Ideas and Social Mobilization in the Early Palestinian Intifada: Activist Intellectuals and the Construction of Consensus in Nonviolent Resistance

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Summary of the Thesis

The thesis questions accepted premises that emphasize an exclusive role for the state in directing political change and the prevailing wisdom that the intifada was inherently violent. The fundamental question posed is how, despite decades of a Palestinian policy of armed struggle, nonviolent strategies of opposition to Israel's military occupation came to dominate for more than two years in the early Palestinian intifada. The answer is found in the eighteen-year period preceding the start of the December 1987 uprising, in the implementation of a new political consensus constructed through three seminal developments. (1) A Palestinian civil society was created under occupation through civilian movements of social mobilization, led by committees which became the organizational base for the intifada. (2) Activist intellectuals around Arab East Jerusalem questioned monopolistic assumptions of armed struggle by advancing alternative ideas and symbols of political compromise and negotiations, which affected the means for reaching talks with Israel. (3) Knowledge and techniques from movements elsewhere in the world were transmitted in the occupied territories, including the insight that Palestinian cooperation with the occupation was sustaining it. Once the uprising began, the civil society achieved de facto self-governance; activist intellectuals propagated ideas and guided the Unified National Leadership Command; and resistance methods drew from tested techniques of other nonviolent struggles and the mostly nonviolent Palestinian resistance of the 1920s and 1930s. The balance of power shifted away from the PLO, to those inside the territories, where nonmilitary leadership networks had for almost two decades been disputing monopolies of power and Truth based on armed struggle and basing their strategies on pluralistic participation in civilian defence. Although some sectors, such as Hamas, resisted the strategy, a critical mass understood the new dialectic of power, and the greatest achievements of the intifada coincided with its most nonviolent phase.
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Note on Sources

As anyone doing research on the intifada knows, documents are elusive. Papers are pilfered, dispersed, destroyed, deliberately discarded, or not created in the first place. Messages among the representatives on the Unified National Leadership Command of the Uprising were passed in writing only if necessary, and then usually in small pellets created by the careful folding of onion skin paper, with only the briefest reference required to communicate. Similar circumstances pertained in the Prisoners’ Movement. The maximum possible was communicated by the spoken word or committed to memory. The Israelis had failed to reckon with the ability of Palestinian youth to memorize long tracts or circulars. Young memories, often trained in inferior schools by rote memorization, were able to recall position papers or the leaflets of the intifada verbatim, which could then be distributed to villages by an eleven or twelve year old with no need to carry paper. The absence of documents is also frequently a byproduct of their intentional destruction. All factions of the PLO were considered illegal by Israel, and after 1980 laws were passed making it a criminal act for Palestinians or Israelis to have contact with the organization.

Although formal documentation is thus scarce, I did gain access to useful material. Since Palestinians working with sympathetic Israelis did not always speak Hebrew, and Israelis who were in contact with Palestinians did not always speak Arabic, English often became the lingua franca. The minutes of the Committee Confronting the Iron Fist, for example, are in English. I was also able to make ample use of the archives and records available in East Jerusalem at the Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs, the Arab Studies Society, the Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence, and in private collections.

Interviews are the most salient sources of information for this research. The term ‘interview’, when used here, means a formal interview, scheduled in advance, and usually conducted with a microphone and two tape recorders. In some cases, the taping of interviews would have been awkward or impossible, so I relied solely on written notes. Telephone interviews are so indicated, and those being interviewed knew that I was taking notes on a computer. The term ‘communication’, when used here, refers to the posing of a limited question, an unplanned encounter, or the eliciting of verification in a setting less formal than an interview. In every instance, I cross-checked information obtained orally and sought verification to avoid reliance on only one source. In some instances, I interviewed sources over a period of years to ascertain that their accounts remained unchanged. In general, I have avoided using one interview as the sole basis of an asserted fact or interpretation, the exception being the official figures for the number of Israelis killed in the intifada, as given by the IDF spokesperson and head of information in Tel Aviv. Israeli publications were a researcher’s bonanza, and ironically they often provided confirmation of Palestinian analyses.

With regard to the transliteration of Arabic, I have generally adopted a simplified approach that omits hamzas and prefers ‘ay’ to ‘ai’ or, indeed, ‘ei’ (as in shaykh). With names, however, I have used spellings common in the news media or those adopted by the individuals themselves in English writings.
### Glossary of Abbreviations and Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AFSC</td>
<td>American Friends [Quakers] Service Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>AHC</td>
<td>Arab Higher Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANC</td>
<td>African National Congress, South African anti-apartheid organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANERA</td>
<td>American Near East Refugee Aid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANM</td>
<td>Arab Nationalist Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APG</td>
<td>All-Palestine Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMC</td>
<td>Arab Media Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATF</td>
<td>Arab Thought Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUB</td>
<td>American University at Beirut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSC</td>
<td>Birzeit Solidarity Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCIF</td>
<td>Committee Confronting the Iron Fist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSBZ</td>
<td>Committee of Solidarity with Bir Zeit University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSCE</td>
<td>Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DFLP</td>
<td>Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fateh</td>
<td>Harakat al-Tahrir al-Filistiniyya, or Palestinian National Liberation Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FBIS</td>
<td>Foreign Broadcast Information Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPWAC</td>
<td>Federation of Palestinian Women’s Action Committees, once the WWC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GFTU</td>
<td>General Federation of Trade Unions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GUPS</td>
<td>General Union of Palestinian Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GUPW</td>
<td>General Union of Palestinian Women</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hamas</td>
<td>Harakat al-Muqawama al-'Islamiyya, or Islamic Resistance Movement</td>
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<tr>
<td>IDF</td>
<td>Israel Defence Forces</td>
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<tr>
<td>JCP</td>
<td>Jordanian Communist Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>JMCC</td>
<td>Jerusalem Media and Communications Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MK</td>
<td>Member of the Israeli Knesset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCA</td>
<td>Muslim-Christian Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>NLL</td>
<td>National Liberation League, later the JCP</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGC</td>
<td>National Guidance Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Nongovernmental organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>NIS</td>
<td>New Israeli shekel, unit of currency introduced in February 1980, equivalent to ten discontinued Israeli pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSCE</td>
<td>Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA</td>
<td>Palestinian Authority, also the Palestinian National Authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>PASSIA</td>
<td>Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PJA</td>
<td>Palestinian Journalists’ Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCO</td>
<td>Palestinian Communist Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>PCP</td>
<td>Palestinian Communist Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>PCPG</td>
<td>Palestinian Communist Party of Gaza</td>
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<tr>
<td>PCSN</td>
<td>Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDFLP</td>
<td>Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, predecessor of the DFLP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PFLP</td>
<td>Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PFLP-GC</td>
<td>Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine—General Command (Ahmad Jabril)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLA</td>
<td>Palestine Liberation Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLF</td>
<td>Palestinian Liberation Front (Abu’l Abbas)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLO</td>
<td>Palestine Liberation Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Name</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPS</td>
<td>Palestine Press Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PNA</td>
<td>Palestinian National Authority, also the Palestinian Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PNC</td>
<td>Palestine National Council, also appears in the literature as Palestine National Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PNF</td>
<td>Palestinian National Front</td>
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<tr>
<td>PNF</td>
<td>Palestinian National Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>PNLA</td>
<td>Palestinian National Liberation Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPA</td>
<td>Palestinian Popular Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PWC</td>
<td>Palestinian Women’s Committees</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSS</td>
<td>Preventive Security Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RDP</td>
<td>Reconstruction and Development Plan for South Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SERPAJ</td>
<td>Servicio Paz y Justicia, Latin American movement for peace and justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNLU</td>
<td>Unified National Leadership of the Uprising, or the Command of the \textit{intifada}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNRWA</td>
<td>United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPI</td>
<td>United Press International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPMRC</td>
<td>Union of Palestinian Medical Relief Committees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPWWC</td>
<td>Union of Palestinian Working Women’s Committees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WRL</td>
<td>War Resisters League</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WWC</td>
<td>Women’s Work Committees, later the FPWAC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YMCA</td>
<td>Young Men’s Christian Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YAP</td>
<td>Youth Advocate Program</td>
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INTRODUCTION

The Palestinian intifada—one of numerous popular nonviolent movements that erupted at the end of the 1980s—may be viewed as the hastening of a long process of struggle for human and political rights by the Palestinians. It also constituted for the Palestinians a major shift in organization, thinking, leadership, and purpose. Changes had taken place during the 1970s and 1980s in Palestinian society in the areas of social mobilization, ideology, and the Palestinians' understanding of resistance, without which the intifada would not have persevered as it did. These evolutions explain how a tradition of armed struggle, which included some of this century's most notorious attacks on civilian and military targets, was consciously discarded in favour of the civilian, nonmilitary measures of struggle which differentiate the intifada, approaches that had not been tried since the 1920s and 1930s. These alterations also explain how, for a period of nearly three years, Israeli actions and reprisals failed to alter the fundamental refusal of the Palestinians to use weaponry against the soldiers who were in their midst. The two polarities of Palestinian struggle—use of the classic methods of nonviolent direct action at one end of the continuum and the surprise raids and manoeuvres of armed guerrilla resistance at the other—had both originated in the period after 1917. Seventy years later, the discipline of Palestinians in the occupied territories was such that the militant nonviolent resistance of the intifada could produce a Palestinian uprising of multidimensionality, durability, and political results, among them the beginnings of a negotiated settlement. In its reliance on massive social mobilization and its rootedness in popular committees, the intifada manifested the development over two decades of civil society, a complement to statehood, in this case its cornerstone.
Organization of the Thesis

This thesis questions the conventional wisdom that the intifada was violent—and inevitably so. The fundamental research question posed is how, despite decades of a Palestinian policy of armed struggle, nonviolent strategies of opposition to Israel's military occupation came to dominate in the Palestinian intifada. This study suggests that the answer lies in three major developments of the years preceding the start of the 1987 uprising.

(1) The development of civil society prepared the way for massive resistance. The first significant development to be the focus of this research is the organizational changes that prepared the populace of the West Bank and Gaza Strip for engagement in a mass movement. These alterations began to take place after the 1967 Israeli military occupation of the remaining lands allocated for the Palestinians in 1947 by the United Nations. Political organizing began in 1969, when the Palestine Communist party violated Israeli prohibitions on such activities and began building small nonmilitary institutions, based on the conviction that local governance and the organizing of community entities was the best preparation for independence. The formation of thousands of committees and groups in new networks of popular mobilization, had the effect of creating a civil society—a direct result of the conditions of occupation. Innumerable and as varied as the constituent groups that comprised them, voluntary associations came into being both to compensate for military occupation and to oppose it. Authority fragmented, as a handful of movements composed of youths, university students and faculties, women from diverse social classes, and prisoners in Israeli gaols assumed responsibility for opposing the military occupation themselves, rather than awaiting intervention from Palestinian exiles or Arab states. These movements were deliberately and markedly nonviolent. Those who propounded armed rebellion through the PLO-related military cadres comprised but one cluster among the dispersing centres of power, as innumerable other centres instead proffered civilian defence through political struggle. The leaders who were shaped within these civilian movements
expressed novel ideas and challenged monopolies of power and Truth based on armed struggle. Popular participation in these nonmilitary clubs, professional societies, and civilian movements familiarized their members with parliamentary procedure, elections, the making of decisions as a group, and the basics of nonmilitary methods of struggle. As the committees prepared themselves for continuous functioning when their elected leaders were arrested, the capacity for individual and group discipline was tested in the running of often large networks of surreptitious committees. Leadership derived from service rather than status. Over a period of nearly two decades, civilian nonmilitary mobilization gave rise to a civil society in which, from diversified centres of power, Palestinians in the occupied territories questioned assumptions of armed struggle as the only means to liberation. Such disciplined popular activity was essential to the construction of the capacity for widespread confrontation with the Israeli military occupation. Without it, the sustenance of an uprising on the scale of the intifada and with its breadth of popular participation may have been impossible.

(2) An epistemic community introduced new symbols and ideas. The change from reliance on paramilitary methods to simple strategies of civilian resistance was given its main political contours by an intellectual process initially involving fewer than two dozen individuals. A group of activists and intellectuals in Arab East Jerusalem acted as a catalyst in transforming Palestinian political objectives and goals, thereby affecting the means of achieving them. The first visible indication of the approaching intifada was the formation of Israeli-Palestinian committees beginning in 1981 and 1982, as these activist intellectuals broke with tradition and pressed for direct negotiations with the Israelis, based on a reevaluation of armed resistance and their analysis of what the Palestinians might accomplish politically.

This small but influential group of Palestinian activist intellectuals, many of whom had arisen to leadership in the student and faculty movements of the aforementioned civilian
mobilization, introduced alternative ideas and symbolism. These included an imagined 
solidarity between Israelis and Palestinians, in which what was forgotten was as important 
as what was remembered, and a conception of the military occupation as mutually 
humiliating to Israelis and Palestinians. Over a period of years, the activist intellectuals 
proposed that they, the Palestinians, would need to share the land and that expulsion of the 
Israelis was implausible or impractical. Seeking a two-state solution, they recast statehood 
as a matter of citizenship—a cognitive entitlement rather than the physical return to one’s 
grandparents’ citrus groves—and argued for a negotiated settlement. Veering away from the 
commando thinking which had produced so little and obscured the moral dimensions of the 
Palestinian question, they sought to redefine the orthodoxies of the guerrilla cadres, and 
transform ideologies and recruitment mythologies of armed struggle by the few into forms 
of struggle relying on invigouration of the many. Publishing formally and speaking publicly 
in Hebrew and English outlets as well as in Arabic, their advocacy of nonviolent tools, self- 
reliance, and insistence on direct talks held potential for sympathetic responses from Israel. 
Allying themselves with Israeli sympathizers, they situated Palestinian political rights and 
entitlements in the arena of widening international norms of human rights. Pointing the way 
to investment in ephemeral political goals, they suggested that the South African 
experience, with its acceptance of rights for all South Africans of whatever race, had more 
to offer the Palestinians than did the model of the Algerian war, in which the colonists were 
expelled. Persuaded that statehood arising from a negotiated settlement would be enhanced 
by the use of nonviolent strategies rather than armed struggle, their ideas for legitimizing 
Palestinian rights and throwing off occupation were cross-fertilized by education abroad and 
contact with Israeli dissidents.

A doctrine of popular participation was advanced, based on the belief that the 
political fate of the Palestinians resided with themselves, and that it was through their own 
exertions that the compromises necessary to living side by side with Israel would be created.
This second major development to be focused upon in this research—the creation of a new political calculus in the occupied territories by the activist intellectuals of an epistemic community around Arab East Jerusalem—is substantiated by three documents which offer concrete evidence that alternative ideas were being translated into action, and were thus shaping the incipient political outlines of the intifada. Meanwhile, the activist intellectuals’ long-term strategies of building a state were being crystallized in the ongoing organizing of civilian committees.

(3) External influences affected the mix of ideas and methods for resisting occupation. The turn to political rather than military means represented by the intifada was posited upon the withdrawal of Palestinian obedience to the Israeli occupation. Thus the third significant development to be investigated in this study is the spread of the insight that a people’s submission to a military occupation is required for its sustenance. Starting in 1983, this knowledge, and that of theories and methods of resistance from successful nonviolent movements elsewhere in the world, were disseminated into West Bank villages and refugee camps. Translated materials, workshops, lectures, and experimental applications of nonviolent direct action made it known that any Palestinian could withdraw his or her cooperation from the web of contacts through which Israel sustained its military occupation. The realization that the belligerent occupation had continued because of Palestinian compliance with it, and conversely the recognition that Palestinians possessed the power to refuse submission to it, was the single most important conceptual change that would animate the uprising.

Transmission of this idea came about much as did the dissemination of the samizdat used in the years prior to the Velvet Revolution of the Czechs and Slovaks against the Soviet Union, a period roughly coterminous with the dissemination of booklets, pamphlets, leaflets, flyers, and translations of documents in informal Palestinian channels. In contrast to the exquisitely argued and published opinions of the aforementioned activist intellectuals
who were working in Arabic, Hebrew, and English, these street handouts were never destined for publication. Their purpose was merely to communicate how other peoples had empowered themselves and fought oppression without arms. Included in such wholesale circulation were academic analyses of nonviolent movements throughout the twentieth century, translated into Arabic and summarized for rapid, pell-mell popular consumption. In contrast to the endeavours of the activist intellectuals already mentioned, who were seeking to change the thinking of Palestinians in the occupied territories as well as in the Tunis-based Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), a group involved in the Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence stood apart from the political factions. Mimeographing their pamphlets, in workshops, handouts, lectures, translated materials, and pilot demonstrations, they went directly into villages and refugee camps to spread insights from other movements. They also enlisted Israeli sympathizers in the floating of trial balloons of nonviolent direct action. For four years prior to the intifada, these catalytic agents argued through the evidence of other times and places that the Palestinians should sever themselves from efforts to use violence to fight the military occupation. Tendering no political solutions, they maintained that taking action was better than inaction, that nonviolent resistance was less self-destructive than armed struggle, that nonviolent struggle was within the limited capacity of the disarmed Palestinians, and, most important, that civil resistance would ultimately be more efficacious in redressing the fundamental injustices.

The three major factors that comprise the focus of this study would converge in the uprising that broke out in 1987. Their coalescence would make possible an opposition to the Israeli military occupation that was more effective than any claim to national rights that the Palestinians had made during the previous seventy years—that is, since Lord Balfour signed his letter to Lord Rothschild in 1917, promising a 'national home' for world Jewry in Palestine.

