in the fall of 1969 that the organization has a mobile command which was sometimes in Jordan and other times in Syria, and that it also had local commands and political wings in Arab countries.* He added that Saiqa's aim was to liberate Palestine and then to follow the path of socialism." While Saiqa itself has not participated in any terrorist operations, the spokesman praised the PFLP hijacking of a TWA plane, saying this action was good because it struck at US interests and gave the Arabs a chance to exchange prisoners with Israel.

*The Saiqa organ At-Talai is published in Damascus.

While all reporting supports the view that Saiqa is the creature of the Syrian Baath, there is some question as to which Baathist faction within Syria is in charge of the organization. Two of Saiqa's main leaders in 1969, Raif Alwani and Ibrahim Ali*, were said to be supporters of Salah Jadid, leader of the Regional Baath Command in opposition to the faction led by Minister of Defense Hafiz Asad, who gained a narrow ascendency in Syria in early 1969. Former Prime Minister Yusif Zuayyin, a member of the Jadid faction, has also been deeply involved in Saiqa matters.

A report of spring 1969 suggests that there were serious differences within Syria as to the path Saiqa should follow. This [redacted] stated that disturbances instigated by Saiqa in Lebanon in the spring of 1969 were designed by the Jadid faction to cause trouble between the Syrian and Lebanese governments. According to [redacted] Syrian G-2 chief Zaza, an Asad supporter, spoke with Alwani, in charge of Saiqa in Lebanon at this time, and told him that, "We have not agreed on what you are doing in Lebanon and you must know that." This dichotomy was further substantiated in March 1970 by Yasir Amr, a PLO Executive Committee member, who said that Saiqa is not supplied by the Syrian Army, which at times even frustrates Saiqa activities because Minister of Defense Asad is anti-Saiqa; he stated that Saiqa relies on Jadid and Zuayyin for support.

In early June 1970, Major Aziz Khadura was named deputy commanding officer of Saiqa forces in Lebanon; this action may have reflected a move by Asad to assert his control over Saiqa since Khadura is said to be his supporter while the other deputy, Mustafa Din, is reportedly a backer of Jadid. The decree announcing this change also removed the apparently anti-Asad official Alwani from command of Saiqa forces in Lebanon; he was eventually

*Both men were reportedly forced out of the Syrian army by Asad.

replaced by Zuhayn Muhsin, whose sympathies are unknown. Other reporting in 1970 confirmed that a shake up of the Saiqa leadership in Lebanon was going on and suggested that it reflected the struggles within the Syrian Baathist regime.

Asad's frequently reported antipathy to Saiqa (based partially on the possible threat these forces represented to the regular army and himself) was demonstrated in late October 1970. At the Baath Party of Syria party conference convened at that time a decision was reportedly made to oust Asad. The latter is said to have responded by replacing the conference's Saiqa guards with his own men from the regular army. He then seized control himself, reportedly placing both President Atasi and former Prime Minister Zuayyin under house arrest. As Zuayyin has been deeply involved in Saiqa's operations, the future of that organization appears uncertain at best.

Arab Liberation Front (ALF)

The ALF was created in mid-1969 by the Iraqi Baath Party to compete with the rival Syrian Baath protege Saiqa; the two groups are antagonistic though espousing essentially the same general Baathist goals. In late 1969 the ALF accused Syria of seeking to infiltrate and split it. The ALF, whose leader is Zayd Haydar, soon established a number of training areas outside of Baghdad for ALF fedayeen, who received further training in Jordan and were then permanently stationed in either Jordan or Lebanon. According to one report "many people" were also being sent to China or North Vietnam for training.

By mid-1970, the ALF had become quite active in Lebanon. In late June a shipment of some 600 Kalashnikov

rifles and grenades, which was being sent to the ALF* in Lebanon by the Qadisiyah forces (the PLA unit attached to Iraqi troops) in Jordan, was intercepted by Lebanese authorities but was finally allowed to proceed. [redacted] revealed a considerable increase in ALF activities about this time, reporting that several new offices had been opened and that ALF combatants and arms had increased. Thus far, however, the ALF has been relatively inactive both against Israel and within Lebanon and Jordan.

QUWAT AL ANSAR--PARTISAN FORCES

Arab Communists - Growing Support for Fedayeen

The position of the Arab Communist parties** towards fedayeen activity changed in 1969, first from opposition to support, then to the actual founding of a Communist fedayeen organization. This shift reflected the rise in fedayeen popularity and the Communist fear of being isolated from other radical forces in the Arab world, as well as the simultaneous evolution of Soviet policy. The Arab parties have been faithful in varying degrees to the Soviet line in the Middle East which is unacceptable to the Palestinians -- support for a peaceful solution, acceptance of Israel's right to exist, and backing therefore only for Arab recovery of the terrorities occupied in the 1967 war rather than for an Arab conquest of all Palestine. As they have come around to a pro-fedayeen stance, the Arab Communists have tried unsuccessfully to force compability on two contradictory positions, theirs and that of the fedayeen.

*Part of this shipment may also have been intended for the PFLP.

**The parties discussed in this section will be those of Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and to some extent Iraq; while not a confrontation state party, the Iraqi party participated in the formation of Al Ansar. The UAR's party is virtually non-existent.

At a mid-1968 meeting with Arab Communists in Moscow and at a subsequent conference of Arab parties, Soviet pressure was successfully brought to bear on these parties to dissociate themselves from the policy of anti-Israel fedayeen raids. Throughout 1968 most Communist writing on the subject did oppose such activities which were depicted as harmful to the overall Arab cause. The Lebanese party (LCP) was the first to break with this line and establish meaningful relations with the fedayeen groups.* In February 1969 representatives of Fatah and the LCP met; the latter reportedly asked to participate in Fatah's political and fund-raising activities in Lebanon. Fatah's delegate (Salah Khalaf) said that the Lebanese

*There have been various previous reports of alleged intentions of these Communist Parties to support the fedayeen, but they had never been borne out. In April 1968 the Jordan party (CPJ) reportedly issued instructions to its group in Saudi Arabia that all efforts and collections in Saudi Arabia should now go to support the Palestinian cause. In early 1969, following Syrian Defense Minister Asad's rise to dominance in the Syrian regime, there was increased tension between the Syrian Communist Party and the regime; simultaneously there appeared a report that the party was trying to form a commando group which would not be openly connected with the party, whose real purpose would be to back the party in Syria if it became necessary. According to this report the Soviet embassy in Damascus was supporting formation of the group. The dissident Federation of Lebanese Communists (FLC) had also been dealing for some time with Fatah, Saiqa, and the PDFLP, and had been considering forming its own fedayeen organization. Still a third Lebanese Communist Party, the pro-Chinese Marxist-Leninist Party was considering cooperation with the PDFLP in early 1969; its leader, Shatila, stated in February that this would depend on whether the ANM's Marxist faction (i.e. the PDFLP) rejected the Soviet line favoring a peaceful solution.

