

Peking Now No. 1 Protector Of Arabs

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Red China, by offering training facilities and arms to anti-Israeli Arab guerrillas, is jockeying today for position as the self-proclaimed protector of Islam.

The first known contingent of Palestinian Al-Fatah commandos, who have been operating against Israel mainly from bases in Syria, has already been welcomed in Peking. This vanguard—a dozen or so—is supposed to have successfully carried out terror missions inside Israel.

They will be trained in guerrilla tactics at assorted camps within Communist China. Some of the trainees, who had been shaping up other recruits in Algeria, left there on Chinese invitation after the coup d'etat last month that deposed President Ahmed Ben Bella.

It was just a year ago that Red China launched a three-continent drive against Israel—in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The main objective was to win friends and influence among Arab regimes by attacking Israel as an outpost of "American Imperialism."

Working steadily behind the scenes, Chinese intermediaries have now managed to persuade the Palestine Arab exiles organization that the regime of Mao Tse-tung is its best friend. The hidden persuader was Egyptian President Gamel Abdel Nasser's reservations about springing to the armed "liberation" of Israel for the Arabs.

Red Chinese activist intervention puts Col. Nasser on the spot and helps dim the diplomatic defeat China suffered in postponement of the second Afro-Asian conference in Algiers.

There cannot be any internal anti-Jewish campaign in China, as there is within the Soviet Union, because virtually no Jews live there. But the anti-Israel drive from Peking, which also makes great use of ultra-nationalist and pro-Nazi material in Latin America, gives Arab exiles a feeling of great momentum.

The Cairo-based Palestine Liberation Organization opened offices last spring in Peking on the initiative of Premier Chou En-lai. This was arranged in a protocol agreement, signed by Premier Chou, whose office defrays expenses and living costs of the exile representatives.

One of the principal go-betweens for the Palestinian Arabs was reported, by interested Arabs in Algiers, to be the foxy, ex-Mufti of Jerusalem. During World War II he worked for the Nazis and now makes his headquarters in Damascus.