Addressing these three propositions, the stage is set by Chapter One, in which,
following a brief perusal of how the *intifada* came to world attention, the terminology used throughout the study is defined. In Chapter Two, Palestinian resistance in the 1920s and 1930s against the Zionist claims to Palestine is reviewed, since many of the methods employed during that period would reappear in the *intifada*. Chapter Three examines five civilian nonmilitary movements of resistance—antecedents to the uprising—which arose in the occupied Palestinian areas in the 1970s and 1980s and are explored for their effects on the fragmentation of authority and creation of civilian leadership networks. In Chapter Four, the work of the epistemic community of activist intellectuals around Arab East Jerusalem in the 1970s and 1980s is brought to light, specifically the way in which their ideas, organizing, and manufacturing of symbols shaped the parameters of the *intifada*. The chapter shows that the prohibition in the uprising against armed attacks on civilians and soldiers—which remarkably persisted from 9 December 1987 for more than four years—was embedded in their search for a negotiated settlement. Chapter Five illuminates the concrete ideas from other movements that were introduced into the occupied territories, especially the concept that the Palestinians possessed the power to withdraw their cooperation from the military occupation. Chapter Six considers the convergence of the three main developments identified by this study in the *intifada*, that is, nearly two decades of civilian mobilization produced a civil society; alternative ideas and symbols for Palestinian political goals affected the means of achieving them; and theories and techniques from nonviolent movements elsewhere were transmitted. In Chapter Seven, the unintended consequences and unpredicted results from the choice of a nonviolent strategy are assessed. The nonviolent parameters of the uprising held remarkably firm among the Palestinians for almost three years, yet, as this chapter shows, disagreement on what constituted a nonviolent approach, and counter-resistance employed by the Israelis, the PLO, and factional minorities within the occupied territories eventually brought about the collapse of the *intifada*. Chapter Eight answers the research question posed by this study.
and explains the appearance of nonviolent strategies in the uprising by amplifying the thesis that the intifada represented a conscious implementation by civil society groups of a new political consensus. Although the intifada is approached from its specificity as a Middle Eastern phenomenon, the study ends by setting the Palestinian uprising comparatively against the broad sweep of late twentieth-century popular nonviolent mass movements, a number of which were successful at lifting military occupations or establishing independent states.
Chapter One

NONVIOLENT RESISTANCE AND THE INTIFADA

Initial Reaction to the Intifada

Although major political upheaval rarely begins spontaneously, two schools of conventional thought evolved to explain the Palestinian intifada: in one, it was sudden unrest; in the other, it was prefabricated by the PLO in Tunis. Those who likened it to unprepared turbulence often hoped for its early demise, while those who saw it as externally controlled thought that coercive measures could end it. The intifada was not, however, a sudden unprepared outbreak, nor was it designed on PLO drawing boards in North Africa. It was not generated by the Great Powers, Israeli Labour party government leaders, or by Israeli peace groups—although all of these forces may have played a part. Israeli officials did not differentiate between the turn to nonviolent struggle represented by the intifada and the operations of the military cadres that had carried out cross-border sorties since 1965. For almost five years, the Israeli government acted as if the uprising were violent rioting that had to be suppressed ruthlessly by military action, rather than a political struggle against which militarized retaliation would not work. Israel had instituted the laws and military orders that made political organizing illegal and had for decades deported its logical potential negotiating partners. Seeing the intifada as leaderless mayhem, Israel did not discern that this was a form of struggle different from what it had become familiar with, nor that major compromises on political objectives and goals were being expressed in the uprising’s literature, whose clandestinity they had obliged.

The actual spark for the intifada was the Palestinian response to the 9 December

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1987 deaths of four labourers from the Gaza Strip, who were crushed when an Israeli truck collided with their two vehicles as they waited to pass through an army roadblock after a day's work in Israel. Seven other workers were injured. The funeral for three of those killed drew four thousand mourners and demonstrators. Although Israeli officials said the crash was accidental, rumours spread among the Palestinians that the deaths had been intentional, in retaliation for the stabbing death of an Israeli in the centre of Gaza City a day before. By 10 December, smoke from barricades of burning tyres covered much of Gaza.

Demonstrations materialized in the Jabaliya refugee camp, and when Israel Defence Force (IDF) soldiers arrived on the scene, they were pelted with stones thrown by the young. Two teenaged boys were blindfolded and tied to the bonnets of military jeeps by soldiers, and Israeli television broadcast footage of a man in civilian clothes—later identified as a member of the Israeli internal security service, Shin Bet—firing his Uzi into a group of stone-throwing Palestinians. On 11 December, soldiers in the Old City of Nablus killed two Palestinian youths. In the Balata refugee camp, near Nablus, harassment of worshippers leaving Friday prayers ended with a grown woman, teenaged girl, and pre-teen boy being killed by soldiers.

So began the intifada and, with it, a debate on the 'children of stones'. In the next few weeks, seemingly unorganized protests by Palestinians broke out across the occupied territories. Human walls of thousands blocked roads, impeding the Israeli army's movement. Standing in the line of fire, they threw stones and advanced towards the soldiers, despite the tear gas and rubber-coated bullets being used against them. At one funeral in the

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city of Khan Yunis, in the Gaza Strip, 35,000 Palestinians turned out.6 The demonstrations were described by an Israeli columnist as comparable to the riots by women and workers in Petrograd that inflamed the 1917 Russian Revolution.7 By 1 January, the IDF had more troops on the West Bank and Gaza Strip than had been required to capture the territories in 1967.8 Weeks later, youths were still advancing towards the soldiers despite tear gas and officers firing on their surging crowds, as in some places young unarmed Palestinians ‘liberated’ areas and took control.9

Despite the era of cheaply accessible image technology and instant communications, Israeli censors seemed to think they could control media coverage of the intifada by cutting off access to the Palestinians or expelling foreign news correspondents who disobeyed their ground rules.10 The U.S. media, in particular, accepted explanations from the Israeli government that defined the intifada as violent riots.11 This led Lewis Lapham to ponder how the story of Israel’s suppression of the intifada would be told if the uprising had taken

6Makram Khoury Machool, ‘This Isn’t Rebellion, This Is War’, reprint, original of which appeared 18 December 1987, in the Tel Aviv weekly Ha’ir, where the article became a media event. On the latter, see New Outlook, February 1988, pp. 12–13.


8The Reluctant Occupiers’, Jerusalem Post, 1 January 1988, p. 6.


place elsewhere, if General Manuel Noriega’s troops were “killing sixteen-year-old boys at the rate or one or two a day”, if Corazon Aquino’s armed forces were “blowing up houses”, or if Margaret Thatcher had ordered Irish rebels’ heads smashed against Westminster Abbey. Instead, Lapham writes, ‘Secretary Shultz assures everybody in Jerusalem that he will do nothing to interfere with the supplies of American weapons’, while ‘the American media borrow the definitions of the Israeli government and refer to the riots . . . as a cynical strategy in a long-standing war rather than as a popular uprising born of desperation and genuine national feeling’.

Eventually, after several years, the Israeli government would recognize the unrest as a political phenomenon and move towards negotiations, but by that time the perception of the uprising as a violent rebellion would be widespread and entrenched. The opening sentence of a study by an Israeli professor on U.S. public opinion concerning the intifada, for example, reads, ‘One of the main goals of the Palestinian uprising . . . was to alter U.S. policy through a political communication process based on violence’. Its describes the uprising as ‘mass violent demonstrations and riots’. Years later, the intifada is routinely characterized by violent terminology in Israel and the United States. Even the sophisticated American journalist Barton Gellman used the expression ‘intifada gunmen’ when alluding to the youths of the uprising, implying an armed revolt. Another commentator, though not suggesting the use of weaponry, uses the phrase ‘seven-year stone-throwing intifada’. Little clarity came from the Palestinians on this matter. This was partly attributable to the illegality of resistance activities which could lead to the arrest of legitimate spokespersons, but it was also due to divisiveness and fragmentation among

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Palestinian factions, which did not speak with one voice. Some tendencies refused to adopt, or wanted to abandon, the nonviolent strategy. PLO chairman Yasir Arafat increased the confusion by using the vocabulary of military personnel in referring to the youth of the intifada as ‘generals’.

Israel never used tanks to put down the uprising, as had other governments facing nonviolent unrest, such as the Chinese in Tiananmen Square. Instead, the state issued a swift and arbitrary order, on 3 January 1988, to deport nine Palestinians said to have been involved in the street disorders. Likud party leader Yitzhak Shamir, as Israeli prime minister, ordered unprecedented displays of a ‘heavy hand’ by the IDF to contain the uprising. The term ‘iron fist’ was not coined by Shamir, although he often associated himself with the term. Ha-yad hazaqah, or ‘strong hand’, and barzel Yisrael, or ‘iron of Israel’, had been used by David Ben-Gurion, and frequently reiterated by Israeli officials. The Labour party’s Yitzhak Rabin, the coalition government’s defence minister, was ‘unabashed in defending his policy of naked terrorisation of the Palestinian population’. In the occupied territories, as many as five helicopters might hover over a given area at a time;

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16A former IDF officer maintains that Israel’s first use of tanks in any Palestinian turbulence was in Jerusalem in September 1996, after high casualties resulted from Israeli bombings in southern Lebanon and Israel opened a tunnel in Jerusalem that runs alongside the Temple Mount and Haram al-Sharif. Street demonstrations in protest were followed by altercations. Reuven Gal, one-hour interview (Jerusalem, 12 March 1997).

17This prompted one of four UN resolutions in four weeks reminding Israel that the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and Jerusalem were occupied areas and calling upon Israel to adhere to the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Times of War, 12 August 1949. The convention was drafted to formulate internationally recognized civil and moral codes of behaviour for an occupying power in a particular territory. Middle Eastern signatories include Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria. After Israel’s announcement of the nine deportations, despite U.S. protestations, for the first time since 1981 the United States voted against Israel in the Security Council. Jules Kagian, ‘The Four Resolutions’, Middle East International, 23 January 1988, p. 10. Israel, in response, claimed the convention applied only to mass expulsions. George D. Moffett III, ‘Palestinians Say Expulsions Were Expected and Won’t Work’, Christian Science Monitor, 13 April 1988.


snipers shot demonstrators in the legs. An unusual directive to Israeli soldiers to shoot in the legs appeared merciful, but it also represented a temptation to use excessive force. This is because IDF policy permitted shooting in circumstances that were not life threatening. According to Human Rights Watch, it was 'impossible to prevent this from becoming a shoot-to-kill policy', which 'led to a large number of unjustifiable killings with only rare adverse consequences for the soldiers'. After 2,000 arrests, an Israeli defence reporter writes, 'either new “troublemakers” were blossoming as fast as the old ones were being plucked off the streets, or the wrong people were being detained'. As so-called rubber bullets were produced and tear-gas rations increased in armouries, some soldiers in the IDF who had been trained to fight wars beyond Israel's borders recognized that their forces were facing 'the enemy within—a difficult transition for a fighting force equipped, trained and psychologically honed to defend Israel from external threat'. Binyamin Ben-Eliezer, a retired brigadier-general and a former battalion commander under General Ariel Sharon when the IDF had used force to quell turbulence in Gazan refugee camps in 1971, warned that Israel was dealing with a popular uprising and that policies of suppression would not work against 'a generation without hope, a society that feels it has nothing to lose'. Nonetheless, on 19 January, Defence Minister Rabin propounded what became the government's formal policy for responding to what was already called the intifada: 'The first priority is to prevent violent demonstrations with force, power, and blows'. Rabin said, 'We shall prove to them even if it takes two months, that they will achieve nothing by

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23‘Reluctant Occupiers’, p. 6.


violence'.

One week later, Prime Minister Shamir told the Herut party that his task was to reinstitute the fear of death. Having been criticized for shooting demonstrators, the army distributed wooden and metal clubs to soldiers, in addition to Galil assault rifles. The policy authorized the breaking of arms and legs. Armed with wooden truncheons, Israeli soldiers 'methodically' beat Palestinians, some 'deliberately breaking bones or pounding their prisoners into unconsciousness'. In news accounts, Israeli soldiers were reported as 'cruel, brutal and ruthless, simply breaking the hands, arms and legs of suspected ringleaders of the riots'. By 23 January, a check of hospitals and clinic records by the Israeli newspaper Ha'Aretz, or The Land, showed that 197 Palestinians had been treated for fractured limbs within three days of Rabin's 'break their bones' mandate and his declaration that the army would, as he phrased it, use 'might, power and beatings' to crush the intifada.

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30 Wolf Blitzer, 'Senior U.S. Officials, Jews Warning Israel to Stop Beatings Immediately', Jerusalem Post, 24 January 1988, p. 4. 'The policy of beatings has reached monstrous dimensions', Citizens' Rights Movement members of the Knesset Yossi Sarid and Dedi Zucker write, after touring Gaza on 21 January 1988 and compiling testimony to produce a report. 'The results of the defense minister's policy can be seen on the hands, backs, and heads of hundreds of youths and old people in the Gaza Strip'. Yossi Sarid and Dedi Zucker, 'Special Report: The Occupied Territories', New Outlook, March–April 1988, p. 16. Not until February 1989 were the first Israeli soldiers brought to trial for beating Palestinians to death, when four soldiers from the élite Givati brigade, three privates and a corporal, were charged by army prosecutors with manslaughter for the killing of Hani al-Shan-d. George D. Moffett III, 'Do Israeli Officers Order Beatings? Four Soldiers Accused in Palestinian's Death Say Higher Echelons Urge Use of Force; ARMY ON TRIAL', Christian Science Monitor, 15 February 1989.

31 John Kifner, 'Arabs Recount Israeli Beatings, The New Policy', New York Times, 23 January 1988, p. 1; Susan Sappir, 'Israeli Police Minister Denies Army Beating Palestinians', Reuter Library Report, 24 January 1988. In June 1988, at four hospitals in Gaza and the West Bank, physicians showed me the results of Rabin's bone-breaking policy: deliberately inflicted mid-limb fractures, which heal more slowly than breaks at joints, and crushed hands considered beyond rehabilitation because they can neither be set nor mended. Surgeons produced glass bullets removed in operations; they claimed that these were designed to evade detection by X-rays, resulting in the need for increased surgical intrusion. Excised 'rubber bullets' were made of ballistic metal coated with a thin veneer of rubber. I was at the time a member of the board of directors of
Near Nablus, in the village of Salim, on 2 February, Israeli soldiers and settlers broke up a procession after prayers at a mosque, beating and trampling four youths before a master-sergeant ordered a military bulldozer (used for sealing the village’s gateway) to bury the youths alive. The driver, who had refused an order to run over them, instead agreed to cover them with a metre of dirt. Villagers were able to dig them out after they lost consciousness and before they suffocated, but they could not take them to hospital until the next day because of a blockade and curfew. 32 On 8 February 1988, Khader Tarazi, nineteen years old and from a prominent Roman Catholic family in Gaza, ducked into a house to wait out a demonstration. Israeli soldiers followed him, beat him with gun butts, and when he tried to flee, four or five soldiers put him on the bonnet of their military vehicle and beat him still more. Neighbours told the family that the soldiers then tossed his lifeless body into the vehicle and drove off. 33 At his funeral the next day, six hundred mourners were tear-gassed. 34 By 9 February, two months after the start of the intifada, 51 Palestinians were reported to have been killed. 35 As of 30 April, 179 were reportedly killed. 36 In early 1989, it was reported that plastic bullets had killed 47 Palestinians and wounded 1,500 in the

Save the Children, a private development agency with a programme in the occupied territories, and we were unable to recruit through searches in numerous countries physical therapists who had encountered such incapacitation from numerous small broken bones in smashed hands.


previous six months, and Israeli pediatrician Ruchama Marton charged that the Israeli government was impeding medical services as a form of collective punishment. It was also confirmed that rubber-coated bullets were lethal at close range.37

The prevailing official Israeli view was that the intifada was a ‘war’ that must be won. So said Justice Minister Dan Meridor in justifying Israel’s use of collective punishment as a deterrence.38 The U.S. Department of State lent credence to this view: ‘The Israeli government has regarded the uprising as a new phase of the 40-year war against Israel and as a threat to the security of the state’.39 According to an Israeli specialist on the IDF, the Israeli forces considered the intifada to be a violent uprising and military action:

[T]he best proof is in the fact that Israel never handled the intifada by police forces or semi-military forces, but handled the intifada by brigades and divisions of the army—mobilizing full brigades, full divisions. They established special divisions for Gaza and for the West Bank to handle the intifada. . . . Special weapons, special instruments, special vehicles, special tactics, but, nevertheless, military. Not police, not riot control, . . . a military affair. . . . Until 1990 . . . the instructions [to the soldiers] were, ‘get as close as you can to these bastards, and once they start shooting or throwing rocks, go get them, get into the houses, put the pressure on’.40

On 8 February 1988, three young men, bound and tied, were pushed by Israeli troops out of helicopters from a height of three or four metres at the village of Jama’in, near Tulkarem.41 That something different was afoot was demonstrated when the Jama’in villagers responded by staging a three-day sit-down and hunger strike.42 Even before this


event, some Israeli journalists had begun to recognize a departure from the past:

They have learned the power of the international media, the intricacies of Israel’s internal divisions and the nature of Pan-Arab politics. They are graduates of high schools, teacher-training colleges, and universities their parents could not attend. . . . Today’s ‘enemy’ has used no weapon more sophisticated than a Molotov cocktail. Their fury has not been directed against Israeli civilian populations. They have taken no orders from the PLO. It has taken the defence establishment weeks to recognize the changes. The army has been slow in adapting to new realities. 43

A salient feature of the intifada, an aspect making it worthy of further study as an historico-political phenomenon, rather than as a single event or aberration, is the low number of Israeli soldiers killed in the numerous daily clashes with the Palestinian populace. 44 One year into the uprising, 70,000 Israeli soldiers were deployed in the occupied territories. 45 A journalist and Palestinian insider sent by London-based international news syndicates to cover the uprising claims that a predominantly nonviolent strategy was carried out ‘almost perfectly’ in the first year. Six months after the uprising began, he reports, ‘not a single soldier has been killed by Palestinian stones’. Skepticism may greet such an assessment, yet Israeli data support his conclusion that the number of incidents involving lethal weapons in Palestinian hands was ‘very small’. 46 A Palestinian human-rights monitoring group


44Frank Collins, ‘How Stones Can Beat Guns’, Middle East International, 19 March 1988, p. 16. A criminologist at Hebrew University in Jerusalem describes the actions of Israeli soldiers in the first nine months of the uprising: ‘They have killed more than two hundred Palestinians, seriously wounded (by beating, tear-gassing and shooting) many thousands more, locked up some seven thousand people with hardly a semblance of judicial procedure (including nearly two thousand under “administrative detention”) . . . blown up houses, and enforced prolonged curfews on hundreds of thousands of people in villages and refugee camps. . . . Beating up people in their homes, breaking their limbs, clubbing them unconscious, shooting unarmed demonstrators in the back. . . . By most standards of national and international law, these are actual crimes. Israel is not involved in an official state of war—the enemy is made up not of armed soldiers but of a million and a half people for whom Israel is responsible’. Stanley Cohen, ‘Criminology and the Uprising’, Tikkun, September/October 1988, p. 60.


