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ISRAELI RAID ON LEBANON

USSR SEES TERROR AS HAMPERING PEACEFUL MIDEAST SETTLEMENT

In routine reportage and comment rather than in official statements,* Moscow promptly denounced the Israeli raid on targets in Beirut and Sidon on the night of 9-10 April and the killing of Palestinian leaders Yusuf an-Najjar, Kamal Nasir, and Kamal 'Adwan. TASS commentator Kornilov on the 10th set the tone for Soviet reaction, as he had following the 21 February raid in Lebanon and the downing of the Libyan plane, by charging that the attack was aimed at intimidating the Arab countries and preventing a relaxation of tension in the Middle East. Along with reportage of indignant reaction in the Arab world and other foreign protests, Moscow publicized on the 11th a message of support to Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) chairman Yasir 'Arafat from the Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee, the host group during 'Arafat's visits to the USSR.

Placing atypical emphasis on the need for good-neighborly relations between Israel and the Arabs, Moscow showed concern that recurring incidents might impel the Arabs to precipitous responses. While sharply criticizing Israel, Moscow sought to strike a balance by recalling "just criticism" of extremist fedayeen elements. And while reiterating stereotyped assertions that Israeli "military provocations" followed U.S. promises of further military and economic aid and replaying charges of U.S. complicity in the Israeli actions, commentators carefully attributed these accusations to Palestinian or other sources, and failed to repeat Palestinian insistence on U.S. embassy involvement in harboring some of the Israeli raiders.

ISSUE OF Reflecting concern that a continuing cycle of terror
TERRORISM and counterterror might lead to general fighting,
 Kudryavtsev in the 14 April IZVESTIYA asked if
Israel hoped to "provoke premature acts" by the Arab states in
order to repeat June 1967 and frustrate a peaceful settlement.

* Last September Moscow atypically issued a Soviet Government statement in response to Israeli attacks on Lebanon and Syria. Other than a government statement of March 1968 pegged to an attack on Jordan, the usual vehicle for response has been a TASS statement, five of which were issued between November 1968 and May 1970 in connection with Israeli attacks on Arab countries.

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A similar view had been expressed in PRAVDA at the time of the Libyan plane downing. Kudryavtsev also made one of Moscow's infrequent references to the need for good-neighborly relations, maintaining that this was the way to obtain secure frontiers. While he accused Israel of elevating terrorism to the level of state policy, he at the same time voiced an indirect remonstrance against Palestinian terrorism, declaring that a policy of official terror can in no way be justified by "terrorist acts of desperate extremist elements."

In a more even-handed approach, a PRAVDA international review, broadcast in Arabic on the 15th, deplored official Israeli terror but added that "it should be pointed out that the counterterror measures carried out by the Palestinian extremist elements of the Black September organization have received just criticism." While Moscow is on record as disapproving Palestinian "extremist" actions, the dissemination of PRAVDA's criticism to Arab audiences in the aftermath of an Israeli action is particularly noteworthy.

Referring to a possible connection between the Beirut raid and the 9 April incidents in Cyprus, a Moscow domestic service commentary on the 11th noted that some papers such as the French LE FIGARO had made "timid attempts" to present the Israeli action as revenge for "recent terrorist incidents on Cyprus," but that such "vain efforts" were refuted by an Israeli radio commentator who called the Lebanon operation one of the measures worked out long ago to mark Israel's 25th anniversary. Typifying its treatment of previous fedayeen incidents, Moscow had all but ignored the 9 April attempt to hijack an Israeli passenger plane at Nicosia airport and the attack the same day on the residence of the Israeli ambassador in Cyprus. TASS that day briefly reported the incidents with the customary circumlocution, attributing the airline incident to "a group of unidentified persons" and adding that "there was an explosion" at the ambassador's residence and three persons were detained by police. The TASS report was broadcast by Moscow domestic service on the 9th, but PRAVDA, publishing it on the 11th, omitted the reference to the second incident. A Menshikov dispatch from Nicosia in PRAVDA on the 15th reported concern in the Cypriot press that the Israeli-Black September "mutual terrorist activities" might spread to Cyprus and referred cryptically to "incidents" on the island.

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Playing up Palestinian denials, Moscow has reported the Israeli and Palestinian charges and countercharges of responsibility for the attacks which destroyed Tapline oil **storage tanks in** az-Zahrani, southern Lebanon, on the night of 14 April.

U.S. ROLE The Korneilov TASS commentary on the 10th made the stereotyped assertion that Israeli "military provocations" followed U.S. promises of further military and economic aid which provided "direct encouragement" of Israel's "expansionist policy" and incitement to new "acts of aggression." This line has been a staple in Soviet comment on the Middle East problem since Israeli Prime Minister Meir's early March visit to the United States and the subsequent reports of new U.S. arms commitments to Israel.

While Moscow has not refrained from taking some propaganda advantage of the PLO charge of U.S. complicity in the Israeli action, it has carefully made attribution to Palestinian or other sources. Against the background of past Soviet accusations of CIA activities worldwide, the treatment in this case seems moderate.* There was at least one acknowledgment, in IZVESTIYA on the 12th, of the U.S. denial of complicity. TASS, in reporting the Security Council session on the 12th, dealt chiefly with the Lebanese representative's statement and made no mention of U.S. Ambassador Scali's remarks, in which he rebutted the "big lie." TASS on the 18th in further reporting the session noted only that Scali failed to condemn Israel's attack on Lebanon and did not even mention Israel in his speech, but "urged the Security Council not to look for those guilty" of the situation existing in the Middle East.

