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## Iraq-Defector

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--- **Iraq** -Defector --- code:4 WASHINGTON (Reuter) \_ A Palestinian ex-businessman said Tuesday he was sent on a bombing mission to Europe in 1982 by an Iraqi-based guerrilla group whose leader had close connections with the Baghdad government. Adnan Awad told a U.S. Senate hearing he took a sophisticated briefcase bomb to Switzerland where he was to blow up either an Israeli or an American installation but could not bring himself to do it. Instead, he surrendered to the authorities and was later brought to the United States where he provided crucial information on terrorist activities. Awad, 50, was testifying to the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee which was examining the treatment of defectors under U.S. government protection. He was described as a hero by Senator Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.) but he complained that he had been treated as a "hostage," moved from city to city, given frequent name changes, unable to work or to read or write English. Awad said he had been head of a construction business in Baghdad and active in the Palestinian community. But he said **Abu Ibrahim**, head of the May 15 Organization guerrilla group, had closed down his business and forced him to undertake the bombing mission. He travelled to Switzerland with a bomb in a briefcase with the assignment to blow up a hotel. Ibrahim, he said, had an "open and clear" relationship with the Iraqi government and enjoyed special privileges "like any big officer in **Iraq**." After two years in Switzerland, Awad elected to go to the United States in 1984 where he entered the witness protection program run by the U.S. Marshal's Office.

He provided evidence last year against Mohammed Rashid, whom he had known in Baghdad. A Greek court convicted Rashid last month on a charge of masterminding the bombing of a Pan Am plane over Hawaii. Awad said that after a Greek newspaper disclosed his identity he became frightened, getting a gun and putting it under his pillow. Awad said U.S. officialdom was unresponsive to his problems of isolation in the United States. "They told me "You are a guest,"" he said. "But I am a hostage. I have no name, no papers \_ nothing." He decided after two years to leave the witness protection program in 1986. "They (witnesses) come to this country, get squeezed for information and are dropped like a dish towel," said Senator William Cohen (R-Me). Neil Gallagher, chief of the FBI's counter-terrorism section, said Awad was issued a resident alien card in June 1991.

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