46Daoud Kuttab, ‘Shooting at Demonstrators: What Is the Israeli Policy?’ dispatch filed with news media, East Jerusalem, mid-1988, Kuttab private papers; idem, ‘Will Guns Be Used?’ unpublished paper, East Jerusalem, 1988, Kuttab private papers. Kuttab donated two files of computer printouts for this research, which offer a trail through the first two years of the intifada. When the uprising erupted, none of its progenitors was known, and authoritative journalists on the subject were equally few. Kuttab had been managing editor of al-Fajr, the English-language Palestinian weekly, since 1986. He became a correspondent for Middle East Mirror and Middle East International and a political adviser to Reuters. In 1997, he was given the International Press Freedom Award by the Committee to Protect Journalists.
concludes that 'not a single Israeli soldier . . . [was] killed in the first year of the uprising during the course of what the authorities refer to as riot control'.

IDF sources officially report the following: Four Israeli soldiers were killed in the West Bank and none in Gaza in 1988; two Israeli soldiers were killed in the West Bank and two in Gaza in 1989; two Israeli soldiers were killed in the West Bank and one in Gaza in 1990; and one Israeli soldier was killed in the West Bank and none in Gaza in 1991. In comparison to the twelve Israeli soldiers killed during this four-year time period, 706 Palestinians were killed by Israelis, according to the IDF. Although the IDF reports that nine Israeli civilians were killed in the West Bank during 1988 and 1989, the data suggest a deviation from the long-standing pattern of refusal by the PLO to make a distinction between civilians and military forces.

Historically, most of the PLO's armed resistance had been against civilians. From 1967 to 1970, 115 Israeli civilians were killed in Palestinian operations and 687 were wounded. Between 1969 and 1985, the different PLO factions were responsible for more than 8,000 attacks, primarily in Israel. Of these operations, 435 were overseas, in which 650 Israelis were killed, some three-fourths of them civilians.

As the days of uprising turned into months, and the months became years, intelligible restraint persisted. Two years into the intifada, an Israeli journalist writes:

[P]ractically no weapons have been used against the occupation army. No one doubts that secret arsenals of guns exist in the occupied territories—they are,

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48Lieutenant Colonel Yehuda Weinraub, IDF spokesperson and head of information, Tel Aviv, records pursuant to a telephone request of 18 March 1997, tr. Reuven Gal.


in fact, used to execute informers—yet the decision not to use them against the occupation soldiers has been generally obeyed. This is all the more remarkable, and perhaps even unique, if one considers that thousands of close relatives of people killed, maimed and imprisoned are seething with rage.53

This thesis, however, is not about numbers. It does not focus on the hundreds of deaths and thousands of human-rights breaches, incarcerations, atrocities, injuries, or violations of international treaties that occurred between 1987 and 1993; thorough documentation of such statistics from the intifada is available on computerized data bases from a range of credible international sources, including Israeli human-rights monitoring groups.54 It also does not concern the extensive debate in Israel and the United States on suppression of the uprising, nor does it cover aspects of the Geneva Conventions of 1949, regarding Israel and the Palestinians, amply covered elsewhere.55 To borrow a phrase from the writer Hunter S. Thompson, this dissertation concerns the ‘Geneva Conventions of the mind’.

Overview of Nonviolent Resistance in the First Two Years of the Intifada

Considering the carmine revolt that ended in 1939 (to be reviewed in the next chapter), it is curious that the intifada is often portrayed as a form of armed struggle.56 Although accounts often emphasize the stones thrown by Palestinian youth and gunfire returned by Israeli soldiers, it has been estimated that 80 per cent or more of the measures


55For example, see Adam Roberts, ‘Decline of Illusions: The Status of the Israeli-Occupied Territories over 21 Years’, International Affairs 64:3 (Summer 1988): 345–59.

56For example, see Joel Greenberg, ‘A PLO Guerrilla’s Widow Returns to Gaza’, International Herald Tribune, 5 August 1994, p. 2.
called for in the first two years of the uprising was nonviolent.\textsuperscript{57} After the start of the intifada, violence against Israeli private citizens was proscribed—a two-year moratorium aimed at transforming the attitudes of Israelis\textsuperscript{58}—but in actuality, the proscription against weaponry persisted much longer.\textsuperscript{59} An analysis of the first thirty-nine leaflets of the uprising—the chief means of coordinating actions—found that more than 90 per cent of the appeals in the initial 18 months of the intifada was explicitly nonviolent in method.\textsuperscript{60} The tendency of news media to report exceptional, visual action undoubtedly had the effect of emphasizing the throwing of stones, and the necessity for reporters to file their dispatches under the pressure of daily deadlines probably contributed to a lack of differentiation concerning nonmilitary methods and techniques. Nonetheless, some journalists saw the uprising otherwise: ‘It is largely a secret war, waged more with radio broadcasts, clandestine printing presses and local underground committees than with stones’.\textsuperscript{61}

Misperceptions of the intifada were common, even among Palestinians. Some Palestinians abroad may have viewed it as merely a manoeuvre or artful device. Not knowing what had changed since their families left Mandate Palestine in 1947, 1948, or 1967, some saw the uprising as the weakened last resort of a broken people. Also affecting


\textsuperscript{59}Not until the end of the fourth year do IDF figures reveal a departure from this moratorium. In 1992, 6 Israeli soldiers were killed by gunfire in the West Bank and 6 in Gaza; in 1993, the numbers rose to 9 in the West Bank and 10 in Gaza; in 1994, the corresponding figures were 4 and 9. During these three years, 349 Palestinians were killed by Israelis. From 1988 to 1994, 56 Israeli soldiers were killed, a period of six years during which 1,055 Palestinians were killed by Israelis. Lieutenant Colonel Weinraub, IDF, 18 March 1997.


misconceptions was the light cast by exiled Palestinian activists who, enthralled by the tradition of the secret armed bands who took up bloody revolt after 1929 (to be discussed in Chapter Two), portrayed the intifada from Tunis and elsewhere as if it were violent rebellion.

The first phase of the modern Palestinian national movement is considered to have begun in the years immediately prior to World War I, specifically in 1916, in bewilderment from the conflicting pledges and ambiguous obligations of Britain, France, and Russia, as they agreed on dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire. What may be seen as the second stage began in the late 1950s, approximately 1957, with the establishment of resistance movements, such as Fateh, culminating in the formation of the PLO in 1964. By July 1968, armed struggle had been adopted as the only means of liberating Palestine and was codified in the Palestinian National Covenant, or Charter, a revision by the fourth Palestine National Council (PNC); thus, the register of Palestinian resistance to Zionism was framed within a concept of ‘armed popular revolution’. The principal means of executing this policy was to be through operations of guerrilla warfare, a policy not substantially revised until the advent of the intifada. In the mid-1930s, faith in some quarters had been placed in other Arab

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63. The policy would not be formally altered doctrinally until PLO chairman Arafat, elected rais, or president, of the Palestinian Authority, in 1996, managed, in effect, to reconcile Zionism and Arab nationalism. On 24 April 1996, at a meeting of the Palestinian Legislative Council in Gaza City, he secured a verbal commitment for revocation of the portions of the Palestinian National Charter that called for the destruction of Israel. One of the tasks required of the Palestinian legislators, also elected in 1996, was to fulfill the pledge made by the PLO at the behest of Israel, in return for the signing of the Oslo I accords, to overturn all articles in the charter calling for the destruction of the State of Israel. The Declaration of Principles completed in Oslo by Israel and the PLO, and signed at the White House on 13 September 1993, is known as Oslo I. The Interim Palestinian-Israel Agreement regarding the West Bank and Gaza Strip, known as Oslo II, was signed by Israel and the PLO on 28 September 1995, also at the White House. As Israel continued to reject the 1996 verbal nullification of the offending articles of the 1964 charter as insufficient, on 14 December 1998, U.S. President William J. Clinton traveled to Gaza to witness the PNC as it voted with a show of hands to amend the charter. This action was accepted by Israel. ‘Palestinians Soften Charter; Clinton, in Gaza, Witnesses Nullification of Anti-Israel Clauses’, International Herald Tribune, 15 December 1998, p. 1; Alan Philips, ‘Palestinian Vote Clears the Way for Summit’, Daily Telegraph, 15 December 1998, p. 1; Christopher Walker, ‘Palestine Receives Clinton’s Support’, The Times, 15 December 1998, p. 1; Patrick Cockburn, ‘Clinton’s Visit Seals Destiny of Palestine’, Independent, 15 December 1998, p. 1.
states, and was supplanted in the 1940s by hope that Arab League intervention might help.\textsuperscript{64}

When Arab unity produced so few fruits, self-reliance and armed struggle were propounded as basic principles.\textsuperscript{65}

Why, then, has the \textit{intifada} not been universally understood to stand in great contrast with the policy enunciated by the 1968 charter? The question is salient, since the effectiveness of nonviolent struggle can be related to expectations. As one respected study notes,

\begin{quote}
[\text{A}]n action is not only non-violent by virtue of its intrinsic properties, but by virtue also of being performed in a situation in which more violent methods would normally be thought of as appropriate. ... One reason why non-violence 'works' is precisely that the action is less violent than the opponent would have expected.\textsuperscript{66}
\end{quote}

The use of nonviolent sanctions is not unknown in the broader Arab context.\textsuperscript{67} As early as 1968, four years after the formal establishment of the PLO, the Princeton-educated Pakistani political scientist Eqbal Ahmad was asserting that 'highly organized, militant, nonviolent struggle' by Palestinians should be the preferred alternative to armed struggle:

\begin{quote}
The roads should be clogged with people lying down, offices blocked with hunger strikers. ... Large marches should be organized into the West Bank and Gaza. Return home. When old men or women die, they wish to be buried in their ancestral villages. Funeral processions should move across the frontiers into Israel. The symbols of exodus must be reversed. A liberation movement seeks to expose the basic contradictions of the adversarial society.\textsuperscript{68}
\end{quote}

Ahmad, who had taught at the Pakistan Military Academy, held conversations with individuals in the PLO during the 1970s. In 1974 in Beirut, he proposed to Chairman Arafat

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{64}Porath, 'Political Organization of the Palestinian Arabs', \textit{Palestinian Arab Politics}, ed. Moshe Ma'oz, (Jerusalem, Harry S. Truman Research Institute, Hebrew University, 1975), p. 19.


\textsuperscript{68}Eqbal Ahmad, 'Yasser Arafat's Nightmare' \textit{MERIP Reports, Middle East Research and Information Project} 13 (November-December 1983): 21.
\end{footnotes}
and the PLO a variation of Gandhi’s 1930 march to the sea.  

Ahmad’s suggestion of processions of tens of thousands of Palestinian refugees walking from the refugee camps of Amman to the Allenby Bridge was rejected.  

In fact, it would not have worked because the PLO's political strategy has long been jeopardized by its military strategy.

Fateh’s belief that armed struggle was necessary to stimulate political struggle, and its ideological 'insistence' on the use of 'all available means' to advance the struggle had the effect of limiting, rather than enhancing, effectiveness.  

Such doctrines impeded the type of strategic differentiation that would have allowed for assertion of prepared, coherent nonviolent resistance. The use of militant nonviolence in the 1987 uprising was also doubtless suspect because of an erroneous presumption that nonviolent direct action is a creed, or faith, based on love—a matter of spirituality or a system of morality. It can be an article of faith, but not necessarily. Also, nonviolent struggle is frequently misunderstood as pacifism.  

Indeed, nonviolent struggle is often chosen when no other alternatives are available;  

60 In January 1930, Gandhi offered to the British government 'Eleven Points', including abolition of the British-imposed Salt Laws that taxed a chemical compound essential for life by prohibiting the making of salt for personal use from sea-water, thus penalizing the poor in India. When the points were ignored, a letter to Lord Irwin, the Viceroy, was rejected, and Gandhi believed all other avenues for getting the Salt Laws lifted had been exhausted, he announced a 241-mile march from Ahmedabad to Dandi. It started with seventy-nine adherents and swelled to thousands who walked to the sea and deliberately violated the statutes. More than 60,000 Indians were gaoled in the nationwide civil-disobedience movement that followed. B. R. Nanda, Mahatma Gandhi: A Biography (Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1958), pp. 290-97. Gandhi chose the objective of removing these prohibitions as the basis for national civil disobedience not only because of the fundamental injustice the laws represented, but because they stood as an emblem of an unpopular and unrepresentative foreign government. The march was part of a year-long civil disobedience movement in 1930 and 1931, undertaken as part of the political programme of the Indian National Congress for independence.

61 In an interview, Arafat recalled meeting Ahmad in 1974: 'I listened to him'. Asked if he had given consideration to Ahmad’s proposals, he responded 'No'. Yasir Arafat, one-hour interview (Gaza City, 24 January 1996). Bassam Abu Sharif, then adviser to Arafat, also denied any influence from Ahmad. Bassani Abu Sharif, two-hour interview (Gaza City, 24 January 1996).  


63 In the case of India, an expedient view was acceptable to Gandhi as a matter of policy. Gene Sharp, Gandhi as a Political Strategist, with Essays on Ethics and Politics (Boston, Porter Sargent Publishers, 1979), pp. 296, 297. According to one of his biographers, few of Gandhi's associates accepted the severe political, religious, and personal discipline that Gandhi imposed on himself. Indeed, most of them only accepted
exigency is usually, if not always, a factor. When, on 17 October 1988, Israeli state radio reported that Prime Minister Shamir had warned that 'if any Palestinians begin using firearms, not one will survive', it may be inferred that the warning was taken seriously.74

Palestinians resisted the introduction of weapons, Daoud Kuttab writes, because of fears that the 'wide participatory nature of the intifada' would have been altered if guns had been used.75 This comment reveals an intrinsically democratic property of nonviolent struggle—no one person can make the decision for someone else to incur the risks involved in what has been called the 'political equivalent of war'.76 Clearly the intifada was 'extremely militant',77 but more to the point, its use of revolutionary nonviolence was extremely militant.

Nonviolent resistance had been used after Israel formally annexed the Golan Heights in 1981, when an Israeli government mandate prompted its adoption by the Druze populace there. Orders were given in December 1981 that the Druzes must accept Israeli identity cards. To the Druzes, who consider themselves Syrian, this would have constituted acceptance of Israeli citizenship.78 The Golani Druzes, therefore, rejected the requirement to obtain new identity papers. This was not an inconsequential act, because lack of an Israeli identity card under occupation makes travel and cashing cheques difficult, precludes the registering of marriages and births, and increases the likelihood of random arrest. Throughout a siege of nonviolent methods in opposition to foreign rule, Jawaharlal Nehru and several members of the Congress Working Committee viewed nonviolent struggle solely as a practical instrument. No mass movement in India could have been conducted on the basis of nonviolence as a creed. B. R. Nanda, telecopier facsimile, New Delhi, 6 October 1995.


75Kuttab, 'Will Guns Be Used?'


78The sect has Islamic origins and lives as a separate Arab community in the mountainous villages of the Golan; yet, unlike Muslim and Christian Palestinians, the Druzes are conscripted and serve in the Israeli army, where they have acquired a reputation for ferocity in carrying out their instructions against Palestinians. Also see Gabriel Ben-Dor, 'Intellectuals in Israeli Druze Society', Palestine and Israel in the 19th and 20th Centuries, ed. Elie Kedourie and Sylvia G. Haim (London, Frank Cass, 1982), pp. 229–54.
forty-three days during which Israeli authorities attempted to force the Druze to comply, electricity and water to four villages with a combined population of 13,000 were severed and homes were demolished. Druze protesters who were wounded when a peaceful demonstration was attacked were denied ambulance services. The secretive community refused to obey orders:

During the siege, Israeli troops went door to door. They forced entry, confiscated villagers' identification papers from a period of Syrian rule or military occupation and left them Israeli identification papers instead. The following morning, the town squares of the various villages were littered with Israeli identity cards.

When five Druzes were arrested for lacking identity cards, the entire village appeared for the trial—not to protest, they told Israeli authorities, but to turn themselves in for the same crime. The Israeli government ultimately yielded, although not all issues were resolved.

Terms of Nonviolent Struggle

Applications of nonviolent direct action have been used in the twentieth century for achieving national independence, national defence, social alterations, reform within systems or governments, and resolution of community problems. Precisely because of the broad applicability and diversity in implementation of nonviolent direct action, specificity in terminology is highly important, and a lexicon for nonviolent struggle necessarily has developed, much of it initially codified by Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, but later amplified and subjected to linguistic evolution.

Resolution of Conflict: Nonviolent techniques are increasingly used to resolve conflicts within given systems or governments. Trade unions have historically used nonviolent sanctions with significant results. Neighbourhood disputes benefit from

80 Ibid., p. 55.
81 Ibid., p. 57.
nonviolent methods, such as mediation, riot prevention, and crowd control. Police are increasingly trained in such measures for handling criminals or stopping fights.

**Social Justice and Reform:** In confronting authority in seeking reform, nonviolent strategies can accelerate a search for social equity. Nonviolent techniques have been employed for political purposes and for revision of national priorities, as well as in disputes over the careless handling or continued manufacture of toxic wastes and on behalf of environmental cleanup. The U.S. civil rights movement also falls into this category.

**National Defence:** Civilian strategies for national defence have been reinforced by recent studies of Czech, Danish, Dutch, and Norwegian resistance to the Nazis during World War II. Where civilians resist nonviolently together, subjugation by an invading or occupying army can be made extremely difficult. The Baltic states are working together to implement joint programmes of civilian defence for dissuading attacks from belligerent neighbours. Such programmes require that a large per cent of the population be trained in a coordinated and disciplined effort.

