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Greece's ruling party 'had links with terrorism'

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GREECE's ruling Panhellenic Socialist Movement (Pasok) yesterday tried to brush off allegations that more than 100 of its members, including a former Prime Minister, had active links with terrorist groups in the 1970s and 1980s.

In a move which threatened to damage the Government's promise to tackle terrorism, a left-wing newspaper printed what it called a "document of shame", accusing Andreas Papandreou, the former Prime Minister, three former ministers and an intelligence chief of having terrorist links.

Christos Protopappas, the Government spokesman, dismissed the allegations as "ridiculous" and "wretched", and insisted that Athens would not waste its time on the matter.

But the row over the publication of the 124 names, included in an intelligence report drawn up in 1988, is unlikely to abate, and there are fears that Greece's record on security could be further harmed ahead of the Athens Olympics in 2004.

The list, which appeared in the pro-Pasok newspaper *Karfi*, is likely to deepen suspicions in the West that the party is not doing enough to root out left-wing terrorist groups responsible for a spate of unresolved attacks.

Foremost among them is the 17 November organisation, responsible for 23 murders since 1975, most recently the assassination 18 months ago of Brigadier Stephen Saunders, the British military attaché in Athens. No member of the group has been arrested.



Brigadier Saunders:
no arrests yet made



Papandreou: "trained at Palestinian camp"

Heather Saunders, his widow, said yesterday that she was frustrated about the lack of progress in the investigation. "I get very despondent," she told *The Times*. "We keep being told that every effort is being made, but there is no evidence of any progress. I wonder if the will is really there to see Stephen's murderers brought to justice."

US officials claim that the Greek authorities have a list of names of 17 November suspects, implying that action against them is being blocked at high level. The Greeks have repeatedly denied having any such list.

The 1988 report, allegedly written under the supervision of police General Nikos Gryllakis, now retired, cites intelligence evidence to show that dozens of senior party members, including the late Papandreou, received training in sabotage and assassination at secret Palestinian camps in Lebanon. The period was between 1975 and 1977.

Although not directly linking them with 17 November, the report says the group had an identical origin to Pasok in the armed PAK (Panhellenic Liberation Movement) squads that Papandreou formed in Europe and the US when Greece was under military rule.

Kostas Laliotis, the Pasok general secretary, termed "a hardline Stalinist" in the report, and who once belonged to a group called the Red Commissars, said those who drew up and circulated the list should "feel shame" for the harm they had done to the party.

A former head of EYP, the Greek intelligence service, is said to have been trained as a saboteur by Abu Nidal. However, the officer dismissed the report as "clumsily-written and a tissue of fabrications." None, however, has specifically denied receiving training in Palestinian camps, and none has sued for defamation.

The opposition conservative

New Democracy Party has also rebuffed the allegations, apparently fearing that more publicity on the issue could affect Athens' hosting of the 2004 Olympic Games.

Yanna Daskalaki-Angelopoulou, a former New Democracy deputy and one of Europe's wealthiest women, is heading the preparations.

Karfi's motive in printing the report remains unclear. Nikos Kakaounakis, the editor, who is known for an abrasive style on his radio phone-in programme, claims that he wanted to "shock the Government into an awareness" of why America, for example, was making a big issue out of Athens' lack of progress in tackling domestic terrorism.

The Palestinian connection surfaced again last week when Israel alleged that the Palestinian mission in Greece had masterminded the attempted shipment of some 50 tonnes of arms to Palestinian recipients.