Committee for Palestinian and Commando Activity was Fatah's vehicle for political support in Lebanon, and the LCP should join that group. He charged that the LCP's support for the Palestinians was limited to endorsement of "eliminating the consequences of the June aggression," (the phrase used by the Soviets to mean recovery of the territory lost in 1967). LCP spokesman Karim Muruwwah (also publisher of the Communist paper An-Nida) responded that this was no longer true, that the LCP now called for the liquidation of the state of Israel and establishment of a Palestinian binational state. Fatah wanted proof of this change, and Muruwwah said that the LCP would soon publish a manifesto which would make the change clear. This, however, did not happen.

Karim Muruwwah
Lebanese Communist

Instead, the LCP met in early April and affirmed in vague terms the party's support for the Palestine resistance and fedayeen action provided this did not lead to internal Lebanese crises. In May, an LCP spokesman said that his party's line differed from that of the Communist Party of Jordan (CPJ)* in that, while supporting the UN Security Council resolution, it also supported the Palestinian armed struggle to recover "legitimate rights;" he did not, however, define these rights. The results of several other meetings between LCP and Fatah representatives in the first part of

*The LCP and CPJ had generally been close in their positions, both adhering to the USSR's pro-Nasir line.

1969 indicated that the LCP had not clearly defined its position, but that Fatah remained interested in trying to get it to do so. In a March meeting, Fatah reportedly asked for help in collecting money, shelter for Fatah fighters, propaganda support, and LCP pressure on the CPJ to change its attitude; in return they offered to accept LCP trainees. The extent of actual agreement reached is not clear, but several LCP members indicated that by early April the party was collecting some funds for Fatah. In a July meeting the LCP reportedly offered more cooperation with Fatah provided the latter severed its relations with the dissident Federation of Lebanese Communists (FLC). This bribe was refused.

The last of these reports suggest that relations between the two groups were still not smooth, and other reports support this. According to one account, Muruwwah had also met with PFLP leader Habbash in the spring of 1969 and agreed to start cooperating with his group, hoping thereby to neutralize Arafat's machinations. In July, an LCP resolution reportedly called for cooperation with Saiqa, ALF, PFLP, and the PDFLP, but specified caution in dealing with Fatah.

Shift in Soviet Line Reflected in Arab Communist Policy

In the fall of 1969 the Soviet position on the fedayeen shifted, and this was reflected immediately in the line taken by the Arab Communist Parties. The Soviets seem to have adopted the line that the LCP had been following for some months -- that of explicit support for the Palestinians' right to engage in armed struggle.* In early September officials of the Soviet

*LCP officials claimed that in fact they had persuaded the Soviets that the party was becoming isolated and must support the fedayeen, and that they had initiated the dialogue between the Soviets and the fedayeen which resulted in the PLO visit to Moscow in 1970.

embassy in Beirut reportedly told LCP officials that the Soviets had decided to support the fedayeen who were fighters for national liberation, and that Soviet support for the UN resolution need not hinder provision for support for such a cause.

As the Soviets shifted toward the LCP position, the LCP decided to modify its own line from one of verbal support for armed struggle into actual participation in that struggle. In September the LCP sent delegations to Jordan and Syria to propose to the CPJ and the Syrian Communist Party (CPS) the establishment of a coordinating committee to consider Communist participation in the resistance movement. CPJ First Secretary Fuad Nassar professed to welcome the proposal, but said his party would have to study the question. The Syrians supported the Lebanese on all points, and LCP officials later said they felt that the CPS, noted for its rigid adherence to the Soviet line, had already received Soviet approval of the proposal. While in Syria the LCP officials were also received by Soviet Ambassador Mukhitdinov, who confirmed the change in Soviet policy.

Fuad Nassar
Secretary General
Communist Party of Jordan

By the fall of 1969, LCP members were receiving commando training in Syria. Several groups of 80-100 men had completed a three-week training course in Syria by the end of the year. The LCP reportedly had also sent a small group to Jordan for training by a fedayeen "left wing group," and [redacted] this was the PFLP. The PFLP was also said to be cooperating with the Lebanese Communist Party, as of

December 1969, to establish bases in south Lebanon. There was also reporting that LCP officials had met with Habbash in the early fall and agreed to cooperate, with the LCP agreeing to act as go-between for the PFLP with the Soviets in arranging an Habbash visit to Moscow.* In the fall of 1969, the LCP was reportedly also acquiring a stock of small arms, some from Syria, some reportedly from Fatah.** In late November an LCP official said that the LCP was in the process of organizing an armed militia composed of people who would be provided with weapons (for which each member would have to pay) and trained to handle them.

Meanwhile, in October the Syrian party reportedly held a series of meetings to discuss the "new" Soviet line towards the commandos.*** In a [redacted] conversation

*In the fall of 1969 there had been one report that the Soviets were already talking with Habbash through an intermediary in Damascus; the PFLP seemed hopeful at that time that Habbash would visit Moscow, but this has not developed.

**By September LCP-Fatah relations had apparently improved again and the LCP had collected some funds for Fatah in return for training given to LCP members in Jordan. Fatah had also reportedly agreed to give arms to some Communists in Lebanon as a result of Communist resistance to an Israeli attack on the village of Attaroun. However, by late October, LCP officials reportedly had made only minor progress in negotiations to obtain arms from either Syria or Fatah, although they did get some arms in return for providing provisions and guides in south Lebanon.

***Rushaydat said in October that the USSR had finally changed its position towards the fedayeen and was ready to support them.

in mid-October, CPS Secretary General Khalid Bakdash said that the CPS had begun to give some of its members commando training with a view to establishing its own units, but that it was not publicizing this as it did not wish to arouse the Syrian regime's suspicions.

Khalid Bakdash
Secretary General
Svrian Communist Party

In early November 1969 it was reported that the CPJ had also decided to establish its own commando organization and that it had assurances that the USSR would supply it with weapons and money. This was particularly significant as the CPJ had traditionally been more opposed to fedayeen activities than any of the other Arab communist parties. The CPJ had apparently been split for some months over this issue* and finally decided that its policy of non-involvement had hurt it and that it must participate in order to survive. Its goal, however, would be to "remove Israeli aggression," not to destroy Israel. Training of CPJ commandos was said to be underway in November.

*[redacted] the CPJ had split in early 1969; a faction led by Salfiti and Nassar advocated a peaceful solution while one led by Ziyadin and Madanat called for the use of more militant methods. In early July a pro-Chinese splinter group formed a fedayeen organization, and in their initial communique attacked Nassar and Salfiti for concurring with Soviet recognition of Israel and approving the UN resolution. This group never amounted to anything. In late October Ziyadin's position reportedly became dominant and the party established a military arm.