**Self-Rule and Nation Building:** Knowledge of how to struggle for justice, human rights, and democracy without bloodshed can shape the growth of new social, political, and economic institutions and the ways in which they evolve regarding governance. Although ending British rule in India was central to the Gandhian campaigns on the subcontinent, in addition to the struggle for independence, Gandhi believed that training a population in methods of noncooperation constituted training for self-rule.

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82 Jacques Semelin, *Unarmed against Hitler: Civilian Resistance in Europe, 1939–1943*, tr. Suzan Huser-Kapit (Westport, Praeger, 1993). Semelin uses comparative studies to analyze nonviolent resistance against Nazi Germany. He includes the actions of teachers and church leaders in Norway, underground organizing by the physicians of Holland, work by the church in Germany, resistance in Poland, including daring efforts by Polish academicians and teachers, activities of Czech and Slovak students and professors, and mass strikes by industrial workers and miners in Belgium and France.

Finding the Right Word

The dominant influence in Gandhian thought was Jainism, originally a reforming sect of Hinduism, with its fundamental concept of *ahimsa*, defined as non-injury to all forms of life. Gandhian interpretation applied it to the social and political spheres of life, moulding the idea into a tool of nonviolent action to affect change. Yet, for Gandhi, finding the right word was a task not so easily accomplished. The term *passive resistance* was initially used by him and his associates, when speaking English, to describe the technique for practising *ahimsa*. It conveyed the wrong impression, however, because nonviolent resistance is an active, not a passive, force. In meeting with Europeans, Gandhi found the term confusing; he discovered that, for their ears, it was 'too narrowly construed, that it was supposed to be a weapon of the weak, that it could be characterized by hatred, and that it could manifest itself as violence'.

A prize was offered through the South African journal *Indian Opinion* for the best suggestion of a single word to express the core concept involved in practising *ahimsa*. The winning entry of *sadagraha*, or firmness in good conduct, was altered by Gandhi to *satyagraha*, Gujarati for holding onto Truth, firmness in Truth, or relentless insistence on Truth—a means of converting the power in nonviolence, or *ahimsa*, into political action. In concept, *satyagraha* is equivalent to nonviolent resistance. The idea of mutuality is embedded in its meaning, bringing benefits and responsibilities to both parties, attaining an end without injury to anyone. Soon after Gandhian campaigns started in the early part of the twentieth century, dictionaries in various languages began to include their own version of *nonviolence* as a recognized word.

Wherever 'nonviolence' is used here, it signifies nonviolent resistance, nonviolent

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struggle, nonviolent direct action, revolutionary nonviolence, militant nonviolence, nonviolent sanctions, or civil resistance. At no time is a spiritual faith or belief intimated.

The word *intifada* is a linguistically nonviolent construction and carries no implication of violence. *Nafada*, the Arabic verb from which *intifada* is drawn, has the connotation of recovery or recuperation. The choice of this particular word goes beyond *samud*, or steadfastness, a term previously used by Palestinians for resisting by holding fast. *Intifada* implies the ‘shaking-off’ of Israeli occupation, like shaking the dirt off a carpet or threshing a rug—getting rid of something, not cooperating, or ‘shaking off dirt from one’s sandals’. Palestinian scholar Shukri Abed stresses the internal meaning of the word to Palestinians, signifying to tremble, shudder, or jump to one’s feet. To Palestinian cultural anthropologist ‘Ali Hussein Qleibo, the term ‘connotes the removal of unnecessary elements; shaking off preexisting weaknesses, . . . updating and revitalizing the system’. The English word *uprising*—the most common translation of *intifada* and the word chosen by English-speaking Palestinians—fails to convey the sense of sloughing off passivity or of newly

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87Sanctions refer to pressures, punishments, or action used to thwart, change, or penalize the behaviour of others, including institutions and states. When used by states, sanctions may help enforce the obedience of the people. They may be used by one state to punish another. Sanctions can also be applied by the citizenry against their own state or by various nongovernmental groups against others. Gene Sharp, *Social Power and Political Freedom* (Boston, Porter Sargent Publishers, Inc., 1980), p. 289. Sanctions are implemented as a final means of action to apply power in acute conflicts, defensively or offensively, and groups and institutions may exert sanctions to wield their power in a conflict. Ibid., p. 326. When institutionalized, violent sanctions may increase centralization of power; however, nonviolent sanctions appear to contribute to decentralization and diffusion of power. Ibid., p. 327.


89Jonathan Kuttab, one-hour interview (East Jerusalem, 8 June 1988).

90Mubarak Awad, ‘Nonviolence: Working Definitions’, *International Journal of Nonviolence* 1 (September 1993): 4. Continuity in imagery may persist from the ancient past. In the New Testament, Mark 6:11, Jesus said to the disciples, ‘If any place . . . refuse to hear you . . . shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them’ (New Revised Standard Version). In Acts 13:51, after the death of Jesus, when the Jews of Antioch would not receive Paul to hear him speak of Christianity, Paul and Barnabas departed, shaking off the dust from their feet.


mobilizing elements in society leaping to their feet. \textit{Intifada} is one of the few Arabic words to enter the vocabulary of twentieth-century international politics. \footnote{The first use of \textit{intifada} was not in 1987; it had been used earlier in the decade, under circumstances that will be described in Chapter Three. It was not a word coined by Yasir Arafat because he thought the revolt to be a spasm that would end in a few days, as Raphael Cohen-Almagor claims. Raphael Cohen-Almagor, ‘The Intifada: Causes, Consequences and Future Trends’, \textit{Small Wars and Insurgencies} 2:1 (1991): 12.}

Most Palestinians appear to prefer \textit{la-'unf}, literally ‘no violence’, to indicate nonviolent resistance. \footnote{Edward W. Said, ‘Intifada and Independence’, \textit{Intifada: The Palestinian Uprising against Israeli Occupation}, ed. Zachary Lockman and Joel Beinin (Boston, South End Press, 1989), p. 5.} Journalists writing in Arabic seized on this phraseology during the \textit{intifada} as the handiest formulation for their purposes, made it the term of preference, and it has so remained among Palestinians. Although nonviolence can be simplistically defined as behaviour in a conflict which refrains from violent acts, such an abbreviated meaning is not specific enough in considering the Palestinian \textit{intifada}. The sense in which Palestinians used \textit{la-'unf} corresponds to revolutionary nonviolence, militant nonviolence, nonviolent resistance, nonmilitary strategic action, and nonviolent struggle—a shrewd and calculated contestation of military occupation with a catalogue of specific methods. These methods draw from an inventory of 198 techniques that fall into six major groups: (1) protest or persuasion, including leaflets, displays of flags, vigils, demonstration funerals, symbolic lights, painting as protest, parades, and marches; (2) social noncooperation, including sanctuary, withdrawal from the social system, and protest emigration, or \textit{hijra}; (3) economic boycotts, consumer boycotts, merchants’ general strikes, withdrawal of bank deposits, and a policy of austerity; (4) economic noncooperation, including resignations from jobs, slowdowns, and prisoners’ strikes; (5) political noncooperation, including literature advocating resistance, civil disobedience, stalling, and obstruction; (6) nonviolent interventions, such as hunger strikes,\footnote{A lexicon of Arabic terms meaning violence can be constructed from \textit{jabr}, \textit{raghm}, and \textit{zawr}. The term \textit{al-nidham al-jadid} might be used as a possible, if elliptical, term for nonviolence, indicating the most modern world order, or \textit{adam al-ittikal}, as free of oppression, in the sense of being against dependency. In one language of international law, Dutch, the word \textit{nonviolence} appears as \textit{geweldloosheid}, meaning a solution free from violence. Paul Brian Hubers, ‘Nonviolence in Violence: Approaches to International Conflict Resolution in Costa Rica’ (Ph.D. diss., the American University, Washington, D.C., 1992), p. 388.}
alternative social systems, and dual sovereignty.96

Civil Disobedience: An Advanced Method of Political Noncooperation

In general, the Palestinian intifada bore more resemblance to the Indian struggle for independence than did, for example, the U.S. upheaval of the 1950s and 1960s, in the sense that both the Palestinians and the Indians were disarmed,97 and both the intifada and the Indian national independence struggles were in pursuit of self-rule. The single component of Palestinian nonviolent resistance apparently most recognizable to those writing about the intifada was its use of civil disobedience, often the only nonviolent sanction to be acknowledged.

The term ‘civil disobedience’ is most often credited to the American Transcendentalist Henry David Thoreau. Although widely cited for his ‘Letter On Civil Disobedience’, he did not use the term, so far as can be ascertained. Prior to Thoreau, civil disobedience was a form of remaining true to one’s beliefs, idiosyncratically used by individuals or groups with little intention of bringing about political alterations. Thoreau himself may have viewed such resistance as a matter of conscience and in the context of the assertion of individualism against slavery.98 Gandhian applications made it an instrument of mass enactment specifically aimed at political change.99 Thoreau spent a night in the Concord, Massachusetts, gaol in 1846 (or possibly 1845) because of his refusal to pay a poll tax that supported a government which he considered illegitimate because it condoned slavery and sought to expand slave


97For Indians, armed struggle was never an option. After the Sepoy Mutiny, a programme of disarming India was undertaken by the British, culminating in the Indian Arms Act of 1878. The law was eventually interpreted so broadly by judges that it denied Indians the right to carry knives, such as might be used against wild animals near jungles. As a result, perhaps 30,000 Indians died in 1930 from attacks by wild animals, not including deaths from poisonous reptiles. Krishnalal Shridharani, War without Violence: A Study of Gandhi’s Method and Its Accomplishments, 1st edn (New York, Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1939), pp. 192–3.


territory through the Mexican War. After being prematurely released on bail paid by a relative, Thoreau spoke about his prison sojourn in a lecture to the Concord Lyceum in February 1848, 'The Rights and Duties of the Individual in Relation to Government'.

Written in the same year as Marx and Engels' *Communist Manifesto*, it was published in 1849 as *Resistance to Civil Government* and received almost no attention. 'Unjust laws exist', Thoreau writes, 'shall we transgress them at once?' Only later did the essay come to be known as 'On the Duty of Civil Disobedience'.

Debate persists over whether Gandhi encountered Thoreau's essay in London before returning home in 1891 or whether he read it subsequently while imprisoned in South Africa. Gandhi told a journalist in London, in 1931, that he had read Thoreau in Johannesburg in South Africa in 1906 and found civil disobedience a suitable English translation for the newly coined satyagraha. Elsewhere, Gandhi writes that he had read it in 1907. Roger Baldwin, a founder of the American Civil Liberties Union, who met Gandhi on a train trip in France in 1931, recalled his saying that Thoreau's essay 'contained the essence of his political philosophy, not only as India's struggle related to the British, but as to his own views of the relation of citizens to government' and that 'Thoreau first formulated for

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him the tactics of civil disobedience, whose very name he borrowed.\textsuperscript{107} Thoreau’s writings probably reinforced views that Gandhi had already formed.\textsuperscript{108}

The idea that political power resides in cooperation from the ruled is not new.\textsuperscript{109} One source for such analysis of power—likely to have been studied by Gandhi while reading for the law in London—is the sixteenth-century writer Étienne de la Boétie, whose ‘Discours de la Servitude Volontaire’ argues that people can refuse to be governed by those who dominate them.\textsuperscript{110} In 1934, Gandhi observes, ‘There is no \textit{prima facie} reason why under non-violence the mass, if disciplined, should be incapable of showing the discipline which in organized warfare a fighting force normally does’.\textsuperscript{111} Such strategies allow groups to assert themselves against military superiority, yet the determination of the group starts with the resolve of the individual. A decisive factor in such action is the requirement for cohesion and unity, which intrinsically favours popular involvement in the making of decisions.

Almost one hundred forty years after Thoreau’s lecture, the Palestinians in the occupied territories used civil disobedience in its customary usage: a deliberate defiance of laws, decrees, or military orders that are regarded as illegitimate, unethical, or immoral. While the U.S. civil rights movement expanded the concept to include the obligation to defy statutes that violated so-called natural law, the Palestinians restricted themselves to disobeying laws they considered unjust, withholding recognition of a military occupation they

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\textsuperscript{109}Daniel Fowle, ‘An Appendix to the Late Total Eclipse of Liberty. Being Some Thoughts on the End and Design of Civil Government; Altho the Inherent Power of the People Asserted and Maintained; That It is not Given up to Their Representatives; This Confirm’d and Acknowledged by Kings or Emperors, and Prov’d from Scripture and Reason’, Early American Imprints (Boston, Daniel Fowle, 1756).

\textsuperscript{110}Étienne de la Boétie, ‘Discours de la Servitude Volontaire’, \textit{Oeuvres Complètes d’Étienne de la Boétie} (Paris, J. Rouan et Cie., 1892). Tolstoy, whose impact on Gandhi is well documented, was influenced by Boétie.

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regarded as illegitimate, and raising the financial and moral costs associated with the occupation. They also used it to establish the ‘non-governability’ of the occupied territories.\textsuperscript{112} Theodor Ebert might have termed it ‘paralysis through non-cooperation’.\textsuperscript{113} One scholar notes, ‘Civil disobedience, when carried out by the entire population, constitutes the cessation of Israeli rule’.\textsuperscript{114}

Producing Political Jiu-Jitsu

One of the recognizable properties of nonviolent struggle has been jiu-jitsu. Richard Gregg uses the term moral jiu-jitsu, while Gene Sharp prefers political jiu-jitsu. At the core of how nonviolent strategic action actually works in practice, jiu-jitsu refers to the ability of the proponent to dislodge the opponent’s mental equilibrium.\textsuperscript{115} The capacity of nonviolent resistance to cause or intensify internal schism has placed it in a unique category among the techniques of struggle.\textsuperscript{116} Theoretically, it works as follows.

Explicitly nonviolent behaviour in the face of oppression throws the attacker or opponent off balance, because the attacker expects violent behaviour in response. Because of the absence of retaliation, the attacker becomes unsure of how to respond, thus losing


\textsuperscript{115}Richard B. Gregg, The Power of Nonviolence, 2d edn (New York, Schocken Books, 1966), pp. 43–51. The term jiu-jitsu is derived from the ancient Japanese martial art of jiu-jitsu, a system of wrestling based on knowledge of balance and use of such comprehension to overcome an opponent’s sense of equilibrium; it is used in battle referring primarily to physical balance. Machiavelli understood the principle applied politically: A ruler who is opposed by the populace and tries to secure his position through brutality, ‘can never make himself secure; and the greater his cruelty, the weaker does his regime become’, Niccolò Machiavelli, Discourses of Niccolò Machiavelli, vol. 1 (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1950), p. 254.

\textsuperscript{116}Disagreement by the citizenry with the harsh reprisals being used against nonviolent protagonists ‘turns on itself’, and the conflict shifts, instead becoming a dispute within the regime or adversarial government over its infliction of violence on unarmed peaceful protesters. Gene Sharp, The Dynamics of Nonviolent Action, vol. 3 of The Politics of Nonviolent Action (Boston, Porter Sargent, 1973), p. 678.
confidence. The sympathies of those upholding the opponent's position—or whom the opponents represent—begin to flow towards the nonviolent protagonists. Soldiers or police may find themselves siding with those they are suppressing and identify with their suffering, which was caused by their own violent behaviour or reactions. The nonviolent adherents, meanwhile, maintain position and gain confidence. With persistence, and if no breach occurs, they may be able to subdue the aggressor or 'win' without resorting to violence.

The effect of political jiu-jitsu today is intensified in the international arena because of the audience reached through the global news media. Just as communications systems can expose the atrocities of an opponent, they can also reveal the discipline and absence of retaliation by the protagonist, causing more distress and loss of prestige for the aggressor. The proponent can conserve valuable human energy by not wasting it on anger and hatred. Gaining in power, the energy of the nonviolent adherents can instead be spent displaying the conviction necessary to reach an agreement acceptable to both sides. Although not always achieved, political jiu-jitsu can be a powerful and effective phenomenon in political change. 17

The Intifada and the Written Discourse on Nonviolent Resistance

The twentieth-century association of nonviolent struggle with Gandhi and his campaigns in India and with Martin Luther King, Jr., and the U.S. civil rights struggle has resulted in oversimplification. The assumption that only saintly figures use the philosophies and techniques of civil resistance has lessened appreciation of its universality. Leadership by a

17 An apt example was in the Philippines, in 1986, following the fraudulent election run by the Ferdinand Marcos government, when the populace poured into the streets of Manila. On 22 February 1986, two army generals and their troops defected. Approximately three million men, women, and children, including priests and nuns, stood silently outside the military installations of Camp Aguinaldo and Camp Crame for more than three days protecting defecting soldiers with their presence from advancing army tanks and troops. Political jiu-jitsu could be seen as large numbers of military personnel who were charging against their defecting fellow military comrades instead joined the populace in resisting the government. In seventy-two hours, the Marcos regime imploded. Patricio R. Mamot, People Power: Profile of Filipino Heroism (Quezon City, New Day Publishers, 1986), p. 33; Hildegard Goss-Mayr, 'When Prayer and Revolution Became People Power', Fellowship 53 (March 1987): 10.
single figure who is larger than life was avoided by the Palestinians. The acephalous leadership of the intifada was tested through service rather than privilege or paramilitary operations, and it was incognito. Since there could be no Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., Lech Walesa, Václav Havel, or Aung San Suu Kyi, countless children, youth, women, and men tapped their own resources.

The severity of the penalties extracted by the occupying authorities made anonymity imperative to the survival of the uprising and for an individual's remaining in action. For decades, Israel had used deportation measures to eliminate Palestinians believed to be potentially strong leadership figures. Through its expulsion of leading Palestinians and its intimidation of others, Israel created the imperative for a secret structure of leadership. Despite the logical outcome of such expulsions, unnamed sources in the Israeli defence establishment claimed three weeks into the uprising, 'We have no one to speak to on the [Palestinian] side and therefore have had to rely completely on operational and deterrent measures'. The same sources complained that traditional Palestinian leaders in the territories—presumably those not warranting deportation—had been 'unwilling or ineffectual channels for restoring order'. Notes Reuven Gal, 'I remember Israelis saying, “What is the address? If we want to talk to these leaders of the intifada, what is the address?” And we kept saying, “There is no address because there is no leadership”'.

