

Radical Palestinians Said to Flee Lebanon and Take Refuge in Iraq

NICOSIA, Cyprus, Dec. 2 (AP)—Radical Palestinians, many escaping on rusty freighters to Cyprus from Syrian-occupied territory in Lebanon, have gathered in Iraq to mount a terrorist campaign against "moderate" Arab governments, diplomatic sources say.

The wounding yesterday in Damascus of the Syrian Foreign Minister, Abdel Halim Khaddam, followed terrorist raids against hotels in the Syrian and Jordanian capitals and a rash of sabotage bombings in Syria.

The Iraqi radio reported today that the extremist Palestinian group known as Black June had claimed responsibility for the shooting of Mr. Khaddam, in which he suffered an arm wound. The Baghdad-based group is linked to the hotel raids as well.

Yasir Arafat, the Palestinian guerrilla leader, cabled President Hafez al-Assad and Foreign Minister Khaddam to condemn "this treacherous attack on our revolutionary brother."

Leaders of the Christian forces in Lebanon, who fought against a coalition of leftists and Palestinians in the civil war, denounced the assassination effort as an effort to wreck the cease-fire.

Linked to Raids on Hotels

An American diplomatic source, reporting the exodus of extreme-left Palestinians from Lebanon, said the fleeing leftists appeared to be congregating around a maverick guerrilla leader, Abu Nidal, who has been expelled from the mainstream Palestine Liberation Organization, headed by Mr. Arafat.

Arab security officers say Abu Nidal founded Black June, which has been broadened to include radical leftists in other Arab capitals.

The group is linked to the Sept. 26 attack on the Semiramis Hotel in downtown Damascus by four Palestinian gunmen. Four hotel guests were killed and 34 wounded as Syrian soldiers counterattacked, killing one terrorist. The three

others were hanged outside the hotel the next day.

A month later the Inter-Continental Hotel in Amman was raided by four Black June members. Jordan's security forces refused to deal with the terrorists and reacted with a strong attack. Three terrorists and six other persons were killed or died of wounds.

Jordanian officials told a visiting reporter recently that they had expected an outburst of terrorist attacks.

Abu Nidal was ousted from the P.L.O. when he defied an Arafat ban on terrorist attacks abroad. Abu Nidal's major terrorist act was the planning for a 1973 assault on an American passenger plane in Rome that resulted in 34 deaths. He was sentenced to death by the guerrilla leadership but has continued to operate from Iraq, a traditional rival and foe of Syria.

A Master of Disguise

According to intelligence reports, Abu Nidal is a master of disguise, once traveling as a Roman Catholic priest. Israeli agents reportedly made a connection between Abu Nidal and the terrorist known as Carlos. In September, they tracked Carlos to Belgrade, from where he reportedly departed for Baghdad.

Far from Israel, and limited in number, the Palestinian radicals appear to be resorting to terrorism in an effort to disrupt and undermine the Arab Governments generally regarded as moderate—especially the emerging alliance of Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Syria. Leaders of all three countries are showing unusual unity and an increasing willingness to make peace with Israel.

They authorized President Assad to enforce a cease-fire in the Lebanese civil war and to curb the Beirut-based Palestinian movement in readiness for a peace settlement giving Palestinians a separate state.