The Decision to Establish Partisan Forces

In November 1969, representatives of the Communist parties of Iraq (CPI), Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon reportedly met and agreed that they would establish a joint partisan organization, but that they would not do so formally or publicly until the spring of 1970. The representatives agreed that in the meantime they would strengthen relations with existing fedayeen organizations and enroll militant Communists in these groups; when the Communist partisan organization was finally announced, a decision would be made whether to withdraw these men or leave them in place.

In late December representatives of the four parties met in Moscow with Suslov and Ponomarev, and were reportedly promised support. In mid-February 1970, arrangements were said to be in process for each party to send members to the USSR for a guerrilla training program.

While the establishment of the joint force was held in abeyance, the various parties continued with their own operations. In early January the LCP was said to be mobilizing its resources in South Lebanon to form an armed group. In mid-January the party circulated a pamphlet calling on Communists throughout the south to rally to the defense of villages and to organize popular militia committees. In April 1970 the LCP Politburo issued an analysis of recent events, saying that one of the most important had been the establishment of this Popular Guard. It stated that in order to fund these forces a compulsory levy of five per cent on the income of party members would be made.*

*In early April LCP cell members had also been asked to donate money to support the families of those who had joined the commandos in south Lebanon. In July LCP cell members were reportedly told that all LCP members must undergo commando training in south Lebanon. This training program was said to be actively underway as of 1 July and was expected to continue for six months with each LCP members receiving fifteen days of training. The LCP was reportedly suffering financial difficulties in July 1970 because of the burden of supporting both the Popular Militia in south Lebanon and the Partisan Forces in Jordan.

In mid-March a source drew a distinction in theory between the Partisan Forces, whose purpose would be offensive (to fight and attack the enemy) and the LCP Popular Guard units whose functions were defensive (to protect Lebanon from Israeli attack).

The LCP at this time was continuing to maintain relations with various fedayeen groups. In its April analysis, the Politburo said that relations had improved with Saiqa, Fatah, the ALF, and the PDFLP. The PLF was said to have agreed to train LCP members and Fatah to accept non-Palestinian elements in its high command and to admit Communists as Fatah members. The Politburo ruled that those Communists given LCP approval to join a non-Communist commando group for training would then obey its leadership and would "not form separate Communist Party commando organizations."

CPJ Announces Partisan Formation

On 7 March 1970, the CPJ jumped the gun by announcing its establishment of Quwwat Al-Ansar (Partisan Forces), proclaiming that it was joining the armed struggle and appealing to its followers to cooperate with fedayeen organizations. The Jordanian Party stated that the Partisan Forces would defend the people's right to achieve what was termed the supreme national goal of the resistance movement, the liberation of Palestine. This was a unilateral action by the CPJ and reportedly surprised the LCP. The CPJ is said to have felt that, as a result of the February crisis in Jordan, it must either take a strong position in support of the resistance or lose prestige. Thus, for some time the organization seemed to be a creature of the CPJ rather than a joint venture of the four parties.*

*The CPJ continued to be divided about the organization it had set up publicly, with one group arguing that it should be open to anyone believing in Marxism-Leninism and another arguing that it should be limited to CPJ members and used for the CPJ's internal protection.

UFC Rejects Partisan Application

In late March 1970 the Partisan Forces application for membership in the Unified Fedayeen Command was turned down because of a Fatah veto. Fatah's public reason was that the Partisans were unacceptable because they favored a peaceful solution. In early May, Arafat said that Fatah would not recognize the Partisans until the group made known its policies. He added that if the group's aim was merely "to remove the consequences of the 5 June 1967 aggression, it would be better for them to stay where they are because we are not prepared to accept an incomplete solution." Privately, Fatah members have emphasized that the Partisans might try eventually to use the movement to support Soviet Middle Eastern policies and have stressed the fact of the Partisan subservience to Moscow.* On 17 March the Yugoslav news agency Tanyug lent support to Fatah's criticisms by noting that the Partisan Forces

> *do not support the slogans of other commando organizations for the destruction of the Israeli State and for forming of a Palestinian State...Arab Communist Parties always had an identical attitude with the Soviet policy in the Near East and supported the plan for the division of Palestine in 1948.*

With the exception of Fatah, the Popular Struggle Front, and the Active Organization for the Liberation of Palestine, all other Unified Command members are said to have supported the Partisans' admission to that fedayeen

*The Chinese have encouraged this view of the Partisans as Moscow puppets created for ulterior motives. According to one report the Chinese sent a shipment of arms to Fatah in the spring of 1970 in gratitude for Fatah's veto of Partisan membership in the Unified Command.

organization. A Partisans internal report in early April indicated that the PFLP had been most helpful to the group, giving both aid and training, and that the PDFLP had also given considerable aid.* Both groups evidently hoped to form an alliance with the Partisans against Fatah and both may have hoped this would gain them Soviet support. Saiqa had also offered support and the ALF was ready to do so. In mid-June, an LCP leader (Nadim Samad) commented that as Fatah was basically anti-Communist, it was not possible for the LCP to have much to do with Fatah on a sustained basis, although he regretted this because he admitted that Fatah was the most important commando organization. Samad added that the LCP had closer relations with the PFLP than with any other fedayeen group.

In early April 1970, representatives of the four participating Communist parties met again in Iraq to discuss steps to be taken next in forming the Partisan Forces -- strengthening bases**, planning operations and collecting funds. There was considerable debate over the political line to be pursued, but it was agreed that the statement issued by the CPJ in March should be the basis

*The PFLP reportedly supported the Partisans because it thought it did not differ much from them in ideology and, more importantly, because it saw a chance to end its isolation and form a bloc directed against Fatah. In late March PDFLP leader Bilal Hasan said that the PDFLP wanted to form a leftist Palestinian front with the Partisans and would propose this to the CPJ. He said that the PDFLP had already accepted a second group from the CPS for commando training at PDFLP camps.

**At this time the Partisans had only two small bases in Jordan. In early April a new group of fedayeen belonging to the Partisans was seen at the refugee camps in Sidon; they reportedly stood out because of their new and modern weapons and their discipline.

for defining policy and that they should meet again in May to prepare a political statement. It was agreed that Amman should be the political center of the Partisans, Beirut would serve as the information base, and that bureaus would be set up in each of the four Arab capitals. The group decided not to resubmit its application for admission to the UFC at that time so as not to appear weak.

During April, some steps were apparently taken to bolster the Partisans. Members and sympathizers of the four parties were asked to set aside part of their monthly salaries (5% according to one report) and to send these contributions to the Directing Committee in Amman. The entire CPJ organization was said to be involved in finding bases and offices for the Partisans; four regional offices had already opened in Jordan*, and offices had been set aside for the Partisans; bases were to be set up gradually on a productive, self-supporting basis.