A comparatively recent strand in the literature of nonviolent resistance concerns its use as national defence, that is, a civilian form of military strategy. As an alternative to

[118]The Nuremberg Judgement and the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 used 'deportation' in this sense, yet the word expulsion may be more appropriate.


[121]Reuven Gal, two-hour interview (Zichron Ya’akov, Mt. Carmel, near Haifa, 16 March 1997).
military defence, it may be a post–World War II phenomenon first promulgated by Commander Sir Stephen King-Hall in 1958. Part of the 'pragmatic' school of thought that has prevailed in much of the literature of the last thirty years or more, a wing of this school argues for 'civilian defence', or 'social defence', in Europe and 'civilian-based defence' in the United States. Strategies by civilians can 'deter and defeat foreign military invasions, occupations, and internal usurpations', including coups d'état. Thomas Schelling's contention that nonviolence as defence puts more pressure on the opponent, yielding a stronger position from which to negotiate, has now become broadly accepted. Civilian defence would have been an inapplicable concept for the Palestinians, however, because they were still in the process of attempting to gain basic rights, such as the right to the security of one's home or person, freedom from summary arrest or deportation, the right to travel, and the right to know the charges under which one is arrested. Were a future state to be formed, it would probably be disarmed, at which time civilian-defence systems might be germane, as Souad Dajani argues.

Although in both thought and implementation, nonviolent action is anything but new, much of its theoretical analysis has only just begun. As a contemporary field of study, it suffers from the fact that countless societies that used it to shape their histories did not chronicle the process for posterity. Palestinian documentation, too, is scant, a problem worsened by the self-destruction of materials for fear that they would be used to target reprisals against activists.

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126For this reason, archives from the intifada are limited, making research difficult. Palestinians on the West Bank often purposely destroyed their papers and did not make notes of scheduled meetings, because they feared that such documents would be used against them. Establishing dates is often frustrating or impossible.
That nonviolent resistance can work under a wide range of political systems is aptly shown in its use by Palestinians; it must be constantly constructed. The early part of the twentieth century is rich in an array of nonviolent political exertions, and they stretch back into the nineteenth century and thence to the time of Christ and before. It has produced forceful political results since the late 1980s in Poland, East Germany, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, and in Latin America, raising the possibility that we may be entering an era of even greater utilization of such sanctions. Although it would be foolish to overestimate its endowments, nonviolent struggle has opened closed systems, brought down governments, prevented military coups d'état, and helped in peaceful transitions to democracy.

The Palestinian intifada represents the application of nonviolent resistance under circumstances of protracted duress. The success of nonviolent direct action, despite its unevenness and inconsistency of use, points to its value even in situations of high militarization. King-Hall wrote in 1958 about changes taking place in the acceptance of military occupation by populations: 'It has been considered in the past that if a state were invaded and occupied, this event marked the end of the war', with no option apart from capitulation and acceptance of a settlement amounting to 'annexation of the conquered territory'. He cites Israel as an example of the 'indestructibility of national ways of life', as it pertains to the Israelis, and does not mention the Palestinians. Still, King-Hall observes that a new factor had come into being—one pertinent for the Palestinians: 'many of the so-called civilian population may not be disposed to accept the defeat'.

Whether nonviolent struggle should be considered a philosophy or a technique is a dispute that runs through the literature. We can observe this in some of the contradictions on

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127 On the need to rebuild its framework in each situation, see Mahendra Kumar, 'Reconstruction of the Concept of Nonviolence', *Violence and Nonviolence in International Relations* (New Delhi, Thomson Press, 1975).


the part of the Palestinians, who sit astride the arguments for both the ethical and pragmatic
schools of thought in nonviolent struggle. The pragmatic line of thinking can be reduced to a
'negative' outlook, as opposed to a 'positive' view often attributed to ethicists or Gandhians.
The negative perspective can be considered 'a confrontation and a struggle for ascendancy of
one group over another . . . raising the material and psychological costs to the opponent if he
continues the struggle'; this is achieved through strikes, boycotts, and noncooperation. 130
Such a policy is not aimed only at altering the will of one's opponents, it is also aimed at
making impossible the achievement of their objectives; its methods can also include
obstruction, defiance, and creation of parallel government. 131 The so-called positive school is
more interested in bringing the other party to see one's point of view and sympathize with it.
'It affirms the oneness of the opponents . . . so that the conflict is not seen as a confrontation
[with] them, but rather as a problem, which they face in common'. 132 If the negative polarizes,
the positive tends to eliminate group boundaries.

The Palestinians could be grouped into the negative category by virtue of their attempts
to thwart the aims of the Israeli military occupation, yet their efforts to appeal to the
sensitivities of the Israeli public would also place them in the so-called positive school.
Positive means, to a degree, consist of permitting large measures of 'independent and
contradictory initiatives'. 133 The Palestinian uprising may not have been 'nonviolent enough',
as Andrew Rigby asserts, 134 although its unarmed parameters contrast starkly with Israel's self-
proclaimed 'iron fist'. For most Palestinians, nonviolence was not a choice between a moral

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130 Boserup and Mack, War without Weapons, pp. 13, 14.
131 Roberts, Civilian Resistance, p. 9.
133 Ibid., p. 17.
and ethical viewpoint on the one hand and a pragmatic perspective on the other.\textsuperscript{135} It was not a case of principled nonviolence versus pragmatism, the two poles of thinking in the U.S. civil rights unrest,\textsuperscript{136} nor was it a choice between idealism or pacifism. Gene Sharp had, by 1970, discredited the designation of nonviolence as pacifism when he found that he could count on two hands the number of cases out of eighty-five that he had then studied in which the leadership of a nonviolent movement had been pacifist.\textsuperscript{137} The Palestinian uprising represented a mixture of motivations, goals, defences, strategies, and tactics, and, as Emile Sahliyeh has suggested, its use of civil disobedience may have been tactical.\textsuperscript{138} The involvement of the population was broad, and reinforced the contention that 'it is no longer appropriate to analyse partial forms of opposition—moral, political, military, or others—but instead to study the way that the whole social body—civilian society—reacts against aggression'.\textsuperscript{139} It was a specific response to the military occupation that followed upon what has been called the 'surrogate colonization' of Palestine.\textsuperscript{140} Moreover, because of the complications of scriptural text being

\textsuperscript{135}Nor was it for Gandhi, who viewed the relationship between the ethical or the practical application of nonviolent direct action as being in the long run identical. Sharp, \textit{Gandhi as a Political Strategist}, p. 288.

\textsuperscript{136}Even in the U.S. civil rights movement, where Gandhian principled nonviolence shaped the parameters for the Southern movement that emerged after the 1955–6 Montgomery bus boycott, the view of nonviolence was often pragmatic. Rural African American communities were armed. The best that could be hoped was that the local people would leave their guns at home. Especially in rural areas, guns were readily available for killing hogs, to put a horse out of its misery, or to hunt game for food. When civil rights workers were around, guns were put away; although unbeknownst to them, local black youths sometimes guarded them with guns, sleeping under porches or on rooftops with rifles. After the start of the Montgomery bus boycott professionals were sent to Montgomery by the Fellowship of Reconciliation—Bayard Rustin and Glenn E. Smiley—to tutor Martin Luther King, Jr., and systematically introduce him to Gandhian theory, with which he had little familiarity. Although both the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and Congress of Racial Equality were founded on the basis of Gandhian thought, debates over whether nonviolent direct action was an absolute stand or a matter of pragmatism occurred frequently in the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee.


\textsuperscript{139}Semelin, \textit{Unarmed against Hitler}, p. 26.

sustained as the basis of international law, and the sequelae from the mid-century genocidal Holocaust, the perception of the intifada was obscured.

**The Intifada and Mechanisms of Change**

Politically, the intifada broke the Israeli occupation, although it did not lift it. The first Israeli military forces to leave the territories occupied in 1967 departed from Jenin, in the northernmost portion of the West Bank, on 13 November 1995, the initial wave of planned withdrawals called for by the 1993 Oslo accords. How such a sequence came about may be clarified by applying Sharp’s nomenclature of four mechanisms, or processes, through which power changes occur in the target group in response to nonviolent struggle: conversion, accommodation, nonviolent coercion, and disintegration. Elements of three of these mechanisms can be identified as resulting in Israel in response to the Palestinian uprising.

In conversion, the opponents react to the actions of the nonviolent protagonists by accepting a new point of view and the goals of those of the nonviolent actionists, with some involvement of their emotions and belief systems. Israelis in small numbers came to see themselves as occupiers and acknowledged the Palestinians as human beings who merit sympathy and respect. Yet skepticism is appropriate before contending that the minds or

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141 The principle of deciding territorial claims on the basis of ancient religious texts is a recipe for insecurity. Anthony Lewis, 'Israel’s Lethal Mix of Religion and Nationalism', International Herald Tribune, 4–5 January 1997, p. 6.


144 Sidra DeKoven Ezrahi, 'Under Jerusalem’s Barren Mulberry Tree', Jerusalem Post, 1 June 1988; Sidra DeKoven Ezrahi, professor of Jewish literature, one-hour interview (Jerusalem, 11 November 1994); Janet Avid, leader of Shalom Achshav, or Peace Now, one-hour interview (East Jerusalem, 12 November 1994); Rafael Moses, Israeli psychiatrist, one-hour interview (East Jerusalem, 5 November 1994). Palestinians, too, moved towards acceptance of Israelis as persons. Feisel Husseini, one-hour interview (East Jerusalem, 30 January 1996). In the coordinating leaflets of the intifada, a differentiation is made between Jews, individual Israelis, and the Israeli military occupation or policies of the State of Israel; the door is left open for a rapprochement with the Israelis as human beings. The leaflets, to be considered in Chapter Six, express hope that a people who had suffered as had the Jews in their Diaspora would, some day,
hearts of a people have changed. Some Palestinian demands were granted without any apparent alterations in Israeli mindsets. It took years for the Israelis to recognize that the uprising had political goals, and when they did, they realized that they, the Israelis, ‘could not win’ militarily. Reuven Gal summarized:

It took a long time for the Israeli leadership to understood that the intifada was a political issue, not a military issue, . . . a struggle for political goals; hence, it had to be dealt with and confronted with political means. . . . [Nor did they understand] that there was no way that the military could put it down, because it was not a military issue. . . . [It was] a continuous struggle that had political goals, and unless these goals were fulfilled, it would not end. 145

It may be more realistic to say that the second mechanism Sharp differentiates, accommodation, occurred in Israel in response to the intifada. 146 With accommodation, the most customary mechanism of change in the target group, the opponents choose to yield on demands and adjust to the new circumstances produced by the nonviolent activists but without changing their positions on the underlying issues. Often this response quiets internal dissension, preserves decorum, averts a worse predicament, or simply cuts losses. Rather than transforming the adversary (as in conversion), it alters the situation.

The third mechanism, nonviolent coercion, occurs against the opponent’s will and without consent, when the target group splits through internal division. The structures of power and capability to use them may be retained by the target group, but its capacity for repressing the nonviolent resisters may be circumscribed because the defiance by its own citizenry is too pervasive or its apparatus has become paralyzed. The objectives of the nonviolent protagonists may be achieved against the will of the opponent, yet short of the disintegration of the adversary’s system. The ability of the target group to apply repression may be thwarted or even dissolved, if soldiers and police mutiny, bureaucracies refuse to understand the Palestinian cri de coeur and acknowledge their own aspirations to self-determination.


146 The responses of the target group to nonviolent struggle are usually mixed, resulting in a continuum of the mechanisms of change, including partial defeats and successes. Sharp, Dynamics of Nonviolent Action, pp. 755–6. Subgroups within the opponent’s camp may react differently. Ibid., p. 706.
function, or the populace withdraws authority and support.147

Opposition to the 1982 war in Lebanon was the first example of the refusal of members of the Israeli military to serve in the armed forces. Colonel Eli Geva, for example, asked to be relieved of his command of a tank brigade, one of 170 soldiers and officers who refused to serve.148 During the intifada, uniformed army generals organized themselves in committees and announced themselves as opposed to the occupation.149 A number of these eventually accepted civil disobedience as a necessary means to oppose the post-1967 policy of military occupation.150 Groups of reservists refused to be posted in the occupied territories and publicly bade others to join them; as many as one hundred were released from service upon declaring their stand.151 Eight months into the intifada, Israeli Defence Minister Rabin confirmed that 120 army reservists and 5 army regulars had refused to serve in the territories. Twenty-nine of them were imprisoned for refusal to serve, 3 of them officers. An organization of Israelis in the armed forces who refused service in the territories, Yesh G'vul, or There Is a Limit, published the names of 600 reservists who said they refused to play a part in suppressing the uprising, including a ‘large number’ of junior and noncommissioned officers.152 Shalom Achshav, or Peace Now, another Israeli peace group, grew exponentially during the intifada. It had come into existence in July 1978, the result of a letter written to Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin and signed by 348 army reserve officers and combat veterans, some of whom had been

147 Ibid., pp. 741–55.


149 Major General (Ret.) Josef Geva and Major General Monacham Meron, one-hour interview (Jerusalem, 8 June 1988). These are two of the generals who were instrumental in the founding of the Council for Peace and Security in March 1988.


decorated in three wars. The missive, which asked the premier not to place maintenance of
the occupied territories above the pursuit of peace, was never sent and appeared instead in
_Ha'aretz_—"the better to make its point." Still, commented an Israeli social psychologist,
such dissenters had a limited effect on Israeli society:

In the Israeli public (I am talking about the Jews), there was no ripeness to
accept the idea of a Palestinian nationality . . . [or to accept] that there are
people here who claim an existence. The Israeli public, by the time the
intifada erupted, was not ready for it. . . . In this sense, the intifada for the
Palestinians was really a very potent tool to gain this acceptance, because,
otherwise, we were not ready to accept it—which is why all of these [Israeli
peace] organizations did not have much impact. They were small, they
overlapped, and it was against Israeli consensus even to think of Palestinians
as having a right to self-definition.

Thus, although some segments of Israeli society experienced sympathy for the
unarmed Palestinians who were being disproportionately killed by armed soldiers, no Israeli
mass movement developed against military service in the occupied territories, and the fourth
mechanism, disintegration—the collapse of the opponent's power system—did not occur.

The Literature on the Intifada

That the intifada represented an organized, preponderantly nonviolent force against
Israeli occupation is astonishing enough; the only more surprising consideration is how
little acknowledgment such restraint has garnered—whether from Palestinian, Israeli,
European, or North American experts. Credible scholars have failed to recognize the

153 Edy Kaufman, 'The Intifadah and the Peace Camp in Israel: A Critical Introspective', _Journal of

154 Amiram Goldblum, former official spokesperson for Peace Now, one-hour interview (East
Jerusalem, 5 November 1994).

155 Helena Syna Desivilya, director of the Carmel Institute for Social Studies, half-hour interview
(Zichron Ya'akov, Mt. Carmel, near Haifa, 16 March 1997).

156 Disintegration could be seen in East Germany in 1989, as the regime and its secret police and
security systems imploded in response to the Pastors' Movement. See Roland Bleiker, 'Nonviolent Struggle
and the Revolution in East Germany'; Konrad H. Jarausch, _The Rush to German Unity_ (Oxford, Oxford
significance of a nonmilitary prototype. One celebrated account of the uprising holds that ‘the Palestinians appreciated almost instinctively that restraint was in their own interest’. As will become clear in this thesis, instinct and natural endowments were little involved in this struggle.

Insightful analysts write of the uprising’s use of civil disobedience, yet show no appreciation that civil disobedience is but one of a large and varied body of nonviolent methods. Emile Sahliyeh stands almost alone in commenting accurately on the importance for the Palestinians of the spread of information about the use of nonviolent means, yet he devotes only two paragraphs to the matter. Two other scholars grasp the uprising as nonviolent resistance, yet they minimize the significance of decisive changes that preceded it in leadership, ideology, knowledge of its use, and the development of consensual agreement upon which such a movement must be based. Ibrahim Abu-Lughod sees the intifada as but one example of a long tradition of resistance against, successively, British and Israeli colonialism. He notes the rebellion’s departure from military strategies and acknowledges that the uprising was unprecedented in scale, militancy, and breadth, yet he does not explain what made it singular. Edward Said lucidly concludes that the Middle East will be forever different because of the intifada, but merely notes that there was ‘no easy resort to

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159 While mentioning the role of the Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence in helping spread information, the date of founding and the centre’s actual name are in error. Sahliyeh, In Search of Leadership, p. 174.


weapons'. In his 692-page major study on the Palestinians and armed struggle, Yezid Sayigh does not ask how, after four decades of combative emphasis on armed struggle, coherent nonviolent strategies suddenly appeared in the intifada, as he acknowledges. Not having posed the question, Sayigh does not answer it.

A form of intellectual relativism in the literature on the intifada ignores the revolutionary nonviolence that was its singular component. Ian Lustick observes that armed struggle had more effect on the Palestinians than on Israelis over the years. Rashid Khalidi says the Palestinians exaggerated the value of the gun after 1967, and by the 1970s weaponry held mainly symbolic significance (an exception being the undeclared war in Lebanon). Acknowledging 'steadfastness, organization, and ways of enabling people to remain on the land and run their own lives' as a priority of the uprising, he almost misses the point:

The various forms of resistance, from nonviolent protests to violent demonstrations, are still crucial weapons in the Palestinian arsenal . . . but the practice of resistance in 1967–70, when armed attacks were far more frequent, contrasts strikingly with the situation in 1987–88, where they have been virtually excluded from the arsenal of weapons used against the occupation by the leadership of the uprising.

