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Emergence of the Japanese Red Army

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Emergence of the Japanese Red Army

Summary

For the past two and one half years a relatively small group of Japanese terrorists, working with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), has conducted or collaborated with the PFLP in three terrorist operations. These incidents--the Lod Airport massacre in May 1972, the Japan Airlines (JAL) hijacking in July 1973, and the Singapore incident in January 1974--are believed to have been planned by the PFLP and then implemented with the assistance of Japanese radicals operating out of the Middle East. In the recent successful operation in the Hague to secure the release of Furuya Yutaka, a Japanese Red Army (JRA) comrade held in a French jail, the JRA appears to have acted independently of the PFLP. An interrogation of Furuya led French police to a network of JRA members in Paris which was planning attacks on Japanese businessmen and a diplomat in Germany. In spite of obvious flaws in the forged documentation carried by JRA members in past operations, JRA terrorists were still able to enter target countries with little, if any, difficulty.

Origin of the Japanese Red Army

Current information from [REDACTED] the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo indicates that the JRA has little support from or connection with other terrorist organizations operating in Japan. The JRA is not "red" in the old communist interpretation of the word and is not an army in the conventional sense. The JRA has no known ties of any kind with the USSR, China, or the Japanese Communist Party and appears to have little or no appeal to most leftist Japanese youth. Little is known concerning its ideology other than adherence to a form of world revolution in which the masses will rise up and defeat the existing imperialist governments.

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In 1969 a group calling itself the Red Army emerged in Japan, advocating violent revolution. This organization apparently was little different from the approximately 27 other radical groups then operating on Japanese campuses. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] In the past five years several groups which could have had their antecedents in the old Red Army of

1969 have emerged with such names as the Red Army Faction, The United Red Army, The Red Army Guard, The World Red Army, The Red Army Arab Committee and now the Japanese Red Army.

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Available information indicates that Shigenobu Fusako, currently thought to be the leader of the JRA, made contact with the PFLP in 1971. In May 1971 she helped produce a film called "The PFLP and the Red Army Declare World War." She also appears to have participated in the publication of a book entitled The Arab Guerrillas and the World Red Army. It is not known whether Shigenobu and her JRA followers initiated contact with the PFLP on their own volition or as the agents of a terrorist organization inside Japan.

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Okudaira and two other Japanese radicals were trained and sent by the PFLP into Israel to perpetrate what is now called the Lod Airport massacre in May 1972. It is likely that the three men were not members of any well-established organization in Japan, but rather individuals who were motivated by the goals of the PFLP in combating Israel.

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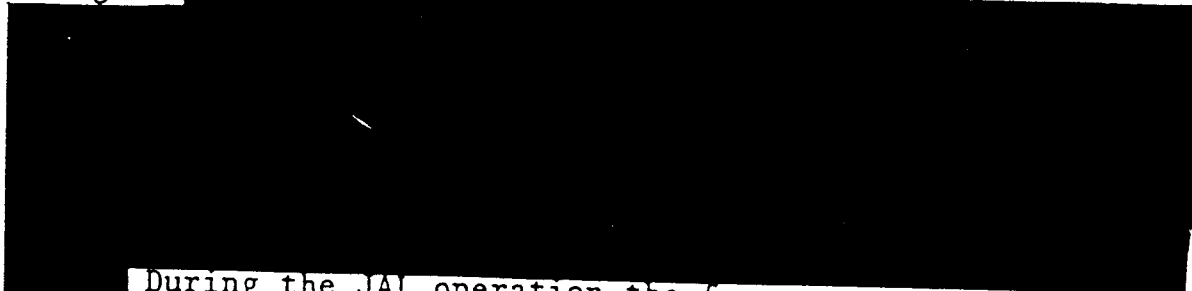
A PFLP spokesman in June 1972 readily admitted that the PFLP had trained and dispatched the Japanese terrorists on the Lod mission.

Following the Lod operation there were a few reports that Japanese radicals and the PFLP intended to mount more joint operations. [redacted] the targets were to be airport facilities in Germany, Switzerland, Italy and France. The Japanese reportedly made this agreement with followers of Wadi Haddad, chief of the PFLP's Foreign Operations Committee, but without the knowledge of PFLP leader George Habbash.