Disarray Over the "Liberation of Palestine"

When the four-party Communist representatives met again in Amman in late May to form a political platform, none of them had prepared a draft save the Syrian delegate, who had a manifesto calling for the "liberation of Palestine." Either the representatives did not have explicit instructions from their parties or they exceeded these instructions, for the resolution adopted by them to spell out the Partisans' political stand retained this phrasing. None of the parties themselves had gone quite this far and none was willing at this time to do so.

*The offices were in Wahdat Amman, Maadabat, the Bakaa Camp, and Irbid.

The Soviets were undoubtedly upset by this event. Shortly after this meeting the Soviet Embassy reportedly delayed the sending of a letter prepared by the CPL on the Partisans. The letter was to be circulated to Communist Parties throughout the world, and it said that the Partisans fight with other fedayeen organizations to enable the Palestinians "to exercise their legitimate right to self-determination." While this phrasing itself did not contradict the Soviet position on Palestinian rights, the Soviets may have decided that they must reconsider their direct association with a Communist group which had gone on record as supporting the "liberation of Palestine."

Soviet cooling on the Partisan Forces was further indicated by their reaction to a four-party delegation which left for East Europe in search of aid in late July. Before the group departed, the LCP received a letter from the CPSU, saying that it could not receive a delegation at the height of the summer as Suslov and six other leaders would be absent, that the delegation should visit all other East European countries before visiting the USSR, and that there had as yet been no evidence that the Partisans had engaged in any activities whatsoever. It seems clear that the reasons given were specious and that the Soviets were simply dragging their feet on the question of helping the Partisans.

Organization and Operations

As of late May, the Jordanian government estimated that the Partisans in Jordan had only about 120 members; the New York Times estimated some 300 armed men in September.* The Partisans also had a number of offices in

*According to the Iraqi representative at Partisan headquarters in Amman, speaking in late June, the Partisans at that point remained stillborn because the CPJ was not entirely convinced of its correctness as a mass movement; the Syrians had as yet sent no fighters; and the LCP was sending members for training only, then pulling them back to south Lebanon to form a Partisans base there.

the Amman area for recruiting, distributing propaganda and so on. According to the Times the Partisans leader was Abu Musa, a Palestinian who had lived in Iraq for many years before coming to Jordan to take charge of the new group. Training, meanwhile, was reportedly being carried out by the PLA in accordance with an agreement worked out between the organization and allegedly pro-Communist PLA leaders, including Yahya and Haddad.* With the connivance of the PLA, the Partisans during the spring were said to have attempted to acquire a shipment of small arms from a source in Eastern Europe, through Syria, but Fatah evidently sought to interdict and confiscate this shipment, with some success.**

However, in the summer the Partisan supply picture improved. In mid-June 1970 a member of the LCP Central Committee told a friend that Bulgaria was supplying the Partisans with arms, vehicles, and other equipment, that arms had already arrived from Bulgaria and the USSR and

*In mid-July [redacted] said that there was a training base in the Jordan Valley which had graduated its first class of 100. He said the Partisans were forming a Popular Militia in Jordanian towns and refugee camps to defend the rear of the Palestinian revolution.

**In late April, Fatah reportedly learned that 43 tons of light weapons had arrived in Latakia destined for Al Ansar in Amman. Arafat reportedly asked the Syrian government to confiscate the shipment and in mid-May Jordanian security authorities learned that the Syrians had in fact confiscated a large shipment of arms enroute through Syria, claiming they were being illegally smuggled into Jordan. [redacted] Syria with the help of the PLA had intercepted these weapons; [redacted] believe Haddad was trying to cover up the fact that he was involved in the plot to smuggle in these arms, an effort which they knew Arafat would disapprove. Previously, Fatah had conducted a surprise raid on a house containing a cache of Partisan arms and confiscated them all; this happened during the February 1970 crisis in Jordan and months later the Partisans were still trying to learn who was responsible.

had been distributed to the Partisans through the PLA both in Jordan and Lebanon. He also said that Partisans were now being trained in Bulgaria for a period of from three to six months, and that the first group of trainees had already returned to Lebanon and joined the LCP militia in South Lebanon. The Partisans delegation which toured East Europe in early August reportedly returned with only vague promises of aid from all states visited except for East Germany, which promised 1000 Kaleshnikov rifles (to be sent through Syria), medical supplies, tents, and food to come via Lebanon; they were to be ready for shipment by 1 September. In early September the Partisans reportedly received in Beirut a shipment of arms from Poland.

As of July 1970, the Partisans were not known to have engaged in any anti-Israel operations.* [redacted] the policy of the Partisans was not to conduct operations in the occupied territories; he said that the Soviet Embassy in Amman was against Partisan operations into the West Bank, supposedly because the group was not yet strong enough. The Partisans thus far have also held to the principle of not participating in terrorist activity. A late May agreement between the LCP and the Palestine Armed Struggle Command provided that neither would carry out acts of sabotage against US interests in Lebanon, as this might provoke a call for US assistance. Only if Lebanon were exposed to occupation or invasion by Israel would they resort to violence.

However, this principle was being questioned within the LCP in the summer of 1970. In June one LCP leader, Nadim Samad, said that as oil was the most vulnerable

*[redacted] reported that in June five Communists participated in an attack on Israeli half tracks from south Lebanon; press reports however, mentioned Saiqa and PDFLP participation only.

aspect of the US presence in the Middle East, the LCP was seriously thinking (in line with Habbash's reasoning) that if the US sold more Phantoms to Israel the Americans should be ousted from their control of oil; he implied that sabotage of oil deliveries was being contemplated. Another LCP official commented in early July that while the LCP does not approve of attacking US interests as this might bring US intervention, the party risks being isolated if it does not agree. He said that the LCP is vulnerable to fedayeen charges that it is cooperating with the Americans in favoring a peaceful solution, and that in the final analysis the party must accept the concept of striking at US interests in order to insure the party's viability.

The Arab parties were faced with still another dilemma in August with the acceptance by the UAR and Jordan (as well as Lebanon) of the US ceasefire proposal. By following the Soviet line of approving the proposal the parties jeopardized their relations with the fedayeen, particularly the PFLP. [redacted] at this point the LCP felt that it would continue to try to cooperate with the fedayeen but would also try to explain the peace proposals to them. He said the LCP would work harder than ever to develop good relations with the fedayeen, but that if Moscow ordered a break in relations they would comply. In September 1970 the LCP Central Committee decided not to cooperate further with the PFLP because that organization had adopted a newly aggressive stand against Arab Communists who supported Moscow. The LCP leadership concluded that steps would have to be taken against the PFLP, including cessation of material aid and the start of an anti-PFLP propaganda campaign.

According to [redacted], the Partisans emerged stronger from the Jordanian civil war of September 1970 because they acquitted themselves well in fighting Amman; however, another report indicated that the Partisans did not enter the fighting until three days after it began because they did not receive instructions to participate from

all the Communist Parties, and the final go-ahead had come from the Soviets only after some delay. As a result of the fighting the Partisans reportedly lost about 28 men and had some 100 wounded. They thus were weakened considerably in terms of numbers, through prestige may have risen because of their involvement.