Neither the writing team of Ze'ev Schiff and Ehud Ya'ari nor co-authors Shaul Mishal and Reuben Aharoni concede that a new factor had entered into the Israeli-Palestinian conflict or that any reconstructions of political thought were at work. Mishal and Aharoni's review of the uprising's leaflets, and their methodology of content analysis, lead them, falsely, to make a cause-and-effect connexion between the upward trend of violent directives and the 'vital role

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played by violence . . . in producing political gains'. A separate strand in the literature should also be noted: an intentional labelling of the uprising as uniformly violent. David Kimche, for example, describes the intifada in 1991 as 'rocks and firebombs'.

The passage of time has not led to more accurate historiography or more insightful political analysis; indeed, it has solidified the categorizing of this movement as one of wholesale violence. With the exception of Dajani and Robinson, virtually all of the analyses published to date fail to address the remarkably nonviolent parameters of the revolt, especially during its first three years. Whether a scholar falls into the 'spontaneity' camp or the controlled-by-the-PLO school of thought makes little or no difference to one's grasp of the use of nonviolent sanctions in the intifada. Some analysts judge that both violence and nonviolence were intended to be utilized simultaneously; others conclude that 'the population was called on to cooperate in both violent and nonviolent actions'. A similar vein of thought depicts the intifada as 'a struggle that mixes nonviolent actions with "limited violence"', the violence principally a reference to the throwing of stones by Palestinian children and youth. Israeli scholar Hillel Frisch calls the uprising 'a strategy of low-scale violence', in which 'limited violence is the mode of collective action' for 'the promotion of political violence against Israeli rule'. He concludes that 'diffuse violence was the basic political tactic' of the uprising.

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166 Shaul Mishal and Reuben Aharoni, Speaking Stones: Communiqués from the Intifada Underground (Syracuse, Syracuse University Press, 1994), p. 43.
The Concept of Civil Society

One more definition and review of provenance is appropriate here. As mentioned earlier, one of the developments that explains the appearance of nonviolent strategies of opposition to the Israeli occupation was the emergence of new networks and forms of mobilization—in effect, the makings of a civil society. As shall become clear by the end of this thesis, for almost three years during the intifada, the methods of civil society were utilized, grounded in the values of civil society, while the rights required to support such an emergent society had still to be sought through the same techniques.

Philosophers and theorists have debated civil society and the demarcation between the public and private, the universal and the particular, through millennial conversations. In medieval and early modern Europe, civil society was indistinguishable from the state. With indebtedness to the Protestant Reformation, from the Scottish Enlightenment until the present, the term civil society has been employed in the context of mutual rights and responsibilities. John Locke considers it most significant in the protection of property rights and the right of individuals (by which he means men, but not women) to withdraw from any

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contract that does not protect life, liberty, and property. G. W. F. Hegel, Thomas Hobbes, and Immanuel Kant have contributed to what are now accepted modern conceptions of civil society as an ethical representation of desirable social life or the good life. By eighteenth-century Europe, a ‘common set of moral sources, of sentiments, and sympathy’ expressed this mutuality. Left to nature, assert Locke and Hobbes, human beings would plunge into war, since conflicting natural rights would produce scarcity, unless each person were to give up some natural rights or transfer them to an external authority. "[T]he act of two, or more, mutually conveying their rights, is called a contract". Civil society meant the organization of individuals beyond the family, a collective that was voluntarily entered and governed by laws, a reign of order over nature, produced by the state. The social contract is in essence the foundation of civil society in this view, ratifying the associations of individuals as a system of restraint. Hobbes’ point was that human life did not have to be nasty, brutish, and short. For Hegel, on the other hand, the state contains civil society, which must be restricted, regulated, administered, and controlled by the superior competence of the state. Rationalization by the state becomes Hegel’s ‘key to understanding the real movement of history’. Marx and Engels alter the Hegelian view and subsume the state under civil society, consistent with their

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reverie on the withering away of the state and an historically determined society.\(^{179}\)

From the mid-nineteenth century onwards, the distinction between civil society and the state became more tactically applied, with a view towards potential political gain by oppositional social movements.\(^{180}\) The pathfinding conception that independent sectors within a civil society can defend themselves against the state arose with the French and American revolutionary controversies; indeed, the revolutionary theme of 'civil society against the state' is not found in German political thought, where enlightened reforms are thought to come from above.\(^{181}\)

The twentieth-century Marxist Antonio Gramsci sees civil society in opposition to the state, which is not an end in itself but an apparatus, and the basis for revolutionary challenge and, eventually, elimination of the difference between civil society and state. Rather than representing universal concerns, to Gramsci, the state stands for particular interests.\(^{182}\) It holds coercive powers of control, domination, or violence, while the direction of civil society occurs through nonviolent means, principally through organizations. Gramsci defines civil society as 'the political and cultural hegemony which a social group exercises over the whole of society, as the ethical content of the State'.\(^{183}\) Gramsci uses hegemony, or egemonia, interchangeably with direction, or direzione, meaning leadership, to explain how basic premises are diffused throughout a society, determining what is considered to be right or wrong, true or false, moral

\(^{179}\)Ibid, p. 67.


\(^{182}\)Bobbio, 'Gramsci and the Concept of Civil Society', p. 76.

or immoral. The realm in which ideas and propositions conflict with each other, and out of which hegemony or consent arises, is civil society.

Contesting the Bolshevik seizure of power through violence, Gramsci sees civil society as consensus, which comes to reign over political society, or force.\textsuperscript{184} It is in civil society that the contest between capitalists and labourers takes place, along with popular democratic struggles.\textsuperscript{185} Gramsci’s major contribution of hegemony pertains to the notion that a world view dominates a society, encompassing economics, politics, ethics, ideology, linguistics, and power.\textsuperscript{186} Hegemony represents a ‘body of practices and expectations, over the whole of living: our senses and assignments of energy, our shaping perceptions of ourselves and our world. It is a lived system of meanings and values’.\textsuperscript{187} A hegemonic class gains the consent of other social forces by creating and sustaining a system of alliances through political or ideological struggle.\textsuperscript{188}

Max Weber, in his sociology concerning the connexions between ownership of the means of production and ownership of the means of violence, views the state’s domain as violence, in opposition to civil society. In other words, the rulers of states have at their direction experts authorized to use physical duress to prevent other citizens from employing violence. For Jürgen Habermas, activities hitherto relegated to the household economy moved outward to create a sphere of capitalist activity located somewhere between the private

\textsuperscript{184}Camoy, \textit{State and Political Theory}, p. 67.


\textsuperscript{187}Williams, \textit{Marxism and Literature}, p. 110. What is decisive about Gramsci’s hegemony, which goes beyond formal ideology, is not only a ‘conscious system of ideas and beliefs’, but a ‘whole lived social process as practically organized by specific and dominant meanings and values’. Ibid., p. 109.

household and the state’s authority, a ‘separate realm’. This space encompasses nearly all nonviolent organizational interactions between the citizens and the state. More recently, the idea of capitalist endeavours being at the heart of civil society has been replaced with a central notion of a sphere in which democratic social activity protects the substance of democracy. Its purpose no longer merely the protection of private property owners from an overweening state, civil society has become the place where citizens ensure governmental accountability. It has a life of its own, Edward Shils notes.

In eighteenth-century ruminations, the ‘civil’ in civil society is often interpreted as civilization in its broadest sense—refined and polished society, as opposed to its primordial alternative, the state of nature. Adam Ferguson applies it to the state, when he writes of the ‘dignities, and even the offices, of civil society’.

Subsequently, and especially in the United States, where Hegelian thinking as reinterpreted by Marx has had less impact than in Europe, ‘civility’ of behaviour has come to constitute an essential feature of contemporary thinking on civil society.

Moving away from the standard theoretical conception of the right to pursue individual interests and privately held property, in contemporary social philosophy and political theory, civil society now broadly encompasses the rights of citizens to interact with representative government and affect the formulation of the basic rules and norms of behaviour in

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192 In developing societies, people may be more concerned with obtaining what they do not possess than in protecting what they do not own. Paul E. Salem, ‘A Critique of Western Conflict Resolution from a Non-Western Perspective’, Conflict Resolution in the Arab World: Selected Essays, ed. Paul E. Salem (Beirut, American University of Beirut, 1997), p. 22.
societies. The concept ‘implies that the state is empirically as well as analytically distinct from society’, John Willis Harbeson writes. Individuals, groups, and associations comprise part of civil society to the extent that they ‘seek to define, generate support for, or promote changes in the basic working rules of the game by which social values are authoritatively allocated’.

Toleration of varying points of view has become preeminent in this modern broad conception of civil society; yet equally paramount is the use of nonviolent methods for its interactions. In the Arab world, the political liberalization that would be preparatory to the opening up of space for civil society has usually been launched from above, rather than through popular forces below, and has often served merely to ameliorate economic crises or isolate a regime’s opposition. This was distinctly not the case in the intifada, the reasons for which will become clear when we return to the role of civil society in the uprising, in Chapter Eight.

Conclusion

Israel’s interpretation of the Palestinian intifada as ‘war’ not only mitigated against the proper recognition of its basically unarmed, political, and nonmilitary character, it has also shaped misperceptions by others of the uprising. Such misinterpretations have been little corrected by the profuse offering of books and articles in the years since. Further clouding the

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misconceptions is a widespread lack of understanding of the properties of nonviolent resistance as a category of struggle or defence. The literature on the uprising—whether European, North American, Israeli, or Palestinian—insufficiently notes the dimension of nonviolent resistance. It has also generally failed to explain the important organizational and intellectual changes prior to the intifada that allowed nonviolent strategies to emerge in competition as a paradigm with persistent military prototypes. Not only does the literature on the uprising generally not make clear that a nonmilitary model had come to coexist with the old, it does not acknowledge that such a schema gained hold and was able to dominate during more than two years of the intifada.

As this thesis will show, a battle was waged by a group of Palestinians inside the occupied territories, who, believing that the time had come to adopt non-belligerent and solely political methods of asserting their rights, worked in the late 1970s and throughout the decade of the 1980s with a variety of outlets, languages, pamphlets, and media. This does not mean that when the intifada started they had been able to construct a perfectly nonviolent movement. Rather, it is to say that in their skirmishing and contacts in the years prior to the uprising a more valid understanding of the intifada can be found. As will be shown, what distinguishes the 1987 uprising is the extent to which a small group was able to hold to and promulgate a nonviolent template of struggle once the intifada began (despite extreme countermeasures and brutal reprisals), and not the episodic phenomenon of violence. In examining this struggle within a struggle, the outlines of the intifada can more accurately be discerned. To grasp the origin and continuity of the changes that would differentiate the Palestinian uprising, it is necessary to review its roots in the larger conflict, the subject of the next chapter.
Chapter Two

**HISTORICAL REVIEW:**

**EARLY USE OF NONVIOLENT PROTEST BY PALESTINIANS**

In the modern era, Jewish colonization of Palestine began in the 1880s, as pogroms in eastern Europe drove Jews to return to the Eastern Mediterranean area. The concept of a nation-state in an era of European colonialism seemed an appropriate response for the protection of Jews from the discrimination and persecution of anti-Semitism on the European continent. Although the Zionist leadership was well aware of the numerical significance of the Arab population from 1908 on, it was only after World War I that average persons among European Jewry realized the ethical and practical complications of the Zionist dream: Palestine was inhabited by half a million Muslim and Christian Arabs.¹

The newly arriving immigrants did not seek to integrate themselves into the various centres, economies, and institutions of the existing population. Their vision of a Jewish homeland entailed the development of their own structures and economic ventures, normally without Arab employees or consumption of Arab-produced goods. As separate settlements and exclusive enterprises were set up, an intense conflagration developed. Conflicting interpretations of national rights resulted from the colonial presence of the British, and the losses of land and jobs associated with Zionist settlements and endeavours. The Palestinians sought to protest the changes that were occurring. Most of the methods they used to fight for what they regarded as their country were drawn from a body of techniques known as nonviolent direct action, nonviolent struggle, or nonviolent resistance. As they struggled to preserve the status quo ante, such measures were prominently utilized during the 1920s and 1930s, and they reappear during the *intifada.*

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Palestinian Resistance in the 1920s

Six Palestine Arab Congresses convened between 1919 and 1923 in opposition to the 2 November 1917 letter from Lord Balfour, British secretary of state for foreign affairs, to Lord Lionel Walter Rothschild, that his government viewed 'with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people'. Even before the text of the Balfour letter had been officially disclosed to the residents of Palestine, a large peaceful demonstration opposed its rumoured contents, in Jerusalem on 27 February 1920, with the knowledge if not the assent of the British colonial authorities. On 8 March, a second demonstration occurred, this time with speeches of a 'violently political character, . . . the temper of the mob was “decidedly nasty” ', and some stones were thrown. Another took place on 11 March, despite demonstrations having been proscribed due to Zionist pressure. In Palestine, waves of protests broke out against the ratification of the Balfour


3Allenby decided against making the declaration public, as he 'had received no guidance from the British Government about their precise intentions regarding the implementation of the Balfour Declaration. In fact they had no precise intentions. As always, the initiative was left to the Zionist Organization'. John Marlowe, The Seat of Pilate: An Account of the Palestine Mandate (London, Cresset Press, 1959), pp. 27–8. Chaim Weizmann, the guiding force of Zionism, persuaded Prime Minister Lloyd George to advise Colonial Secretary Winston Churchill, 'You mustn’t give representative Government to Palestine'. Notes on conversation at Balfour’s Jerusalem residence, 22 July 1921. Richard Meinertzhagen, Middle East Diary 1917–1956 (London, Cresset Press, 1959), p. 105.

4Palin Report, or the Report of the Court of Inquiry convened by order of H. E. the High Commissioner and Commander-in-Chief; Dated the 12th Day of April 1920, Foreign Office (FO) 371/5121/E120/6.31, 1 July 1920, pp. 56, 57.

5Kayyali, Palestine, pp. 75, 84. The outbreaks in Jerusalem caught the attention of the Great Powers, according to the Palestinian historian A. W. Kayyali, yet instead of causing a review of proposed policies, the process went forward to nominate Britain for the Mandate. It was not until after the nomination, that the Balfour policy was formally unveiled to the notable families of Nablus in April. Ibid., p. 84.
Declaration at San Remo, and in opposition to the separation of Palestine from what was then Greater Syria, an alliance thought by militant young Palestinians to be the best vehicle for independence (one that was nullified by the creation of the French and British mandates in 1922).

The Palestinian protests started out peaceably, with fifteen hundred demonstrators rallying in Jerusalem, two thousand in Jaffa, and 250 in Haifa. Showing coordinated, nationwide, unified action, the street assemblies were also accompanied by the closing of shops and submission of petitions to the authorities. By the close of Easter Week 1920, however, the actions had boiled over into a violent clash between Arab and Jew. After the end of the seven days of the yearly al-Nabi Musa celebrations, processions of delegations from across Palestine proceeded south from Jerusalem towards Jericho, heading for the mosque considered by Muslims to be on the grave of Moses. After feasting by the Dead Sea, they returned to Jerusalem for closing prayers. The speeches at the annual ceremony on 12 April were of a 'flagrantly political character', and the presence of agents provocateurs was considered 'extremely probable' by the British military investigation, known as the Palin Report, which remains the principal source of facts on the episode, which turned into a demonstration against Jews. Despite martial law, 5 Jews were murdered and 216 injured.

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6 The declaration was ratified on 25 April 1920 by the conference of allied powers meeting at San Remo, in northern Italy, which awarded the mandate over Palestine to Great Britain. It was subsequently incorporated into the Treaty of Sèvres on 10 August 1920, with Articles 22 and 95 making reference to the Balfour Declaration, and was superseded in July 1923 by the Treaty of Lausanne. After approval by the United States, the mandate (explicitly including the Balfour Declaration in its second paragraph) was confirmed by the Council of the League of Nations on 24 July 1922. 'League of Nations Mandate for Palestine', December 1922, Cmd. 1785 (London, H. M. Stationery Office). Also see the report of the Peel Commission, officially the Royal Commission of Enquiry, July 1937, Palestine Royal Commission Report, Cmd. 5479 (London, H. M. Stationery Office, 1937), pp. 30–32. Twenty years after the issuance of the Balfour Declaration, in 1937 the commission headed by Lord William Robert Wellesley Peel would grant that little had been known about the indigenous population and admit the opposition of its leaders. Peel Commission Report, p. 32.


9 Palin Report, pp. 62, 63–4. The Palin inquiry, however, found 'no evidence of any definite plan on the part of an organised body of rioters and the whole affair has the appearance of spontaneity' in ibid., p. 58; it uncovered 'no preconceived intention' to attack Jews in ibid., p. 63.
while 4 Arabs were killed—all of them by firearms—and 21 wounded. The Peel Commission later concluded the following about the April 1920 riots:

The causes of the trouble had been (1) the Arabs' disappointment at the non-fulfilment of the promises of independence . . . (2) the Arabs' belief that the Balfour Declaration implied a denial of the right of self-determination, and their fear that the establishment of the National Home would mean a great increase of Jewish immigration and would lead to their economic and political subjection to the Jews. . . .

The violence accelerated strides towards Jewish self-defence. Chaim Weizmann called the riots a pogrom and said that hugely increased immigration was the only antidote to their repetition.

Present on 12 April was Haj Amin al-Husseini, the main Palestinian nationalist figure in opposition to the political goals of Zionism for three decades. Haj Amin possessed the Husseini family's backing, giving him political precedence over other candidates from leading families to become the next mufti of Jerusalem, an indication of the preeminence of politics over religion at the time. On 8 May 1921, Haj Amin was advised by the British, who followed Ottoman procedure in choosing from among three candidates for mufti, that he

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10 Palin Report, pp. 75-6.

11 Peel Commission Report, p. 50. Similar opinions are more bluntly stated in the contemporaneous Palin Report, which concludes that the 'impatience' and 'indiscretion' of the 'official Zionists' were largely responsible for the crisis in 1920. Palin Report, pp. 80-1.