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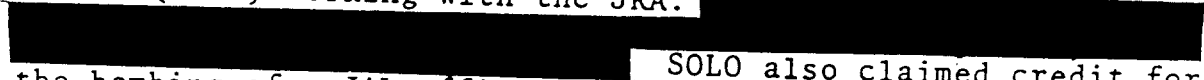
On 20 July 1973 a combined JRA-PFLP group hijacked a Japan Airlines (JAL) Boeing 747 as it departed Amsterdam's international airport. The aircraft finally landed four days later in

Libya, where the terrorists destroyed the jet with explosive charges.



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During the JAL operation the four terrorists described themselves as members of the Sons of the Occupied Land Organization (SOLO) working with the JRA.



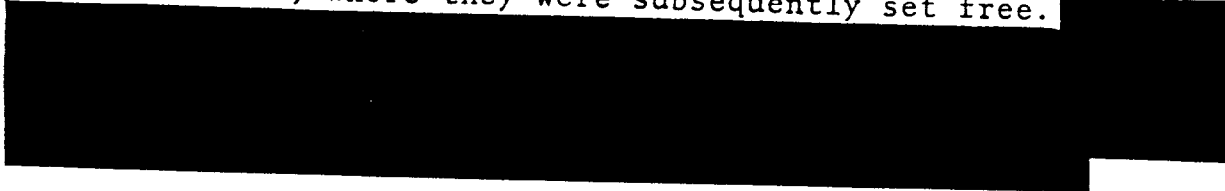
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SOLO also claimed credit for the bombing of a JAL office in Bonn, Germany on 31 May 1974.) The JAL hijacking was the first instance in which the title JRA was linked publicly with the PFLP.

Several months later the PFLP and the JRA struck again, this time against the Shell oil refinery on Pulau Bukum Island near Singapore. Two PFLP terrorists and two JRA members set fire to one oil storage tank and attempted to blow up three others before seeking to escape from the refinery in a ferry boat. Shortly after they seized the ferry, the four men identified themselves as members of the Japanese Red Army and the PFLP.

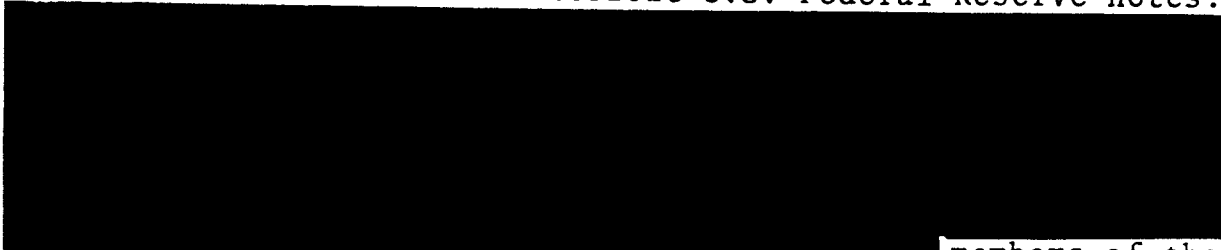
In a press conference the day after the attack, a PFLP spokesman in Damascus described the operation as a warning to monopolistic, exploitative oil companies and as a rejection of the Geneva efforts for a peaceful settlement of the Palestine problem. Negotiations between Singapore authorities and the terrorists dragged out for seven days, and on 6 February five PFLP terrorists seized the Japanese Embassy in Kuwait and demanded that the four Singapore terrorists be released and flown by the Japanese government to Kuwait. After the Japanese and Kuwaiti governments agreed to these conditions, the four Singapore terrorists and their five comrades were flown from Kuwait to Aden, where they were subsequently set free.