ATTEMPTS AT FEDAYEEN UNIFICATION

Palestine National Council -- February 1969

Before the take-over of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) by Fatah in February 1969 there had been abortive attempts by various organizations to achieve some form of unity within the Palestinian movement. Some progress was reflected in the March 1968 joint statement of the PLO, Fatah, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), for unification of the struggle and for the convening of the Palestine National Council (PNC) to discuss the issue. In May 1968 these three organizations jointly selected delegates for a scheduled July Council meeting.

However, hostility between these groups, particularly between Fatah and the PFLP, erupted soon thereafter. The Iraqi Embassy indicated that the announcement of the Council members chosen had been delayed in early June because Fatah refused to accept PFLP leader Habbash as a delegate, ostensibly because he had been sentenced to prison in Libya and imprisoned in Syria. In return, the PFLP charged that Fatah had "dictated" the choice of delegates and announced that the PFLP would not attend the Council meeting. When the Palestine National Council actually met in July in Cairo, it could agree only to ask the existing PLO Executive Committee, headed by Yahya

Hammudah (former PLO Chairman), to continue in office for six months. The committee was given the job of selecting another Council. In late November-early December 1968 it met in Amman for this purpose.*

In this preliminary dickering, Arafat reportedly first demanded that Fatah be given 50 seats in the new Council, which was to have a total of some 105 seats. This was rejected as was Arafat's subsequent demand for 40 seats. However, in the absence of the PFLP representatives who boycotted the meeting, Fatah managed to gain 33 seats (Saiqa and the PFLP each got 12), and acceptance of a second, nominally independent list of delegates which included many Fatah and pro-Syrian Baath names. Thus, the groundwork for Fatah control of the Council was established. Bahjat Abu-Gharbiya, a PLO Executive Committee member opposed to Fatah's domination, resigned at this time to become leader of the Popular Struggle Front, a small fedayeen group.

When the Palestine National Council convened in February 1969 it was dominated by Fatah, even more than the allocation of seats itself would have suggested, because the sessions were boycotted by the Palestine Liberation Army** and its fedayeen wing (the Palestine

*Parallel with discussions about the Council were other attempts at coordination. In October, representatives of the Palestine Liberation Forces, Fatah, and Saiqa met in Amman and decided to form a military council to coordinate operations. While the PLO at first felt this was a minor effort, Fatah and the PLF both sent high-level representatives. According to one source a "coordination office" was established in early November to work in Amman on joint money collection for the three organizations. In December these groups also formed an Emergency Council to respond to any possible threat from Jordan and the PFLP reportedly sought representation.

**PLA Commander Budayri indicated shortly after the Council meeting that the PLA would abide by Executive Committee directions provided they were consistent with Council resolutions.

Liberation Forces), as well as by the PFLP and some PLO members. Fatah managed to place four men on the 11-man Executive Committee; Saiqa had two, the PLO two, and there were three independents. Subsequent meetings between Habbash and Arafat failed to reconcile the PFLP and Fatah, and hostility between the two thereafter increased.

The Palestine Armed Struggle Command (PASC)

The new PLO Executive Committee set up a military coordinating body called the Palestine Armed Struggle Command (PASC) composed of Fatah, the Palestine Liberation Forces (PLF), and Saiqa. In September 1969, PASC commander Abd-al-Razzaq Yahya (also commander of the Palestine Liberation Army--PLA) said that the PASC consisted of two bodies -- a higher council headed by Arafat and the military subcommittee headed by Yahya himself. The former was supposed to deal mainly with matters of a political nature and as of September had never been convened. The subordinate body was composed of leaders of various commando organizations and tried to coordinate activities, adjudicate disputes, and so on. Yahya said Arafat was nominally PASC Commander-in-Chief and he (Yahya) was official Chief-of-Staff, but claimed that in fact he was the head of the organization. One of the first coordinated efforts of the PASC was to unify security patrols in the streets of Amman. The group also was responsible for issuing communiques.*

*In June 1969 a [redacted] described the process of issuing PASC military communiques. He said that each member submits a sealed statement of planned operations; once the operation is completed, the statement is opened and if the PASC accepts it as valid, it is approved and published. The PASC has frequently made statements denying the involvement of member groups in a particular action.

A major task of the Command was to expand its membership and it had considerable success in persuading the smaller groups to join, primarily because these groups feared they might be eliminated by the Jordanian authorities if they did not have some protection. The PASC was joined in the spring of 1969 by the Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PDFLP) and subsequently by the Arab Liberation Front (ALF), the Popular Struggle Front (PSF), the Arab Palestine Organization (APO), and the PFLP General Command.*

While these small fedayeen organizations were joining the Palestine Armed Struggle Command, the PFLP continued to hold out. In a July policy statement in its organ al Hadaf, the PFLP presented its conditions for joining the PASC and for participating in the Palestine National Council meeting scheduled for September 1969. It called for the establishment of a new national front to include all types of Palestinian organizations; it demanded that the PLO be made a more revolutionary body; and it insisted on a clear statement that the revolution's enemies included Israel, imperialism, and Arab reactionary forces (a statement Fatah would be unwilling to endorse). According to PASC commander Yahya, the PFLP's final demand for participating in the Council was that the PLO Executive Committee agree that

*The Active Organization for the Liberation of Palestine (AOLP) did not join because its leader, Isam Sartawi, feared Fatah domination more than he did Jordanian repression. Jabril of the PFLP General Command had also hesitated to join as he too feared Arafat's domination, and he initially demanded that the PASC be reorganized so that each group would be equally represented. However, his lack of enthusiasm for the PASC was overshadowed by his fear that Jordan might take action against his group unless he secured PASC protection, and he therefore eventually yielded.

imperialist interests throughout the world must be attacked. Arafat refused, the PFLP decided against attending, and the two seats which had been set aside for the PFLP at the Council meeting were reallocated to the PFLP's rival, the Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PDFLP).*

Palestine National Council -- September 1969

The Council which met again in September 1969 was similar in composition to that of February, save that 24 new seats had been allocated -- nine to the PDFLP, three to the PFLP General Command, two to the Arab Palestine Organization, and the rest to various non-fedayeen Palestinian groups. The sessions were marked by further factionalism, with the PDFLP and the General Command contributing the most to the discord. General Command Leader Jabril claimed afterwards that he had been very successful in his presentation to the Council's military committee; he had demanded full cooperation on the battlefield among fedayeen groups and PLO financial assistance to all "fighters." He said that the demands were well received, although he was sure Arafat would see them as a challenge to his controls and prevent the Council from adopting them.

