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JACK ANDERSON

Death of PLO Could Spread Reign of Terror

As the sands run out on the Palestine Liberation Organization in Lebanon, intelligence analysts predict it will disintegrate into a dozen underground groups that will spread terror and revolution throughout the western world.

In fact, the PLO has never been anything more than a collection of revolutionary bands and aggressive egos held together by a web of agreements and alliances. Its charismatic chairman, Yasser Arafat, has limited control over its disparate parts.

Now that its 12 fighting factions have been defeated on the battlefields of Lebanon, the survivors are expected to go underground. They will work closely, the analysts believe, with revolutionary movements around the world.

Surely, they will take out their vengeance on Americans. U.S. government and corporate officials may become the victims of shootings and kidnappings, the analysts fear. The PLO may even try to set up a terrorist base in the United States.

The PLO turned Lebanon, as I have reported in the past, into a

haven for terrorists. During a recent tour of the Lebanese front, I spoke with PLO soldiers who had trained with "foreigners." The foreigners had not stayed to fight in Lebanon but had returned to take the "revolution" to their homelands, the soldiers said.

In the rubble of an abandoned PLO post I also found documents that revealed the PLO's close connections with revolutionary movements. The evidence proved that the Soviet Union supports and subsidizes these movements as part of an underground campaign to destabilize western democracies.

Israeli troops captured stacks of documents, which corroborate these findings. In Washington, my associate Lucette Lagnado double-checked the contents of these documents with State Department sources, intelligence analysts and Library of Congress experts.

One document gives an inside look at the relations between the PLO and East Germany. It is the transcript, in Arabic, of meetings that a PLO delegation held with East German military brass in East Berlin just last April.

The PLO delegation was greeted at the airport by East German officials, including the deputy defense minister, Gen. Werner Fleissner. The captured document indicates preparations for extensive military cooperation between the PLO and East Germany.

For example, one East German

official is quoted as telling the Palestinian visitors that his government was studying "an agreement . . . to accept trainees from the liberation organization and attach them to our military schools."

He outlined the training that would be offered to the PLO, and then asked: "The Marxist-Leninist doctrine constitutes the basis for training. Do you have any objections to that?" According to the transcript, the PLO man replied: "None at all."

The PLO delegates asked that their guerrillas be instructed "within the same training framework" as the East German army. Their hosts countered: "They will be training with German officers, but as an independent group, as their proficiency in the German language is limited."

A question was raised over the length of training that would be given to the PLO recruits. The East Germans' three-year hitch was too long for the PLO's taste, so the Germans agreed to "speed up training" for the guerrillas.

Intelligence sources note that East Germany is only one of a number of Soviet bloc countries that have played host to the PLO.

My sources say PLO recruits have been trained in the use of Warsaw Pact military hardware, and intelligence analysts suspect the goal was for the PLO to attain the capabilities of a conventional army, instead of just a guerrilla force.