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Box 69, Folder 13, Palestine Liberation Organization and Iran,
1981.



February 2, 1981

Mr. Morris B. Abram
345 Park Avenue
New York, New York 10022

Dear Morris:

In addition to the material which we have already sent to you on PLO-Iranian relations, I thought you would be interested in the enclosed memo from AIPAC, which pulls together the available evidence on the relationship of the PLO to the seizing and holding of the American hostages.

As you will note, some of the information reports rumors and charges, but I am sure that you will know how to use this most appropriately and effectively.

Kind regards and best wishes.

Sincerely,

George E. Gruen, Ph. D.
Director, Middle East Affairs

GEG/el
enclosure

bc: Marc Tanenbaum ✓
Bert Gold/Selma Hirsh

AMERICAN ISRAEL PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
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MEMORANDUM

January 1981

THE PLO & THE AMERICAN HOSTAGES

With the safe return of the American hostages from Iran, in-depth investigation of their abduction, detention and mistreatment is beginning. Particular attention should be given to the role played by the Palestine Liberation Organization in the planning and execution of the American Embassy assault. There is ample evidence that PLO officials and members aided in the training of Iranian radicals, the assassinations of foes of the Khomeini regime, and the attacks on American interests in the Persian Gulf.

THE ASSAULT ON THE AMERICAN EMBASSY was coordinated by PLO leaders. PLO terrorists were identified inside the Embassy compound and they helped maintain security once the hostages were secured. The PLO allegedly received millions of dollars in return for these "operational" services.

IRANIAN RADICALS WERE TRAINED BY THE PLO in PLO camps throughout the Middle East. According to PLO leaders, training, weapons and money were provided to assist in the overthrow of the Shah. Many of the PLO-trained and supplied gunmen participated in the Embassy takeover. PLO assistance in the overthrow of the Shah was rewarded when Israel's embassy in Tehran was sacked and turned over to the PLO — a foreshadowing of what was to happen to the American Embassy.

IRAN AND THE PLO HAVE JOINTLY ATTACKED American interests in the Persian Gulf — both in actions and in words. Iranian leaders have pledged their support for the PLO assault on Israel; the PLO has vowed to "strike U.S. imperialism and interests in any time and in any place."

PLO TERRORISTS HAVE ATTACKED enemies of the Khomeini regime. Several attacks in Europe have proven Iranian-PLO cooperation. Terrorists arrested after attempting to assassinate Shapour Bakhtiar confessed they were dispatched by Yasir Arafat. Terrorists who attempted to attack an Israeli passenger plane in Belgium carried Iranian passports.

THE EVIDENCE

PLO INVOLVEMENT IN THE HOSTAGE-TAKING

CBS NEWS
December 12, 1979

"U.S. experts say an unknown number of Palestinian guerrillas joined the Iranians inside the compound and provided what's called 'technical assistance.' CBS News has learned that it was the Palestinians who mined the embassy grounds and walls and have taken a direct hand in the security of the hostages. The Palestinians are still there, which explains why Arabic is heard inside the compound, in addition to the native language, Farsi. The Palestinians, who early on tried to serve as inter-

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mediaries, are said to be playing both sides of the street, drumming up popular support in the U.S. while doing Khomeini's bidding inside the embassy."

Associated Press
January 7, 1980

"The State Department has indications that Palestinians are among the militant students holding some 50 Americans hostage in Iran, Republican presidential contender Philip Crane said today. Crane made the statement after leaving a closed door briefing with Deputy Secretary of State Warren Christopher.... Crane, an 11 year veteran of the House of Representatives, said Christopher told him there 'is evidence there, within that terrorist group' of 'fedayeen and radical Palestinian groups.'"

The Daily Telegraph
[London]
April 24, 1980

"At least one of the gunmen holding the 50 hostages in the United States Embassy in Iran has been identified as 'an experienced subversive' with the Palestine Liberation Organization, a Western intelligence expert said last night. His presence, and the background of others have raised more than reasonable doubts as to whether the militants are mere Moslem students demanding the return of the Shah."

Los Angeles
Herald Examiner
January 20, 1980

"Veteran terrorists of the top pro-Soviet wing of the PLO organized and recruited self-styled 'students' to seize the U.S. Embassy in Tehran and hold hostages the last two months. The invasion of the U.S. diplomatic mission in Iran was under the direct instruction and programming of Dr. George Habash.... His deadly game plan was disclosed by highly qualified sources who are mystified that only now the administration in Washington has chosen to reveal the captors as Marxist terrorists."