For his part, Hawatmah, the PDFLP leader, stated after the meeting that Fatah had been put on the defensive by PDFLP charges that it was reactionary. However, he added that the PDLFP had been isolated and that the

*Another problem between Fatah and the PFLP was an ongoing dispute about who had been responsible for the bombing of the Haifa oil pipeline in June 1969. A fight in Amman in which a Fatah man was killed and another injured was evoked by an argument over this operation.

resolutions passed by the political and organizational committees had been changed entirely at the closing session of the congress to bring them into harmony with Fatah's line.*

Several other differences erupted at the Council sessions. One ended with the resignation of Ibrahim Bakr as Vice-President of the PLO Executive Committee. Bakr is reported to have delivered a harrangue attacking all the Arab countries and their regimes and urging that the revolution be extended to all Arab states in order to gain full support for Palestine. His speech evoked a heated argument, in which he was challenged by Fatah and supported by the PDFLP. In another more significant, dispute, Popular Struggle Front leader Abu-Gharbiyah questioned Fatah's support of a secular Palestine with equal rights for Arabs and Jews, on the grounds that there would be too many Jews in the Palestine of the future to make this feasible. The final concensus reached was that the base figure for a Jewish population must be either those Jews in Palestine as of 1948 or "Palestinian Jews who were in Israel until 1948." This privately agreed upon position of the Council is not compatible with Fatah's public position on this issue, which supports equal rights for all Jews in Israel now with the exception of those "Zionists" who would not wish to stay.

*Hawatmah said the only Fatah leader not entirely against the PDFLP was Salah Khalaf; at the other extreme were Kahlid Hasan and Yahya Hummudah. Arafat went with the majority of Fatah in opposing the PDFLP. At the meeting, Fatah supporter Khalid Yashruti became Chairman of the Palestine National Fund, further increasing Fatah's control. Yashruti died in 1970 and was replaced by Zukhayr Alami at the June PNC meeting. Alami's background is not known.

Unified Fedayeen Command -- February 1970

In December 1969 the Palestine Armed Struggle Command was under attack from both the PFLP and the PDFLP. At Libyan insistence Habbash had reportedly met with Fatah representative Salah Khalaf and agreed to join the Command, but the agreement broke down. The PFLP criticized the PASC for not being truly unified and called again for the establishment of a broad national front. Also in December the PDFLP announced that it was "freezing" its relationship with the Command until the internal regulations of that organization were defined, but that it still considered itself a member of all joint action bodies, including the Command. According to Zuhayr Muhsin (a Vice-President of the Palestine National Council and a Saiqa leader) the PDFLP had decided to freeze its position because it was unable to play a leading role in the organization, but that the PDFLP obviously still wished to keep the Command's umbrella of protection against the Jordanian regime over its head.

On 10 February 1970 the Jordanian government issued a law-and-order directive designed to tighten control over the fedayeen. Largely in response to this but also probably in an attempt to form the new "national front" group called for by the PFLP, ten fedayeen organizations immediately issued a statement in the name of a new joint body called the Unified Fedayeen Command,* asserting unity in the face of Jordanian

*In late January 1969 the PLO Executive Committee had met in extraordinary session in Amman and agreed to create a unified command in Jordan to guide the struggle in occupied territories and to protect fedayeen action. This group had not been particularly active until it was resurrected in February 1970 in the face of another Jordan threat from King Husayn.

authority, and an eleventh group joined later in the month.*

A Voice of Palestine broadcast on 11 February said that this "unified command," stationed at the headquarters of the Palestine Armed Struggle Command was to direct operations if hostile forces moved against the fedayeen and would issue orders to all fedayeen military units to "place themselves at the disposal of the Unifeid Fedayeen Command of the PASC." Two days later Voice of Fatah announced that the Unified Command had the right to issue orders to all member organizations and to take all necessary measures to preserve security and prevent friction.**

Jockeying for position within this new group began immediately. On 18 February Reuters reported that Habbash had been appointed chairman of the Unified Command's political committee. This was denied the following day by a Unified Command spokesman, and on 20 February PLO spokesman Kamal Nasir was named spokesman for the new organization as well.

*The statement was signed by Saiqa, Fatah, the PDFLP the PFLP, the Palestine Liberation Force, the Arab Palestine Organization, the Arab Liberation Front, the Popular Struggle Front, the PFLP General Command, and the Active Organization for the Liberation of Palestine. The People's Organization for the Liberation of Palestine joined on 22 February.

**On 17 February the Unified Command announced that all resistance groups must observe its political, military, and disciplinary instructions, and that it must be informed of all violations so that it could end them. On 18 February the Unified Command issued its own set of "law and order" instructions which were similar to those issued by Husayn on 10 February, the main difference being that the fedayeen rather than the Jordanians would enforce them. It designated the PASC to carry them out.

The establishment of the Unified Command was a challenge to Fatah's leadership since Fatah's position was much less dominant in this organization than in the Palestine Armed Struggle Command. The Unified Command was created while Arafat was in Moscow and he did not return to Amman until 21 February. It seems clear that Arafat had been outmaneuvered,* but he accepted the new organization's existence, and on 23 February stated that it should continue to function. Asked the following day about the relationship between the Unified Command and the PASC, he said that they would complement each other.**

National Unity Agreement - May 1970

The Unified Command did take steps to perpetuate itself. On 10 March it announced formation of a National Unity Committee and began discussions on means of organizing a unified Palestinian fedayeen group. On 15 March the Voice of Fatah announced that the PLO Executive Committee was meeting in Amman to supervise the work of this committee. This statement reflected Fatah's concern with keeping the Unified Command and any other joint fedayeen organization under the aegis of the PLO so that Fatah could maintain dominance.

[redacted]

**One of the first actions taken by Unified Command was to deny that any of its members had participated in the 22 February bombings of the Swiss and Austrian airliners though the PFLP General Command had already claimed credit for them. Several days later [redacted] indicated that Arafat wished to combine fedayeen operations and to check all operations planned outside of Palestine.

Talks among the various fedayeen groups apparently continued throughout April. The PFLP was said to be agitating for elimination of the PLO itself, while Fatah and Saiqa insisted upon its retention. With discussions stalled, Yahya was asked to state the position of the Palestine Liberation Army. On 4 May he submitted a lengthy memorandum outlining this position and threatening to "liquidate" the smaller commando organizations and the PFLP unless agreement was reached substantially as outlined by the PLA.

The PLA argued that the PLO was the revolution's raison d'etre and must be retained,* that the Palestine National Council was the revolution's official legislative body and the Executive Committee its supreme executive committee. The PLA did not object, however, to transforming the Unified Fedayeen Command into a central committee if provisions were made that within six months its existence be terminated in favor of a "national council" embodying "genuine national unity." The committee's function would be to plan for unification of forces, finances, information media, and political programs. The PLA demanded that, if established, the central committee be composed of members of the PLO Executive Committee, a senior representative of each member organization, the PNC Chairman, the PLA commander, and various other officials.

