

# US probes terror links with Greece

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THE United States has intervened forcefully in a row triggered by the *Observer's* disclosures that Kurdish terrorists are being trained by elements of the Greek security services and the Greek terrorist movement 17 November.

The Greek government has denounced last week's report that a splinter group of the Kurdistan Workers Party, the PKK, was being helped by Greek supporters to make terrorist bombs. But US State Department spokesman Jim Foley said: 'The report is a serious one and we will be looking into it.'

The spokesman went on to say that the US had 'no information about official Greek assistance to the PKK, but the allegations are serious and bear looking into.'

Mr Foley did not address the core allegation of the former PKK operative, Seydo Hazar, that the PKK had had unofficial assistance from elements of the Greek security services.

The US Assistant Secretary of State, Mark Grossman, said during a visit to Greece last week that Washington considered the PKK — which has a political office in Athens — and 17 November to be terrorist organisations. The Americans want the PKK office in Athens shut down.

The Greek Public Order Minister, George Romeos, who is in Washington, is holding talks about PKK activities with US security services, according to diplomatic sources.

Washington recently reiterated its offer of a \$2 million (£1.25m) reward for the 17 November terrorists responsible for killing four Americans, including CIA station chief Richard Welch, shot dead in Athens in 1975.

A computer disk said to contain detailed intelligence about 17 November and the PKK is being offered by Hazar to any Western government prepared to help him start a new life. Asked if US officials would be prepared to talk to Hazar, Mr Foley said from Washington: 'I will be making a few telephone calls — that's all I can say at the moment.'

Hazar, who is in hiding, believes he is on the wanted list of more than one national security agency. 'I have to keep moving because I am sure the

Greeks and others would love to see me dead,' he said in a telephone call to the *Observer* last week.

'The computer disk information in my possession can be of great value to anyone interested in the affairs of the Near East. The PKK is one of the most powerful organisations in the region and what I have on the disk is like an internal telephone directory, containing names, addresses, contacts and details of future schemes.'

Hazar repeated his claim that the PKK had set up a liaison unit with the Palestinian Islamic resistance movement, Hamas, which is responsible for a series of suicide attacks inside Israel. He said the man in charge was called Javed and was being briefed by PKK chief Abdullah Ocalan.

In Athens, Romeos revealed that government records showed Hazar left the country on 26 September through the Doira ni border, probably on his way to Germany.

Romeos said Hazar had been given a one-month visa to enter Greece which was renewed once and expired in April. The Minister added that Hazar paid a fine before leaving Greece because he stayed on for five months after his visa expired.

The Greek government spokesman, Yiannis Nikolaou, attacked the *Observer*, saying: 'An attempt is being made to incriminate Greece, summoning a host of inaccuracies which are founded solely on the "disclosures" of a certain Kurd named Hazar.' He categorically denied the *Observer* reports which he said were 'false, unfounded and fabricated.'

He continued: 'What is striking, however, is the fact that this newspaper makes use of well-known Turkish propaganda allegations in order to support its claims.'

Athens says training areas in Greece described in last week's article had been thoroughly searched, but nothing had been found to substantiate the claims.

In London the Kurdish Information Centre attacked the story as part of the Turkish government's psychological warfare against the Kurds, which includes the arrest, torture and killings of tens of thousands of innocent people.