13 According to Amin biographer Zvi Elpeleg, Amin 'roused the marchers and turned the celebration into a violent demonstration', Zvi Elpeleg, The Grand Mufti: Haj Amin al-Husaini, Founder of the Palestinian National Movement (London, Frank Cass, 1993), p. 6. This was the judgement of Ronald Storrs, in Orientations (London, Nicholson and Watson, 1943), p. 331, which Porath accepts in Emergence of the Palestinian-Arab National Movement, p. 99, although Porath disputes the Zionist view of premeditated violence, p. 98. Revisionist biographer Philip Mattar, however, rejects the interpretation of Haj Amin as a fomenter. Relying chiefly on the Palin Report, Mattar asserts that while the speakers were still beyond the city walls on 4 April 1920, a spontaneous disturbance began in the Jewish quarter of the Old City. Philip Mattar, The Mufti of Jerusalem: Al-Hajj Amin al-Husayni and the Palestinian National Movement (New York, Columbia University Press, 1988), p. 17. How much fomentation would have been needed for unrest is unclear. The Palin Report notes, 'We are faced with a native population thoroughly exasperated by a sense of injustice and disappointed hopes, panic stricken as to their future', in ibid., p. 78. 'Had the Arabs possessed meaningful power to uphold their demands, the outcome might have been different, but power was clearly not in Arab hands. Rather than read the violence . . . as a sign of events to come, Britain chose to interpret them as "disturbances" which it was hoped would not be repeated'. Richard P. Stevens, 'Zionism as a Phase of Western Imperialism', The Transformation of Palestine: Essays on the Origin and Development of the Arab-Israeli Conflict, ed. Ibrahim Abu-Lughod (Evanston, Northwestern University Press, 1971), p. 57.
would be granted the position. In January 1922, the Supreme Muslim Council was established with Haj Amin as its president, and became the most significant political entity for the Palestinians during this period. The mandatory government also gave him a more exalted title, grand mufti, al-mufti al-akbar, as he demanded, apparently considering the office a modest price for ensuring future stability, which, indeed, lasted eight years.

During most of the 1920s, the Palestinian resistance led by Haj Amin and others in the often-feuding élite Arab leadership was directed towards London and its support for the Zionist movement, using the simplest and most basic nonviolent methods: formal statements, petitions, supplications, entreaties, manifestos, assemblies, delegations, processions, and marches. Although some of his biographers have concluded that Haj Amin primarily favoured violence in his struggle against the Jews, in the view of this thesis, for most of the decade the instruments he used as mufti to fight Zionist immigration were the most rudimentary of nonviolent methods.

Britain's military administration ended on 30 June 1920, and a civil administration was established under Sir Herbert Louis Samuel, a liberal Zionist who assumed office as the first high commissioner of Palestine convinced that the Arabs would ultimately be reconciled to the programme of the Zionists. A boycott to protest Samuel's appointment

14Elpeleg, Grand Mufti, pp. 7–10.
15Elpeleg describes Haj Amin's moderation during this period as arising from his need for approval from the authorities in order to consolidate his national political leadership. Elpeleg, Grand Mufti, pp. 10–11. Mattar says Amin publicly maintained that the Palestinians should not rebel against British rule, as it was too strong and 'ephemeral', but should focus on opposing Zionists, the principal threat to Palestinian nationalists. Mattar, Mufti of Jerusalem, p. 26.

16Compared to a typology of methods developed by the theoretician Gene Sharp, the measures used by Palestinians in the 1920s generally fall within the first, most elementary of six categories: protest and persuasion. The other five categories are social noncooperation, such as ostracism of persons or excommunication; economic noncooperation, such as boycotts and refusal to pay assessments; economic noncooperation, such as strikes, slowdowns, and walkouts; political noncooperation, such as boycotts of legislative bodies and civil disobedience; and nonviolent interventions, such as hunger strikes, sit-ins, and the development of alternative institutions. Gene Sharp, Methods of Nonviolent Action, vol. 2 of Politics of Nonviolent Action, pp. 117–25, 130.

17For example, see Elpeleg, Grand Mufti, pp. 43, 85–93.
ended weakly.\textsuperscript{19} Violent outbreaks were intermittent, and the organization of political parties had not yet begun.

By the Third Palestine Arab Congress, in Haifa on 13 December 1920 (known as the 'Haifa Congress'), opposition to the Balfour Declaration resulted in a deluge of manifestoes to the League of Nations contesting the validity of British policy. A number of Muslim-Christian Association branches sent representatives from across Palestine to the meeting. In Haifa, the number of Christians signing public statements opposing the Balfour Declaration and joining protest actions often exceeded the participation of Muslims, and included landowners and wealthy merchants whose political consciousness had sometimes been sharpened by favourable educational and economic opportunities.\textsuperscript{20} The Haifa Congress elected Musa Kazim Pasha al-Husseini to head the Executive Committee, or Arab Executive, composed mostly of notable families. The public unified around the Arab Executive based on the hope that the Balfour Declaration could be nullified through political action, a prospect that did not seem unrealistic at the time, and not violence.\textsuperscript{21} Resolutions were passed by thirty-seven delegates, who rejected a national home for the Jews based on the Balfour Declaration, declared their nonacceptance of the principle of Jewish immigration, and called for establishing a national representative government.\textsuperscript{22} The resolutions it passed were the three basic doctrines of the Arab national movement.\textsuperscript{23}

The first Arab street demonstration organized under the civil administration took
place in Nablus soon after the Haifa Congress, in protest of the Balfour Declaration. In Haifa, demonstrators defied a prohibition to march. When the governor of Jaffa rejected a request to march, Muslim shops closed in protest on 28 March 1921. In Jerusalem on the same day, a large peaceful demonstration protested the Balfour Declaration. During a visit to Palestine, Winston Churchill, after being named secretary of state for the colonies, met with a Palestinian delegation from the executive committee of the Haifa Congress on 28 March. Musa Kazim al-Husseini presented Churchill with a long memorandum from the congress which dissected the Balfour Declaration, and asked for the abolition of the principle of a Jewish national home and for the creation of a national government, cessation of Jewish immigration until an Arab national government could be formed, and a return to the status of Palestine prior to the British Mandate, under which it was unified with neighbouring Arab states. Churchill replied, 'If it is not in my power' to repudiate the Balfour Declaration or halt Jewish immigration, 'nor, if it were in my power, would it be my wish', and cited the right to rule based on military conquest. During Churchill's stay, demonstrations occurred in April in Haifa. Rallies and denunciatory speeches marked similar unrest in Beisan.

Riots broke out in Jaffa on 1 May 1921. As Jaffa was the main port in Palestine, and adjacent to the growing Jewish neighbourhoods of Tel Aviv and Petah Tiqvah, the Jaffa Arabs were attuned to the numbers of Jewish émigrés. The clash was touched off by disputes over authorized and unauthorized May Day parades by Jewish socialists and


25Appendix C, Churchill's Reply to the Palestine Arab Deputation, Klieman, Foundations of British Policy, p. 270. 'Our position in this country is based upon the events of [World War I]... It has been the armies of Britain which have liberated these regions', Churchill writes. Ibid.

26Beisan had been the scene of disputes dating to 1870, when the Ottoman government auctioned off large tracts of Palestinian village land due to unpaid land taxes and crop arrearages. Caplan, 'The Yishuv, Sir Herbert Samuel, and the Arab Question', pp. 8, 9; Peel Commission Report, p. 259.

27Immigration to Jaffa by Russian Jews fleeing pogroms averaged 2,000 a year from 1881 until World War I. Bentwich, Palestine, p. 66.
communists. Arabs who had gathered at the Jaffa side of an open area between the port and Tel Aviv misinterpreted police shots fired into the air to disperse the Zionists, who were gathered on the Tel Aviv side. A mob moved through Jaffa, smashing Jewish shops and attacking pedestrians. Rumour-mongering led to Arab attacks on Zionist settlements along the coastal plain, and after six days, 47 Jews had been killed and 146 wounded, while 48 Arabs lay dead and 73 were injured, mainly by other Arabs. High Commissioner Samuel was the first British official to grasp the magnitude of the Jaffa riots, which would come to be attributed to increasing Jewish immigration and the resulting unemployment of Palestinians. The fears felt by Palestinians, despite British blandishments, were borne out by the remark of a representative of the Zionist Organization in 1921, at a court of inquiry after the Jaffa riots, that 'there can be only one National Home in Palestine, and that is a Jewish one, and no equality in the partnership between Jews and Arabs, but a Jewish preponderance as soon as the numbers of the race are sufficiently increased'.

Haifa was changing from a 'small roadstead' into a crowded harbour city, under the immediate impact from newly arriving émigrés, as large numbers of those who disembarked from ships remained there. The arrival of 650 Russian Jews in 1920—among them a number of committed Bolsheviks who sought to enlist Arabs for secret Leninist cells—was reflected


31Comment of Dr. Montague David Eder, psychoanalyst and head of the political department of the Zionist Organization (after 1927, the Jewish Agency), also president of the Zionist Federation of Great Britain and Ireland, 1931-6. Testifying before the commission of inquiry investigating the Jaffa riots of 1921, over which Chief Justice Sir Thomas Haycraft presided, Dr. Eder spoke as the Acting Chairman of the Zionist Commission and was regarded as representing the ‘official Zionist creed’. Colonial Office, ‘Palestine. Disturbances in May, 1921: Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry with Correspondence Relating Thereto’, [Haycraft Commission Report], 1921, Cm. 1540 (London, H. M. Stationery Office), p. 57; William B. Ziff, *The Rape of Palestine* (New York, Longmans, Green and Co., 1938), p. 171. The Haycraft Commission reports, in the third person, that Eder used the term ‘predominance’, rather than ‘preponderance’, as quoted above in Ziff. According to the Haycraft Report, Eder ‘was quite clear that the Jews should, and the Arabs should not, have the right to bear arms, and he stated his belief that this discrimination would tend to improve Arab-Jewish relations’. Haycraft, Ibid.

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the following year in the May Day demonstration that turned violent. Guns were coming through the Haganah into Haifa, and, in addition, the communists were supplied with smuggled arms by some members of the labour movement, such as the carpenters' union. In 1924, Jewish firms in the port city were reportedly running arms from Danzig to Palestine.

In July 1921, the first delegation of Arab leaders to travel to London protested to the Colonial Office that neither the Balfour Declaration nor the British Mandate could be accepted. It demanded abrogation of Balfour's pledge, an end to Jewish immigration, and the start of representative government. The Balfour Declaration was regarded as a threat to the national and physical survival of the country, and British rule based on the declaration's implementation required, as the Israeli historian Yehoshua Porath phrased it, 'a constant struggle to impose an unwanted policy'. In February 1922, a delegation of Arab leaders told the Colonial Office in London, 'The people of Palestine cannot accept the creation of a National Home for the Jewish people in Palestine'. Churchill's subsequent White Paper of June 1922 was a 'cunningly balanced document' substantially drafted by Samuel, whose basic principles would not formally be laid aside until 1939.

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32 Seikaly, Haifa, pp. 2, 81–97, 173, 180 en60.
33 Ibid., pp. 173, 180 en64, 65.
34 Worsfold, Palestine of the Mandate, p. 19; Lesch, Arab Politics in Palestine, pp. 159–60.
35 Porath, 'Political Organization of the Palestinian Arabs', p. 11.
36 Peel Commission Report, pp. 32.
37 Bernard Wasserstein, 'Herbert Samuel and the Palestine Problem', English Historical Review 91:361 (October 1976): 770. The 'Statement of British Policy in Palestine', presented to the Zionist Organization and the Palestine Arab Delegation in London, was later called 'Churchill's White Paper', and combined the colonial secretary's encouragement to the Jews in March 1921 with the high commissioner's assurances to the Arabs in June 1921. It read, in part, 'Unauthorized statements have been made to the effect that the purpose in view is to create a wholly Jewish Palestine. Phrases have been used such as "Palestine is to become as Jewish as England is English". His Majesty's Government regard any such expectation as impracticable and have no such aim in view. . . . [T]he terms of the [Balfour] Declaration referred to do not contemplate that Palestine as a whole should be converted into a Jewish National Home, but that such a Home should be founded in Palestine'. CO, 'Correspondence with the Palestinian Arab Delegation and the Zionist Organisation', [Churchill White Paper], 3 June 1922, Cmd. 1700 (London, H. M. Stationery Office), as reprinted in Appendix 3, Great Britain and Palestine, 1915–1939, Information Department Papers no. 20A, rev. edn (London, Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1939), p. 123.
of subordinating the Arab populace or culture, and it spoke of government plans to assist in the gradual establishment of self-government. It, too, was repudiated by the Palestinians, because the British policy was nonetheless based on Balfour. Shortly thereafter, the League of Nations approved the British Mandate. In July, a Palestinian delegation arrived in Mecca to gather the support of fellow Muslims for resistance to the mandate, the first effort to orchestrate specifically Muslim support for the Palestinians. It reportedly resulted in demonstrations by Afghan, Indian, Iranian, Javanese, Kurdish, Sudanese, and Turkish pilgrims to Mecca and Jidda.  

Within Palestine, as the mandate became recognized as a fait accompli, the tone of Palestinian opposition changed from contesting the national home and delineation of the mandate to rejection of the entire mandate and assertion of independence. On 23 October 1922, the first census of Palestine’s population was taken. Of a total of 752,048 counted, 589,177 were Muslim, 83,794 were Jewish, 71,464 were Christian, and 7,028 were Druzes. 

The resistance techniques to which the Palestinians then turned were drawn from the categories of nonviolent techniques known as noncooperation. Village mukhtars, village heads or mayors, began to refuse to cooperate with government commissioners. Protests occurred against land grants to Zionists in a variety of areas, and a general strike took place on 13 and 14 July 1922, with shops closing across the country. Villagers were encouraged not to pay tithes to a non-Muslim government, and prayers about the danger facing Palestine were offered in mosques. The technique of excommunication was employed, in which access to Islamic sites was proscribed for those who had sold land to Zionist brokers or middlemen, and Haj Amin issued a fatwa, or a legal opinion of Islamic jurisprudence,


forbidding the sale of land by Muslims to Zionists or their agents. 40 Foreshadowing the
division of opinion in the leadership of the intifada almost seven decades later, by the
summer of 1922 the district governors were of two schools of thought—one favouring
nonviolent methods of noncooperation and obstruction, the other preferring direct rebellious
confrontations and armed guerrilla warfare. 41

The earliest use of methods of distinct political noncooperation had come as
Palestinian leaders refused to participate in a variety of conciliatory constitutional formulae
proposed by High Commissioner Samuel. 42 Samuel had issued a temporary stoppage of
Jewish immigration in response to the May 1921 Jaffa riots and was also prompted by them
to try to reconcile the irreconcilable obligations in the Balfour Declaration. He convinced
Churchill that a legislative assembly could provide a forum for the representation of
Palestinian views that might advise the civil administration. Later, on 22 August 1922 in
Nablus, however, the Fifth Palestine Arab Congress voted to boycott Samuel’s new
Palestine constitution and the proposed elections for a Palestine Legislative Council. The
constitution and council were predicated on the Balfour Declaration, guaranteeing that the
assembly would have a majority of non-Arabs and few powers, thus the fundamental
Palestinian political dilemma remained: participation might be construed as acceptance of
the mandate and thus the Jewish national home, as Arab leaders argued, yet rejection of
such a step towards self-governance denied the Palestinians an option for moderating
Jewish colonization, which naturally gratified the Zionists. 43

40 Nels Johnson, Islam and the Politics of Meaning in Palestinian Nationalism (London, Boston, and
41 Monthly Political Report, June 1922, Wyndham Deedes (the first secretary of the civil service,
chosen by Samuel) to Churchill, 7 July 1922, in Kayyali, Palestine, pp. 113, 128 enl 16.
42 One of Gene Sharp’s subcategories of political noncooperation includes actions such as boycotts of
government departments or elections, refusal of assistance to enforcement agents, refusal to disperse, civil
43 Porath, Emergence of the Palestinian–Arab National Movement, pp. 144–58. “It appears
unreasonable of the Arabs to have rejected a Legislative Assembly in which they would have taken part, as one
of their great grievances consists in their non-participation in the government of the country. But it must be
remembered that they still hoped to make a stand against the Balfour Declaration, and that by accepting the
Palestinians tried to insist on the broadest possible interpretation of the Balfour Declaration's injunction against any prejudicing of their rights, as they pressured the British to agree to their three basic demands. In assembly elections on 20 to 28 February 1923, only 126 of the 722 seats allocated to Muslim and Christian Arabs were filled, despite an extension in the voting deadline. Throughout the country, only 1,397 votes were cast, 1,172 of them by Jews. The balloting was thus 50 per cent Jewish, 18 per cent Muslim, and 5.5 per cent Christian. It proved 'an embarrassing fiasco'. Samuel announced that the elections were null and void:

In two out of the four districts into which Palestine is divided, the Arab population abstained... from submitting nominations and in the other two districts there was a partial abstention. This was due partly to voluntary action and partly to exercise of strong pressure by the organisation opposing the election. In consequence, the people not having fully availed themselves of the opportunity to participate in the Government of the country through elected representatives, His Majesty's Government have decided to suspend, for the time being, such part of the proposed constitution as relates to the establishment of a Legislative Council.

On 12 March 1923, the closing of shops and a work stoppage were announced for two days later to underscore the withholding of participation in the legislative council elections. At the Sixth Palestine Arab Congress, in Jaffa, from 16 to 20 June 1923, resolutions restated old demands. Political obstruction and tax resistance were discussed, the latter merely referred for discussion.

Assembly they would have recognized its legality, which they had always contested. They also feared the preponderating influence of the Jews in a mixed assembly. Mrs. Stewart Erskine, Palestine of the Arabs (London, George G. Harrap and Co., 1935), p. 78.