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Japanese Red Army Activities in Europe

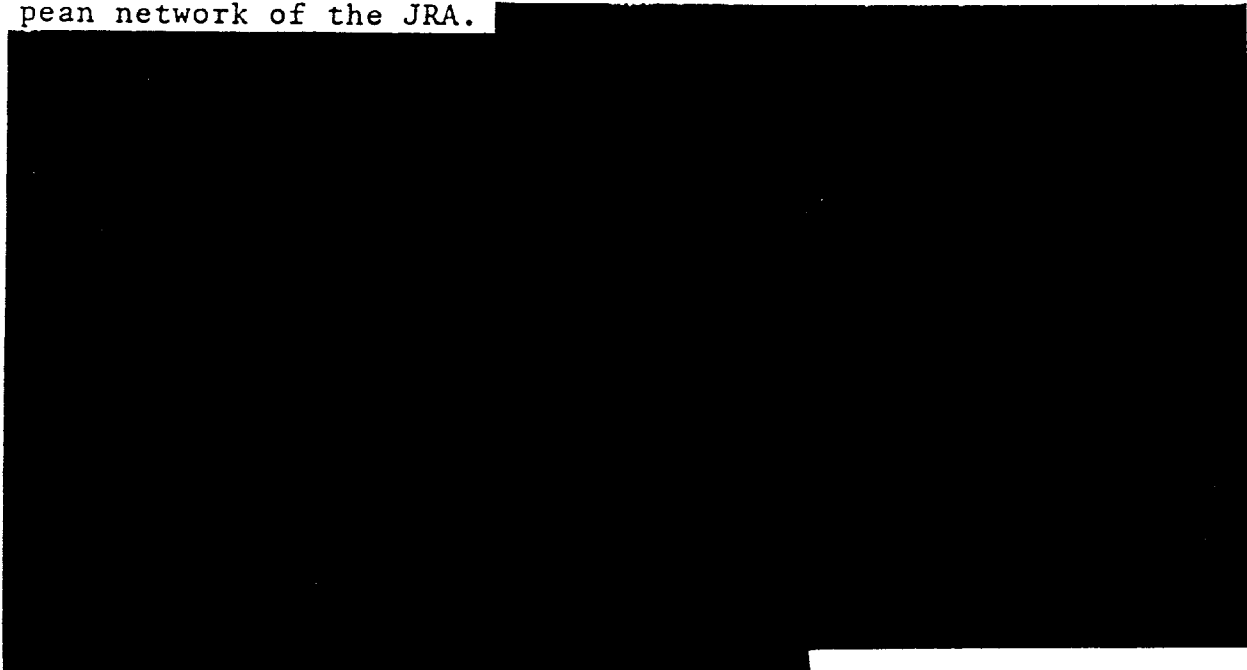
On 26 July 1974 French authorities arrested Furuya Yutaka, a Japanese national, for possessing four altered passports and ten thousand dollars in counterfeit U.S. Federal Reserve notes.



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members of the Curriel Apparatus were providing support to the JRA. The Curriel Apparatus is a Paris-based "leftist" organization which has provided support in the way of training, documentation and financial assistance to revolutionary and national liberation groups in numerous countries. Financial support for the Curriel group is believed to come from fees it receives for services rendered to the various organizations it assists.

The most important JRA member arrested and interrogated was Takahashi Taketomo, believed to be the chief of the European network of the JRA.



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JRA Secures Release of Furuya

Three JRA members successfully obtained the release of Furuya (Yamada) from a French prison in mid-September, in a well-planned and coordinated operation which involved seizing the French embassy in the Hague and trading the Ambassador and eight other hostages for Furuya and his documents.

The hostages were held from 13 to 17 September, when Dutch and French authorities finally reached an agreement with the JRA terrorists. After leaving behind their hostages, the terrorists were given U.S. \$300,000 and were allowed to leave Amsterdam in an Air France 707 flown by a volunteer crew.

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JRA Modus Operandi

While there is little information available on the JRA to illustrate definite patterns of operation which could be indicators of impending attacks, a few generalizations can be made on the basis of their past attacks.

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Unfortunately no pattern of JRA activities can be obtained by comparing the Lod and Singapore incidents, because the operations were so different. At Lod the task was to kill as many people as possible with automatic weapons and grenades. Therefore a minimum amount of preparation was necessary. At Singapore, however, the terrorists prepared detailed plans over a month in advance.

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