"They insist that regular reports have poured into Washington following the embassy seizure. Additional data has since been transmitted pinpointing identities and connections."

"Habash, according to the sources, laid down his broad program first in his PLO headquarters in Lebanon. Then he shuttled back and forth to Tehran for study sessions."

PLO TRAINING OF IRANIAN RADICALS

Christian Science
Monitor
January 24, 1979

According to Ahmed Jibril, head of the PLO's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command, "We can humbly say that we have been in touch with Iranian activists since 1970. We have trained tens of their leaders, giving them arms and experience."

Washington Star
October 23, 1979

"It is becoming increasingly clear that the PLO provided substantial money and arms during the Iranian revolutionary struggle."

Washington Post
February 19, 1979

"Arafat's mainstream Fatah organization trained and perhaps helped arm the Mujahideen while George Habbash's Marxist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine provided similar aid to the Fedayeen."

Washington Post
January 23, 1981

"Iran was singled out for special attention long ago by a global terrorist network. Thousands of Iranians learned the arts of urban guerrilla warfare that way in the '70s, under the expert tutelage of Cubans, East Germans and veteran Palestinian warriors... The Iranians have been a privileged elite in this network since it first took shape, under radical Palestinian auspices."

Ettela'at
[Tehran]
December 16, 1979

"Some Iranians who were at a PLO camp in southern Lebanon three months ago have said that there were 3,000 Iranians undergoing military training at the PLO camps under George Habbash, Nayif Hawatmeh and al Fatah... The training of the 3,000 has involved the Fatah organization in much expenditure."

PLO ATTACKS ON AMERICAN INTERESTS

As-Safir [Beirut]
November 17, 1979

"PLO chief Yasser Arafat has offered military assistance to Iran in the event the United States intervenes to release the U.S. hostages being held by Iranian students in the U.S. embassy in Tehran."

Associated Press
January 8, 1979

"Palestine Liberation Organization chief Yasir Arafat claims a post-Shah government in Iran would join Palestinian militants in a crackdown on American interests in the Middle East. 'Thanks to the Iranian uprising we can now say: Bye-bye American interests,' Arafat told a closed ceremony in Beirut."

Voice of Palestine
December 7, 1979

Yasir Arafat speech:
"Just as our Iranian brothers have decided to send fighters to fight with us on this frontline trench, we are prepared to send our columns to fight with them there in the frontline trench.... Tell Imam Khomeini to give the order, and we will all obey and move to strike U.S. imperialism and U.S. imperialist interests at any time and in any place."

WRC Radio
[Washington]
April 9, 1980

Ali Akhbar Tabatabai [assassinated three months later]:
There are 15,000 "PLO mercenaries in Iran." More than \$100 million of Iranian assets had been given to the PLO, Tabatabai charged.

Kuwait News Agency
May 4, 1980

"Arafat disclosed that he had warned Iran of a possible new U.S. military operation against it following last month's abortive attempt to free the hostages in Iran.... Arafat said that he had sent a Palestinian military commander, the director of military operations, to Tehran to convey to the government of the Iranian revolution his warning of a possible new American military operation against Iran."

Voice of Palestine
April 25, 1980

"While noting the U.S. military operations against the armed Iranian Revolution ... the Palestinian revolution wishes to affirm to all that it stands firmly with the Iranian Revolution against these U.S. aggressive attempts against the Islamic Iranian peoples. The PLO also strongly denounces this operation [the rescue attempt]."

Tehran Radio
December 13, 1979

PLO Representative Hani al Hassan: "The PLO is not an intermediary between Iran and America; Palestinians are on the same side as the Iranian revolution.... Any victory by the Iranian nation over the influence of American imperialism in the region should be considered a victory for the PLO."

PLO-IRANIAN COOPERATION IN TERRORISM

Associated Press
July 21, 1980

"In a development in the [Shapour] Bakhtiar case Monday, the French media reported Anis Naccach, the alleged leader of the commando team that attempted to assassinate Bakhtiar, told police the mission was ordered by Palestine Liberation Organization Chief Yasir Arafat."

Sunday London Times
March 16, 1980

"Iran is paying the Palestine Liberation Organization a two-dollar royalty on every barrel of oil it sells under a secret agreement signed by the Ayatollah Khomeini and the PLO. In return the PLO provides what is termed 'operational services' for the Ayatollah's supporters. These are said to include the use of PLO agents to dispose of troublesome opponents inside Iran and abroad."

Press Release
Embassy of Iran
May 31, 1979

"Following the attack against the Brussels Airport on April 16, 1979, by extremists and uncommitted groups who called themselves Palestinians, a report was broadcast by Reuters and French news agencies that two of the assailants bore Iranian passports.... A thorough examination was made of the passports which, on technical grounds, proved to be entirely forged."