On 6 May 1970 the Unified Fedayeen Command issued a "national unity agreement" providing guidelines for the formation of a Central Committee to replace the Unified Command and be responsible to the Palestine National Council. The proposed committee was to be constituted as the PLA demanded and to have a total of 27 men; the statement also called for establishment of a unified military committee. The agreement affirmed that the PLO

*As the PLA's formal existence is tied to that of the PLO, PLA rejection of any plan to abolish the PLO is inevitable.

was the broad framework for national unity. It also stipulated that matters agreed upon collectively are binding but where no agreement has been reached "each group will use its own judgment," thus providing a safeguard for those organizations (presumably the PFLP) which feared an attempt by Fatah to assert its will.

These were the only elements of the agreement published. However, there were some indications that the PFLP had promised to suspend its international terrorist operations* in spite of the fact that in their statements PFLP leaders continued to emphasize their right to act independently on matters in which there was no agreement. It is likely that each group chose to interpret the agreement to its own advantage.

Palestine National Council -- June 1970

The Palestine National Council met again from 30 May until 4 June.** The PFLP this time sent a "symbolic representative" (Ahmad Yamani alias Abu Mahir) rejecting the eight seats alloted it as being insufficient. The PLA was given six seats but Yahya came as the group's sole representative. The Arab Liberation Front, Active Organization for the Liberation of Palestine, and People's Organization for the Liberation of Palestine

*Subsequently, when the Central Committee suspended the PLFP from membership on 12 September the PFLP was charged with having taken unilateral action (the September hijackings) despite the fact that on 6 May 1970 the Central Committee had adopted a resolution banning such action. On 15 September the PFLP was readmitted.

**At this meeting the PLO leadership said Arab states' committments to the PLO totalled almost 13 million pounds sterling, with about four million earmarked for the PLO budget and the rest to maintain the PLA.

each attended for the first time, sending one delegate each. The Council set up two committees; one to work on the proposed central committee, and the other a military committee to discuss unification of military forces.

The PNC accepted the recommendation that the Central Committee be regarded as the Palestinian struggle's supreme command and that its decisions be binding on fedayeen organizations; its mission would be to follow up Council resolutions, adopt measures to strengthen fedayeen actions, and decide all questions referred to it by the PNC or Executive Committee. Thus, as defined here, the Central Committee was supreme but somehow also responsive to Council and Executive Committee direction, a somewhat ambiguous position which left unclear the actual chain of command.

The military committee, headed by Yahya, recommended, and the Council accepted, formation of a Supreme Military Command to replace the Palestine Armed Struggle Command, with authority to train, direct, and move fedayeen forces and coordinate their activities. This command would consist of a military council of the highest fedayeen commanders and a general staff appointed by the council. Joint units were to be formal in geographic sectors with sector commanders chosen by the general staff.* The general staff would issue communiques. The committee's recommendation that the command follow the orders of the Executive Committee as the Supreme Command was not adopted.**

*The committee's recommendation closely paralleled one that Fatah had proposed except for a Fatah desire that the sector command be given to the fedayeen organization with the largest force in the sector. (In fact, this would almost always have been Fatah.)

**The Council reportedly also established a Jordanian commando committee to deal primarily with Suleyman Nabulsis National Grouping and a Lebanese Commando Committee to deal with leftist Lebanese parties.

Although Arafat was named to head both the Central Committee and the Supreme Military Command, the creation of these new organizations weakened Fatah's dominance of the fedayeen apparatus simply because membership on both bodies was far broader than that of the Executive Committee and thus less immediately responsive to Fatah's wishes. Fatah reportedly agreed to the move because of pressure being exerted by a number of Arab states.*

However, the PFLP was not totally pleased with the situation either. That organization's "symbolic" representative to the PNC, Ahmad Yamani, tried to reserve the PFLP's right to carry out independent operations but this was opposed by the majority. Following the meetings, a Central Committee spokesman said the new Military Command would have the authority to discipline members who carried out unauthorized acts deemed detrimental to the cause. In contrast, Yamani, in a press conference, defined the mission of the Military Command as being of a "technical" nature, thus downgrading its importance. The PFLP turned out

* [redacted] the UAR, Libya, Algeria, Iraq, the Sudan, and Jordan had all exerted pressure for unification; they all wanted the PLO to have freedom in the administration of the military and civil affairs of the Palestians and wanted to retain Arafat as leader. The Soviets also reportedly supported these aims. There was also a report that Saudi Arabia and Libya had threatened to cut off financial support to Fatah if there were no formal move to unify the movement. Even after this decision was made, the Libyans indicated that unless further steps toward unification were taken, they might halt aid to the fedayeen.

to be right; expelled from the Central Committee in September 1970 because it ignored a Central Committee order not to destroy the planes it had hijacked, the PFLP was readmitted after several days. In addition, the Central Committee termed the hijacking itself "brilliant and successful" although the PLO was on record as opposing such operations.

The PLO Central Committee

Immediately following its creation by the PNC, the Central Committee became almost completely involved in the Jordanian-fedayeen confrontation. An army/PFLP clash on 6 June quickly escalated into a serious confrontation as both fedayeen extremists (primarily the PFLP) and army hard-liners countered attempts by the government and moderate fedayeen to quell the situation. Husayn and Arafat met on several occasions on 10 and 11 June and agreed on a series of cease-fires; these broke down however, as the army continued shelling Amman and the PFLP took 32 foreign hostages, making a series of demands in exchange for their release. On the evening of the 11th Husayn capitulated on several key demands and the following day the PFLP released its hostages.*

The Central Committee became the authoritative voice of the fedayeen during this crisis, and on 18 June it announced that it was assuming the powers of the various fedayeen joint commands (i.e. the Unified Command and the Palestine Armed Forces Command) and was placing the forces of these groups under its direct supervision.

* the PFLP had modified its demands somewhat after Arafat and other leaders threatened to use force against them.

[redacted] but in early September Salah Khalif said that a seven-man "executive bureau" was now directing the Palestinian revolution both politically and militarily. In June the Central Committee assigned itself a number of tasks, including those of preserving the internal security of fedayeen organizations and regulating their relations with the authorities, combatting smuggling, and maintaining fedayeen discipline.*

The Central Committee handled negotiations with the Jordanian authorities and with the four-state mediating committee appointed by the Arab states' summit conference in late June. It named a six-man group to represent it, including Arafat, Habbash, Hawatmah, Sartawi, Jamani of Saiqa, and Kamal Nasir. An agreement was finally signed on 10 July.** Within hours afterward, however, the PFLP had reportedly flouted the ban against fedayeen maneuvers inside cities,*** and

*A further step toward unifying fedayeen operations was announced on 2 July; as of 1 July the various groups were to stop raising funds individually and to form joint financial committees in Jordan to raise money.

