

THE KGB'S MIDDLE EAST FILES : PALESTINIANS IN THE SERVICE OF MOTHER RUSSIA

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Secret KGB documents reveal just how deeply involved the Soviet Union was in the spilling of Israeli blood. The Russian spy agency provided Palestinian terror organizations with funds, training and arms, running agents like 'Krotov' - aka **Mahmoud Abbas**, 'Aref' - or **Yasser Arafat**, and 'Nationalist,' who was behind several plane hijackings long before 9/11.

(...)

Infiltrating the Mukataa

The two most important KGB recruitments from the PLO during the second half of the 1970s were of people who still play a major role in Palestinian politics today.

According to the Mitrokhin documents, the KGB had an agent at the heart of the PLO whose file describes him as "a member of the PLO's executive committee and a member in the politburo of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP)." This was none other than Yasser Abed Rabbo, one of the top officials in the Palestinian Authority, who held a number of senior roles in the PA over the years, was a chief negotiator in talks with Israel, and one of the architects of the Geneva Initiative.

Abed Rabbo was fired by Mahmoud Abbas when the latter was elected, but stayed on as a senior advisor to the Palestinian president.

For the most part, the Mitrokhin documents don't provide details about the information with which the agents provided the KGB, instead merely stating the fact that they were agents. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note the way Abed Rabbo is defined in the documents—as an "informant," who is ranked below "agent" in the level of importance to the KGB. This means that Abed Rabbo's contact with the KGB was done without the knowledge of the organization he belonged to.

The second and more important KGB recruitment was of the agent "Krotov" (mole), who was described in the KGB's files as "born in 1935, Palestinian, prominent figure both politically and socially. Lives in Syria, a member of the PLO Central Council."

As reported on Channel 1, based on research conducted by Isabella Ginor and Gideon Remez, agent "Krotov" is none other than Mahmoud Abbas, the president of the Palestinian Authority.

The Mitrokhin documents, which have been corroborated by information gathered over the years by Israeli intelligence services, provide further details about agent "Krotov."

The KGB began Abbas's "first stage of recruitment" around 1979, when Abbas arrived in Moscow to study at the Lumumba Peoples' Friendship University of Russia. In describing those initial contacts, his KGB file notes that "it's still unclear whether the object will agree to cooperate."

The university's declared goal was to aid elements in the Third World and in Africa in obtaining higher education—while increasing the influence of the USSR and of communism in the developing world. But the university had other roles, too. Among other things, the KGB—that essentially controlled the campus—recruited agents there.

Abbas had already been a graduate of the Damascus University's Faculty of Law, and was accepted in Moscow to study for a Candidate of Sciences degree, which is the Russian equivalent of a PhD in Social Sciences at Western universities.

The university's president at the time was Yevgeny Primakov, who had close ties to the KGB. He later went on to become the head of the KGB First Chief Directorate and helped it on its transition to the control of the Russian Federation government, under the new name Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR). He then served as Russia's minister of foreign affairs and later still as its prime minister.

As university president, Primakov appointed his top Middle East expert, Prof. Vladimir Ivanovich Kiselev, as the Palestinian leader's dissertation adviser. Abbas's CandSc thesis "The Other Side: The Secret Relationship Between Nazism and Zionism"—a lampoon of blatant lies, including Holocaust denial and accusations that Zionists "assisted" Hitler—was completed in May 1982 and released as a book two years later.

The original cover of Abbas' book

By that time, Abbas had already returned to Lebanon and used the PLO archive to spread Soviet propaganda prepared by the KGB and the Stasi, which accused "Western Imperialism and Zionism" of cooperating with the Nazis. This was done as part of a widespread propaganda campaign run by the KGB at the time, which attempted to create a link between anti-Soviet elements and the Nazis—the ultimate symbol of evil.

This propaganda material was later seized in an Israeli Military Intelligence raid of the PLO archive in Beirut, and it constitutes, at the very least, additional circumstantial evidence attesting to the links between Fatah and Abbas and the Soviet intelligence services.

As ties between Abbas and the Russians grew closer, an internal KGB report concisely noted that developing progress: "Krotov is an agent of the KGB." According to the KGB's definition, those who reach the level of "agent" are those who "consistently, systematically and covertly carry out intelligence assignments, while maintaining secret contact with an official in the agency." In other words, according to the KGB documents, Abbas was authorized to be a KGB spy within the PLO.

Yedioth Ahronoth was unable to obtain a response from Mahmoud Abbas's office or from Yasser Abed Rabbo by the time of publication.

However, a former senior Fatah official who asked to remain anonymous told us that Abbas was not an agent of the KGB in the sense that he acted against Fatah's interests but rather was "a Fatah-authorized contact

appointed by Arafat to coordinate the transfer of measures and arms from the Soviet Union to the Palestinians"—contacts that the official doesn't deny. The official added that the "Soviet Union and its intelligence services greatly and significantly aided the Palestinian struggle for independence."

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