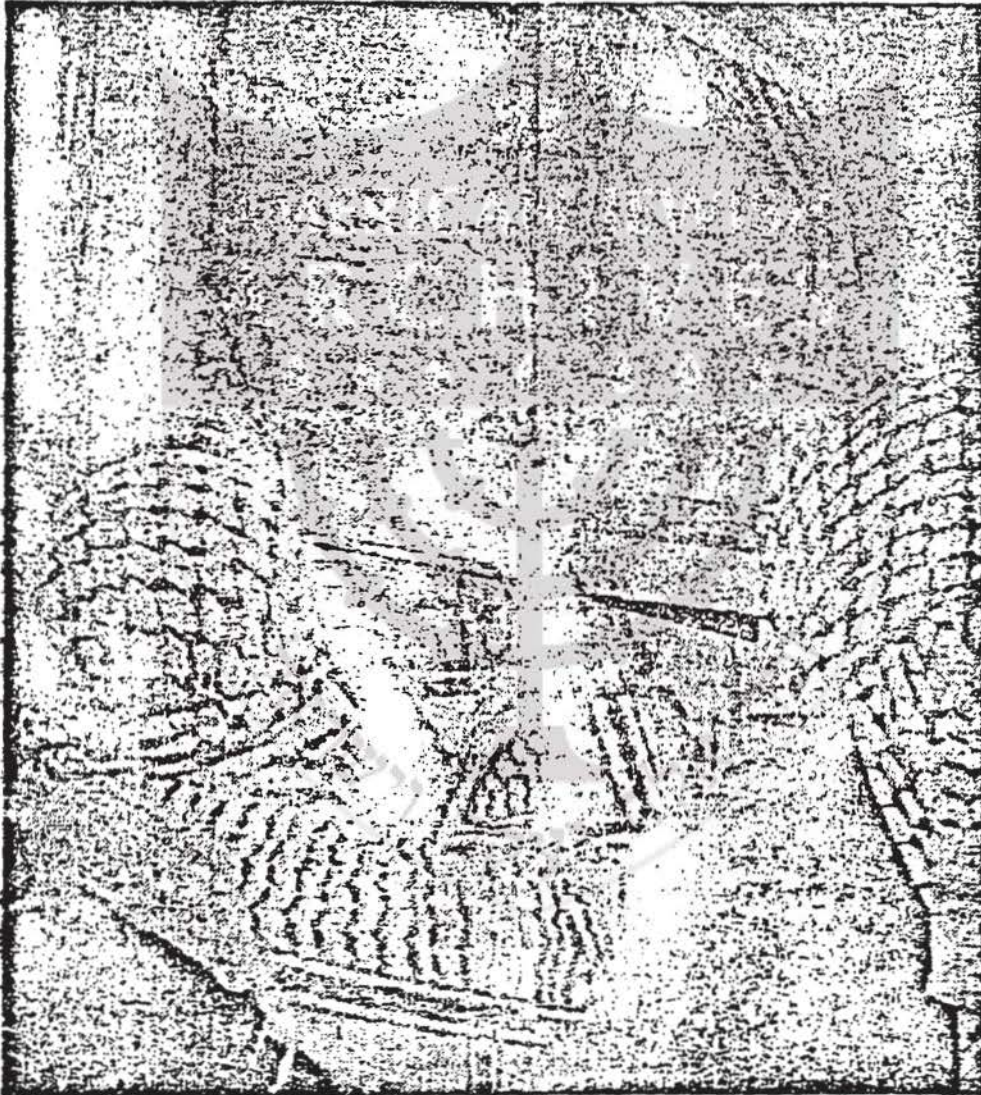
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Washington Post
February 19, 1979

"An obviously overjoyed Yasir Arafat wound up two days of meetings with leaders of Iran's revolution here today and said the overthrow of the shah by a militantly Moslem movement offered a 'new dawn and a new era' to the Middle East struggle.... In a triumphant gesture today, Arafat visited the building that housed the Israeli mission in Tehran and claimed it as the local office of the PLO."



Chicago Sun-Times, Wednesday, December 5, 1979



Palestinians join anti-U.S. mob

On 31st day that Americans are being held hostage in Iran, Palestinians demonstrate in solidarity with the revolutionary Islamic students. They chant along with the Iranians as photographs of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini are displayed in front of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran. Iran's foreign minister said Tuesday that hostages will be tried on spy charges and will be judged by captors. (UPI)