**It provided that the fedayeen would not appear armed in public places, would not conduct demonstrations in towns or open fire in populated areas, would not insult army or security forces, would not conduct maneuvers wtih live ammunition in populated areas, would not maintain bases in towns or stockpile ammunition and heavy arms in towns. The Central Committee was recognized as the responsible fedayeen representative and fedayeen safety was guaranteed. The government was to eliminate "negative attitudes" toward the Palestinian resistance and dissolve any organization "whose methods conflicted" with the resistance.

***In a statement of 13 July Habbash indicated that while he did not totally approve of the findings of the four-state committee the PFLP would abide by Central Committee decisions "regardless of its private views on a number of issues." He professed a desire for consolidation of relations among resistance groups and for the establishment of sound relations between Fatah and the PFLP.

the following day the PDFLP issued a statement questioning various aspects of the accord. On 15 July the Central Committee selected a team to participate in implementation of the agreement; composed of the same six men, except that Yahya replaced Sartawi.

The next crisis faced by the new Central Committee came with the late July acceptance by the UAR of the US proposal for a ceasefire with Israel. The fedayeen were said to be unsure of how to handle the situation, because of dissension within the movement as well as fear of confrontation with pro-Nasir forces. The Central Committee met on 27 July and denounced the proposal; it called for unification of the military forces of its member organizations to help deal with the situation. Several pro-Nasir groups, the APO and AOLP, reportedly flirted briefly with supporting the proposal, however. On 3 August AOLP leader Sartawi said that the UAR had the right to use diplomacy as a weapon; however, he also affirmed the unity of the fedayeen organizations and assured his listeners that both the AOLP and APO rejected peaceful solutions and the Rogers plan. In the first several days of August several clashes were reported between the AOLP and the PFLP, which was violently opposed to acceptance.* Clashes also are said to have occurred between the PDFLP and elements of the AOLP, APO, and PSF when a PDFLP spokesman criticized Nasir at a rally in late July.

On 16 August Salah Khalaf, second in-command of Fatah, led a rally at a refugee camp in Amman. In eight points adopted at the rally, an emergency Palestine National Council scheduled for the end of August was urged to denounce all "capitulationist" solutions, to resist all attempts to create a puppet Palestine state (i.e., a West

*On 11 August the APO charged that the PFLP had attacked an APO office in Lebanon. Following a meeting in which the APO participated, eight fedayeen groups (Fatah, PFLP, PDFLP, Saiqa, PFLP General Command, PLF, ALF, APO) denied PFLP involvement.

Bank state), to put all manpower at the disposal of the Central Committee, to denounce all "anti-revolution attempts" in Arab countries, and to appeal to the Jordan Army to resist all efforts to use it against the revolution. Arafat met with Nasir in Cairo on 26 August, but they apparently failed to reconcile their differences.

The emergency session of the council convened in Amman (for the first time*) on 27 August. In its report to the PNC the PLO Executive Committee alluded to suspect actions by Palestinians who were alleged to be linked to Zionism and imperialism; these Palestinians were said to be receptive to the US proposals, thus preparing the groundwork for a weakling Palestinian state.** A PLO spokesman said that the Council would reject the Rogers plan as well as any plan to create a Palestinian state on the West Bank.

On 28 August the Palestine National Council issued a resolution denouncing the Rogers plan and stating that the resistance movement, represented by the PNC and Central Committee, is the sole representative of the Palestinian people and that anyone trying to speak for the Palestinians outside this framework would be considered a traitor. It condemned the recent false calls for self-determination and rejected plots to break up the unity of the people and divide the country into tiny Palestinian

*Always before the Council had met in Cairo; now, however, relations with the UAR were strained. The fedayeen resented Nasir's acceptance of the ceasefire and Nasir had retaliated by silencing Voice of Fatah and Voice of Palestine. The Iraqis then stepped into help bedayeen propaganda and in early September "Voice of the Palestinian Revolution, Voice of the PLO Central Committee" was broadcasting from Baghdad.

**On 24 August the Central Committee had announced it would set up a revolutionary court to try persons acting outside the revolution ostensibly on behalf of the Palestinians. This was aimed at Palestinian elements suspected of taking part in negotiations with the enemy.

and Jordanian states. The PNC further resolved that the PLO Central Committee must be strengthened and should adopt all necessary measures to prevent the present negotiations from continuing.* The PNC requested that the Arab states free the PLA and place it at the disposal of the PLO.

The Jordan Crisis -- September 1970

On 31 August, in the face of renewed confrontations with Jordanian authorities, the Central Committee granted Arafat full authority and large-scale powers to supervise and control all fedayeen elements and to take all necessary measures to protect the fedayeen. During the fighting in September 1970 Arafat was named commander-in-chief of all fedayeen forces by the PLO Central Committee.

The upheaval caused by the Jordan civil war of September is bound to have significant effects on the structure of the fedayeen movement. The immediate result seems to have been to strengthen the position of Arafat and Fatah. The more extremist groups (particularly the PFLP and the PDFLP) suffered the worst losses in terms of men and arms, and their leaders have been declared outlaws by Jordanian authorities; furthermore, King Husayn has stated that he will deal only with Arafat.

Fatah tried after the September crisis to take advantage of its increased strength relative to the radical groups, by pushing for a united front (dominated of course by Fatah) which would exercize greater control over individual organizations. Arafat's aggressive approach was criticized in late October by Isam Sartawi, leader of the

*The resolution also called on the Central Committee to adopt all measures in Jordan to "safeguard the resistance against the enemy" and against "current plots aimed at liquidating the movement."

ABBREVIATIONS

AL ANSAR	Partisan Forces
ALF	Arab Liberation Front
ANM	Arab Nationalist Movement
AOLP	Active Organization for the Liberation of Palestine
CPI	Communist Party of Iraq
CPJ	Communist Party of Jordan
CPS	Communist Party of Syria
LCP	Communist Party of Lebanon
PASC	Palestine Armed Struggle Command
PDFLP	Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine
PFLP	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
PLA	Palestine Liberation Army
PLF	Palestine Liberation Forces
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
PNC	Palestine National Council
PSF	Popular Struggle Front
Saiqa	Vanguard Organization for the Popular Liberation War
UFC	Unified Fedayeen Command

Active Organization for the Liberation of Palestine and a consistent opponent of Fatah's dominance. Sartawi complained that Arafat was making all the decisions for the Palestinian movement without consulting anyone and that the PLO Central Committee had not even met for weeks. The apparent (although probably temporary) success of Arafat's manipulations was indicated by a mid-November PLO Central Committee announcement that the fedayeen planned a formal merger of their military and political organizations into a single "Palestinian Liberation Front." Fatah's strength was also suggested by reports that Sartawi's group (The AOLP) had been absorbed by Fatah, presumably by force or threat of force. Such actions as well as any agreement by the lesser groups to a formal merger would probably be only of short duration, given the propensity of these groups and their leaders to pursue independent paths.