The first Soviet pickup of the Palestinian charges of U.S. complicity came in a domestic service broadcast on the 11th. The radio's Beirut correspondent, Seyful-Mulyukov, noted that a PLO statement said "secret CIA agents operating on Lebanese territory" had "furnished the Israeli terrorist squads with direct aid." The dispatch claimed it had been "authenticated" that the attack was prepared and carried out by Israel with the

* For instance, TASS on 8 April publicized a commentary by Baskakov charging the CIA with "subversive activities" in Indochina, India, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America.

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"collaboration" of imperialist intelligence agencies, and cited Lebanese reports that the cars used by the Israeli teams had been rented a few days earlier by foreigners with West European passports.

The complicity charge appeared, with qualifications, in Moscow papers on the 12th. IZVESTIYA noted the U.S. denial, in a Koryavin dispatch from Cairo that said any connection with the terrorist acts in Beirut "has been officially denied in Washington," but added that the PLO had charged that "the entire operation was 'coordinated with the CIA.'" (On the 13th, without mentioning the U.S. denial, Koryavin reported in IZVESTIYA that Palestinian representatives in various Arab countries were emphasizing full Israeli-CIA coordination in the attack.) PRAVDA on the 12th published a Beirut dispatch by Orekhov which also reported that the Palestinian resistance leadership had issued a statement accusing the CIA of "allegedly" participating in the preparation of the raid. Orekhov identified the "pseudotourists" who rented the cars as "a group of Israeli agents" who arrived in Beirut as tourists from West Europe.

The charge of CIA participation was also aired in broadcasts in Arabic and by the "unofficial" Radio Peace and Progress in English to Africa.

SECURITY COUNCIL TASS, in minimal coverage of the Security Council session considering Lebanon's complaint against Israel, reported on the 14th that Soviet delegate Malik had said his delegation was ready to support "efficient sanctions" against Israel, "up to its expulsion" from the United Nations. Moscow has from time to time brought up the question of sanctions, generally in the context of a UN General Assembly or Security Council debate on the Middle East. TASS last December reported Malik as saying in the General Assembly that Israel could not forever abuse the United Nations' patience and sabotage the observance of its decisions and still enjoy the advantages of membership.

According to a Korotkov commentary broadcast in Arabic on the 14th, Malik again raised the matter of "coordinated efforts" by the permanent members of the Security Council to eliminate the "dangerous war area" in the Middle East and expressed readiness to "resume immediately" consultations with the object of providing assistance to Dr. Jarring. Not since February 1972, during a Security Council meeting dealing with an Israeli attack on Lebanon, had Malik been reported by Soviet media as "appealing again" to the permanent members to resume consultations.

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PRC CHARGES "SUPERPOWERS" AID ISRAEL WITH WEAPONS. MANPOWER

Peking reacted to the Israeli raid in Lebanon on 9-10 April with a show of solidarity with the Palestinians and other Arabs. The most authoritative comment was a PEOPLE'S DAILY Commentator article on the 12th which placed equal blame on the Soviet Union and the United States for supporting Israel. Along with publicity for a press conference held by the head of the Palestine Liberation Organization mission in Peking, NCNA reported that Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Ho Ying and other PRC officials had called on the PLO mission to express condolences on the death of the three Palestinian leaders killed in Beirut. NCNA reported from Beirut, in an item datelined the 12th, that the PRC charge d'affaires in Lebanon had called on PLO chairman Yasir 'Arafat to express sympathy;* on the 14th, the charge called at the Lebanese foreign ministry to express support for Lebanon in its "struggle against Israeli aggression and for safeguarding national sovereignty."

The PEOPLE'S DAILY Commentator article charged the "superpowers" with support and encouragement which have "made the Zionists so arrogant," reiterating previous propaganda assertions that "one superpower" supplies a flow of money and weapons to Israel while "the other superpower incessantly provides it with massive manpower and sources for troop recruitment, and even technical specialists, in the form of emigrants." NCNA has disseminated recent Arab press complaints about the emigration of Soviet Jews to Israel and on 31 March even cited the article by "Soviet special agent" Victor Louis in the Israeli paper YEDIOT AHARONOT disclosing that the USSR recently suspended the levy of exit fees on Soviet Jews emigrating from the Soviet Union "in order to expedite their emigration to Israel." The Soviet move, NCNA said, had aroused "strong resentment and opposition" in the Arab world.

PEOPLE'S DAILY seemed to rebuke Arab governments seeking to control the activities of the fedayeen and also to hint that the Palestinians should confine their operations to the Middle East. Commentator thus called it "entirely just" for the Palestinian people to fight "on other Arab territories" for the restoration of their national rights "with the support of other fraternal Arab people."

* The clandestine Voice of Palestine and the Baghdad Voice of Palestine--but not Soviet media--reported on 11 April that Soviet Ambassador to Lebanon Azimov had contacted Yasir 'Arafat to convey the Soviet Government's condolences on the death of the three Palestinian leaders.