

# Jerusalem Letter

## Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs

JERUSALEM INSTITUTE FOR FEDERAL STUDIES • CENTER FOR JEWISH COMMUNITY STUDIES

Daniel J. Elazar, Editor and Publisher • David Clayman, Executive Editor

ISSN: 0334-4096

JL:66 11 Kislev 5744/13 November 1983

### THE ENEMY IS NOT ANONYMOUS

by Oded Zarai

#### *ACTION AND ANALYSIS*

One Saturday last October at 10 O'clock in the morning, a black Mercedes with Lebanese license plate number 338804 pulled up at the Shi'ite "Amal" organization headquarters in Bourj Al-Barajneh in West Beirut. The car, which was escorted by an armed white "Landrover" pick-up, was carrying three senior commanders of the Fatah rebels led by Abu-Mussa. One of the three was Habib Siam, who was in charge of the PLO camp in this area before the evacuation. The three officials stayed at the "Amal" headquarters for about three hours. The next day, the officials' families arrived in West Beirut. They belong to the group of cadres that arrived last week, in cars loaded with arms and explosives, via the "Abu-Mussa route" to the southern suburbs of Beirut, and from there to the western part of the city.

Seemingly an unremarkable event, this is in fact one of a number of steps taken in past weeks to revive and expand what remains of the terrorist infrastructure in West Beirut. Among those arriving during this period have been experts on large-scale terrorist actions from the Popular Front-General Command organization led by Ahmed Jibril. These experts, or at least some of them, come from the headquarters of the pro-Syrian organizations in Damascus. They spend some time in the Beka'a, at the Syrian intelligence command which is shared with the Soviet military advisers; and from there they go via the Beirut-Damascus highway through the Tzofar-Bahamdoun area, to the Abu-Mussa route -- from Beitzur in the east to Shu'eifat in the west -- escorted by Jumblatt's men, who control the length of that route.

These are the elements in action out in the field who are counted among the allies of Syria -- which enjoys Soviet patronage. That is to say that every terrorist action or shooting at Lebanese army positions, at the Eastern (Christian) suburbs of Beirut, or at the areas where the Multi-National Force is located, are carried out in coordination with and/or under the direction of Syria. From the American intelligence report, a clear picture emerges of the part the Soviet experts play in the entire scope of military elements that control some of the southern and western suburbs of Beirut. It follows, therefore, that the terrorist activity and shooting planned in these areas are coordinated and directed, directly or indirectly, by operators in Damascus or in the Beka'a. This is even more true of a sophisticated, ambitious, well-planned action such as the despicable crime at the American Marine headquarters in Khalde and at the French battalion headquarters in Janakh in West Beirut.

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This picture, in even greater detail, is well known to Lebanese security forces, to the Multi-National force headquarters -- and especially to the Americans, who have excellent intelligence resources at their command. As to the case in hand, sources in Beirut contend that in recent weeks the Americans had been warned against ambitious terrorist actions directed against them, based on reliable information indicating intensive Syrian attempts to smuggle car-bombs into West Beirut. In the wake of Sunday's tragedy, it is only natural for the communications media in the region and throughout the world to wonder about the identity of the perpetrators, and thereby to fall into the "communications trap" generally laid for them by the real perpetrators, who let some fly-by-night organization take responsibility for the crime.

Arafat employed this method in the murder of the Israeli athletes in Munich, when he hid behind "Black September." This is also the method the Syrians are employing now in Beirut. But if the media may be permitted to wonder at the true identity of the perpetrators, and to conclude, at least in the early stages, that it was an "unknown enemy," this does not apply to those injured in this case -- because both the American and French intelligence services know well that the enemy is not in the least anonymous.

Pointing an accusing finger at Iran is perhaps an easy policy for the Americans. But any military man who has passed a junior officer's course, and has served in Lebanon for more than a month, knows that even if Iran had wanted to carry out the attacks at Khalde and Janakh, it could not have done so. Possibly the Iranians contributed two drivers from the revolutionary guards to drive the booby-trapped vehicles to their target, but it is doubtful whether they were capable of more than that. Syrian control over what goes on in Lebanon has increased immeasurably in the wake of the takeover by Walid Jumblatt's men and the terrorists in the areas evacuated by Israel last month. One need not be a military man to understand the overwhelming importance of opening a connecting route between Tsofar and Shu'eifat. The two truck-bombs could have easily passed over that route. At the same time, the sabotage materiel and the necessary equipment could easily have been brought in via that same route in several installments and the two trucks readied at a spot close to Khalde and Janakh.

- The American Marines in Khalde do not control what goes on in the Solaima quarter, hence sniper fire is directed at them, nor do they control the Fakahani area, where car-bombs are made.
- One can snipe at the forces of the greatest power in the world, and even shell them without risk; one can blow up the American Embassy in Ras Beirut without risking retaliation; and if so, why not dare to blow up the Marine headquarters, especially when it serves the desired end of bringing about the removal of the Multi-National Force from Lebanon?

Actions of this sort bring immediate repercussions throughout the country. Not only does Syria's prestige go up in Lebanon and in the entire Arab world, but the other elements who operate in other parts of the country are encouraged thereby, and they step up their activity -- like the Shi'ites in the South. At the same time, the criminal action sends a shock wave through other elements in the Lebanese arena who have staked their bets on the "American trump card" -- just as happened to those elements that had been friendly to Israel following the events in the Aley and the Shouf. These elements -- today more than ever, as the press in Beirut points out -- have their eyes on the American administration and what it is doing in the wake of the disaster. They aren't asking themselves whether President Reagan will stand firm on leaving the Marines in Lebanon, but whether this time, too, the United States will carry on as usual and not retaliate.

In such a case, and especially if the Marines should withdraw from Khalde to one of the aircraft carriers off the coast of Beirut, it may well be that the way may be paved to renewed Lebanese recognition of Syrian dependability, with all that that implies both for the United States and Israel.

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