46 Wasserstein, 'Herbert Samuel and the Palestine Problem', p. 771.
47 The elections were invalidated in London, on 4 May 1923. Ibid. On 29 May, Samuel announced the nullification and wired his text to London. Herbert Samuel, High Commissioner for Palestine to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, telegram, 1 June 1923, p. 9, in, 'Elections for the Palestine Legislative Council'.
From 1920 to 1924, the position of the Palestinian Arabs was to support all political pressures being applied on London, making it appear that no elements of Palestinian society could cooperate with the British while policy was based on the Balfour Declaration, and thus causing rejection of all compromise proposals coming from Britain. A contemporary account of a British colonel notes the ‘wonderful self-control and exemplary behaviour of the local [Palestinian] Christians and Arabs’ in response to Lord Balfour’s first and only trip to Palestine, in March and April 1925, to inaugurate Hebrew University on Mount Scopus in Jerusalem:

Beyond showing their feelings by passing the day in prayer, with closed houses and places of business shrouded in black, and shunning the precincts of the new University, the Mohammedans made no hostile demonstration of any kind; and a similar attitude was taken by the Christian population.49

Balfour’s niece and biographer Blanche Dugdale, the ‘gentle Zionist propagandist’, confirms the one-day strike, with all Arab shops closed, and notes that Jerusalem’s Arab newspapers were bordered in mourning black.50 As successive Conservative and Labour governments retained the inherited policy based on the Balfour Declaration, the Palestinian Arabs began to conclude that political methods and persuasive appeals would be to no avail, and internal schisms deepened.51 By the time the Palestinians reconsidered their position on a legislative body in 1928, the Zionists had rejected the principle.

The further adoption of Islamic emblems for opposition to the Balfour policy emerged at the end of the 1920s. For Jews, the Western Wall, or Kotel Ma’aravi, of the sacred Temple Mount—the so-called Wailing Wall—was the ‘last relic of their ancient


sanctuary and of their national glory. On 24 September 1928, the Jewish Day of Atonement, or Yom Kippur, Jewish worshippers set up a partition at the outer wall of the temple in Jerusalem, dividing it into sections for men and women. This rekindled an old dispute that was as complex as it was bitter, and set off a spiral of events known as the uprisings of 1929. To Muslims, the wall was part of the stable for the Prophet’s winged horse, Buraq, who, according to tradition, carried Muhammad to heaven, as well as the retaining wall of the Haram al-Sharif, or August sanctuary, where the journey was said to have begun. It had long been considered Maghrebi waqf. Since the medieval period, the Jews had had the right to use the narrow pavement below the wall for prayers; they believed they were entitled to bring a screen, chairs, and scrolls, but Muslims feared that this was the first step to a Jewish takeover of the Haram al-Sharif. On 1 November 1928 in Jerusalem, Haj Amin convened a General Muslim Conference, or Islamic Congress, with seven hundred participants from across Palestine, who promptly sent formal statements of protest to the League of Nations. They also established the Society for the Protection of the Muslim Holy Places. A white paper was issued by the Colonial Office that month, which upheld the Ottoman position that Jews had the right of prayer at the Western Wall—but without their accompaniments to worship of chairs, screens, or benches—out of concern that permitting


33 Porath devotes a chapter to the Western Wall conflict, having indicated that he believes it marks the widening of the Palestine predicament from a local issue into a pan-Arab and Muslim question. Porath, *Emergence of the Palestinian-Arab National Movement*, pp. 258–73. Wasserstein views the failure of British authorities here as indicative of a larger incapacity to solve the problem of Palestine. Wasserstein, *British in Palestine*, p. 222.


the items to stay would set a precedent and arouse the Muslims. When the Jews refused to comply with orders to remove their partitions and various other articles, fights broke out with British officers.

Across Palestine, rumours spread of the possibility of the great Jewish temple being rebuilt on the site of al-Aqsa mosque. Haj Amin’s original intention was doubtless to find a political solution, yet the mufti’s efforts soon turned to bloodshed. The mandatory government failed to respond with legal sanction for Muslim claims to the Western Wall, and a series of disturbances and counter-disturbances erupted during the following year.

When Jews marched to the wall on 14 August 1929, the fast of Tisha Bav, commemorating the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 A.D., Arab demonstrations followed at the site the next day and again on 16 August, Mawlad al-Nabi, the Prophet’s birthday, in which two thousand may have participated. During the next few days, eleven Jews and fifteen Palestinians were wounded, and a Jewish boy died. These events culminated in riots from 23 to 29 August 1929, which the Arabs called the Buraq Revolt, or thawrat al-Buraq. Armed with sticks, knives, revolvers, clubs, and swords, on 23 August 1929, the fellahin, or peasant labourers, arrived at al-Aqsa for prayers. Following speeches by Haj Amin and others, the crowd charged into the Western Wall area, leading to mayhem, as police fired upon mobs and aeroplanes flew overhead. The violence spread, the greatest of which was directed at the ancient Jewish communities in Hebron and Safed. In Hebron, sixty non-Zionist Jews

58Elpeleg, Grand Mufti, pp. 18–20.
59Lesch, Arab Politics in Palestine, p. 209.
60Kayyali, Palestine, p. 142.
61Ibid., p. 143.
were massacred, including women and children, and one hundred wounded, all of them members of the Old Yishuv, or Old Settlements antedating Zionism, who did not fight back. They had been attacked for religious reasons. The Palestinian Arab acceptance of non-Zionist Jews and for Judaism as a faith, maintained until then, was broken. By 30 August, the disorders had reached Safed, where twenty Jews were murdered and a hundred houses robbed. The initial catalyst may have been anti-Jewish feeling, 'mob action' to frighten the Zionists, but, as British troops began firing at Palestinians, other Arab towns, such as Nablus, Jenin, Tulkarem, Acre, and Gaza, began to demonstrate with an explicitly anti-British bias.

A Commission of Enquiry, headed by Sir Walter Shaw, travelled around Palestine between October and December 1929 and found that a 'National Home for the Jews, in the sense in which it was widely understood, was inconsistent with the demands of the Arab nationalists while the claims of Arab nationalism, if admitted, would have rendered impossible the fulfilment of the pledge to the Jews'. By the end of the year, reciprocal boycotts of Jewish merchants and Arab businesses were in place. The assessment by Sir John Hope Simpson—a former civil administrator in India who by the end of the decade had written two of the earliest modern studies on refugees—on 20 October 1930 verified serious and prevalent Arab unemployment, some resulting from eviction of the fellahin, and

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63 On 2 July 1919, for example, such sentiment was expressed in one of the first Arab issuances on record expressing opposition to Jewish immigration to Palestine. While the memorandum calls Zionist migration 'a grave peril', the next sentence reads, 'Our Jewish compatriots shall enjoy our common rights and assume the common responsibilities'. 'Memorandum Presented to the King-Crane Commission by the General Syrian Congress', in The Israel-Arab Reader: A Documentary History of the Middle East Conflict, ed. Walter Laqueur, 3d edn (New York, Bantam Books, 1976), p. 33.

64 Elpeleg, Grand Mufti, pp. 21, 22.

65 Weizmann, Trial and Error, p. 335; Kayyali, Palestine, p. 145.

inadequate arable land for the Palestinians already farming the land.\textsuperscript{67} The White Paper of that same date, under the secretary of state for the colonies, Lord Passfield, better known as Sidney Webb, urged self-government along lines similar to those of Churchill’s memorandum of 1922, and called for proportional representation of Arab and Jew.\textsuperscript{68} This temporary reversal of Britain’s policy, which might have allowed an independent Arab state, was related to London’s desire to retain control of the larger Muslim Middle East. A ‘storm of protest’ broke in London from Jews and Conservative opposition leaders.\textsuperscript{69} The Zionists attacked the proposal because their seats were to be allotted according to their ‘actual population’, the British governor of Jerusalem notes; ‘yet, if ever a people seem to deserve at least the opportunity of official public utterance, it is the Arabs of Palestine’.\textsuperscript{70}

In January 1931, an attempt was made to internationalize Muslim support for a Muslim Palestine, and a congress was convened in Jerusalem. Delegates from twenty-five Muslim regions—including those in Iran, India, China, Java, and Sumatra—were elected to an executive body, under Haj Amin’s leadership. Because of the session’s ostensibly religious purposes, the mandatory authorities allowed it to proceed; however, its real mission was to try to challenge the mandate and its support for a Jewish national home.\textsuperscript{71}

The subsequent nullification of the Passfield White Paper in a letter from Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald to Chaim Weizmann, published on 14 February 1931—dubbed the Black Paper by the Palestinians—was seen by Palestinians as regression and repudiation


\textsuperscript{69}Great Britain and Palestine (RIIA), pp. 49–50.

\textsuperscript{70}Storrs, Orientations, pp. 373, 374.

\textsuperscript{71}Kramer, Islam Assembled, pp. 123–41.
of the Arab Executive’s moderate policies. This advance and retreat—advocacy of a position, followed by its withdrawal—intensified the misgivings of both Palestinians and Jews regarding British policy. Zionist land purchases proceeded unabated through the Jewish National Fund, which regarded all land as inalienably Jewish, and designated what land it did purchase as solely for Jewish employment. British steps to protect Arab landowners were rendered ineffective as the Zionists, intent on the acquisition of more land, eluded each measure or law.

**Palestinian Resistance in the 1930s**

The decade of the 1930s saw the intensification and broadening of Palestinian nonviolent resistance, with more general strikes, closures, and development of an extensive committee apparatus for support. Political parties evolved. A preceding decade of mostly nonviolent resistance by the Palestinians, led by aristocratic families, was to be supplanted by a period in which popular, rural violence at times verged on the anarchic. This span of years witnessed the growth of armed Arab resistance as the organization of Jewish armed resistance also accelerated. The flow of Jewish immigrants was not an abstraction, and the Palestinians ‘had cause for grave concern, as they saw entire regions of the country changing face’. Although the Palestinians rejected compromise, other forces were also at work.

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73 By 1919, the activities of a Jewish self-defence group had become visible. Called the Haganah and formed by Zionist revisionist leader Lieutenant Vladimir Yevgenievich Jabotinsky, it had been able to obtain firearms, possibly with the military government’s knowledge. Seikaly, Haifa, p. 173. According to Bentwich, Jabotinsky’s Jewish self-defence groups had obtained firearms prior to May 1920, Palestine, p. 93. During the 1930s, the buildup of Jewish armed groups increased, as reflected in CO, ‘Palestine: Statement of Information Relating to Acts of Violence’, regarding the Haganah, Palmach, Irgun Zvai Leumi, and Stern Group [Gang], and ‘movements of sabotage and violence under the guise of the “Jewish Resistance Movement”’, July 1946, Cmd. 6873 (London, H. M. Stationery Office).

Despite earlier calls for resignation from jobs with the mandatory government, as it became suspected that the declaration could not be nullified and the British would not be departing, a contradictory emphasis instead sought to place Palestinian Arabs into such positions. In this, Christians had the advantage of a higher level of education, attained through attending schools run by religious orders or missionaries which had functioned vigorously in the Ottoman period and been able to protect the study of Arabic language and literature.\textsuperscript{75} Large numbers of Christian Arabs were employed by the civil administration. This resulted in Muslim unease which, along with the rise of the Supreme Muslim Council, encouraged the organization of religious groups that did not adhere to the traditional approach of Muslim-Christian unity and downplayed the idea of a secular national identity common to Muslims and Christians. Exclusively Islamic entities developed, such as the Young Men's Muslim Association (YMMA) and youth scouting. At the same time, word was spreading from Damascus and Baghdad about concepts of Arab unity and independence, rousing a young educated élite whose status derived from education rather than clan or family origin.\textsuperscript{76}

In the summer of 1931, a Palestinian conference in Nablus demanded the establishment of a defence organization and the procurement of weapons in response to help being given by the British for Jewish defence endeavours. Agitated about governmental provision of weaponry to the Jews, the decision was made to demand from the authorities comparable arms for Palestinian villages and clans. The young activists (and the general public) denounced the policies of the Arab Executive for having selected lobbying as the approach to the British rather than armed means. Calls were heard for independence in the context of Arab unity and the boycotting of imports not made by Palestinian Arabs.\textsuperscript{77} It may

\textsuperscript{75}For children 5 to 14 years of age, 17 per cent of the Muslims were enrolled in school, 81 per cent of Christians, and 96 per cent of Jews; of youths 15 to 18, 3 per cent of Muslims were enrolled, 37 per cent of Christians, and 42 per cent of Jews, according to the 1923 census. Harry Emerson Fosdick, \textit{A Pilgrimage to Palestine} (London, Student Christian Movement, 1928), p. 289.

\textsuperscript{76}Porath, 'Political Organization of the Palestinian Arabs', pp. 15–16.

have been on 31 July 1931 in Nablus that for the first time armed struggle, or *al-kifah al-musalah*, was publicly expounded as the only means for preventing the completion of the goals of the Zionist movement. One of the Hebron delegates, possibly Shaykh Sabri Abidin, proposed the formation of armed bands to fight both the British and the Jews, and a three-person committee was appointed to procure weapons.\(^{78}\) The committee apparently did not take any action, but Nablus became the centre of anti-British and anti-Zionist agitation in the summer of 1931, as the young radicals aroused by the sweep of nationalistic thinking seized the initiative from a fractured Jerusalem leadership. Armed bands mobilized to fight the British and Zionists, the concept of armed struggle was debated, and a secret network began to develop.\(^{79}\) In August, an attempted strike in Nablus was suppressed by the authorities, and collective action by taxi drivers was similarly broken.\(^{80}\)

The retreating Turkish army from Palestine towards the end of World War I had left stockpiles of abandoned or purloined weaponry, which was now in civilian hands. Banditry and the pillaging of Christian pilgrims had flourished for centuries in the Eastern Mediterranean area, and such plundering, coupled with the decline of the Ottoman Empire and the inadequacy of the central government, resulted in gangs of robbers and sociopaths who formed their own power centres and sometimes won respect from the populace. Somewhere between eight and ten thousand Palestinians (5 per cent of the male population between twenty-five and fifty years of age in the mid-1930s) had already received basic training as soldiers or police, through conscription or enlistment in either the Turkish army, the Arab ‘revolt in the desert’, service to the British Mandate, or in the Transjordan Frontier

\(^{78}\)The conference was held on 31 July and 20 September 1931. *Al-Jami‘a al-‘Arabiyya*, or The Arab League, 2 August and 23 September 1931; Central Zionist Archives, S 25/4108; Civil Investigation Department (CID), Daily Intelligence Summary no. 221, 21 September 1931; ‘Nablus Congress of 20th September, 1931’, FO 371/15333, in Lachman, ‘Arab Rebellion and Terrorism’, pp. 52, 56.

\(^{79}\)Lachman, ‘Arab Rebellion and Terrorism’, p. 57.

\(^{80}\)Kayyal, *Palestine*, p. 164.
The call for armed struggle came primarily from two camps: those advocating pan-Arabism and confrontational strategies, and Muslim religious authorities and youth, many of whom were inspired by the grand mufti. In the winter of 1932, the first National Congress of Youth met in Jaffa, adopted a pan-Arab programme, voted to establish branches in villages and towns, and passed resolutions advocating the promotion of local industries and products—a positive ‘buy-Palestinian’ measure. The congress reflected the developing national awareness of youth and its emergence as a separate, insurgent political force. A generation of educated Palestinian nationalists was rising in the cities; it was disparaging of the impotency of the élite Jerusalem leadership after 1929, and most of the young activists came from the north and the Nablus area. The Arab Executive was disintegrating, its ineffectuality revealed when some of its own members were disclosed as selling land to Zionists. New nationalist forces were jockeying for position, a partisan press were raising their voices, and radical ideas and militant strategies were being debated. These included renewed declarations for no Palestinian to serve in an office of the mandatory government or cooperate with the government.

**Women Organize**

Women’s organizations had existed since the Ottoman period, and in 1910 an Orthodox Ladies Society was founded in Jaffa. By the start of the 1920s, Palestinian women were obtaining political experience through nonsectarian and exclusively female-run and nonsectarian and exclusively female-run and

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82 Lachman, ‘Arab Rebellion and Terrorism’, p. 54.


female-led organizations, the first of which was the Palestinian Women’s Union, which by 1921 had headquarters in Jerusalem and Haifa. At a time when women’s groups in Tunisia and Egypt were fighting against polygamy and summary divorce, the programme of the women’s union was calling for retraction of the Balfour Declaration, cessation of Jewish immigration, and improved treatment for Palestinian political prisoners. Responding to the bloodshed resulting from the Western Wall disturbances, on 26 October 1929 at the Jerusalem home of Tarab ‘Abd al-Hadi, more than two hundred women from across the country gathered as delegates to the First Arab Women’s Congress of Palestine. They protested the eviction of the fellahin from farmland that had been purchased by Zionist colonies and enterprises, while also asking for abrogation of the Balfour Declaration, an end to the mandate, and complete independence. A delegation of fourteen of the attendees was received by High Commissioner John Chancellor and Lady Chancellor at Government House and delivered a summary of the resolutions passed by the congress, for transmittal to London: ‘To protest against the Balfour Declaration, which has been the sole cause of all the troubles that took place in the country, and which may arise in future. We consider that this country will never enjoy peace and tranquillity as long as this Declaration is in force’. It also protested collective punishment, ‘maltreatment by the police of Arab prisoners’, and the donation of 10,000 pounds to Jewish refugees without a comparable donation to help Arab refugees.

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89Fleischman, Jerusalem Women’s Organizations, p. 23.


When the delegation rejoined the ongoing congress, the participants decided to demonstrate. A motor cavalcade of 120 cars drove through the streets of Jerusalem, horns hooting, and pausing at diplomatic consulates to give each foreign consul a copy of the summary. A petition was telegraphed to Queen Mary and the colonial secretary in London:

Two hundred Palestine Arab Moslem and Christian women representatives met on twenty-sixth instant in Congress Jerusalem, unanimously decided demand and exert every effort to effect abolition Balfour Declaration and establish National democratic Government deriving power from Parliament representing all Palestinian communities in proportion to their numbers; We beseech assistance in our just demands.

Numerous memoranda sent by the executive committee to the government on behalf of prisoners, however, went unanswered, including a 14 June 1930 telegram to the Archbishop of Canterbury, but eventually three prisoners under life sentences were pardoned.

On 15 April 1933, when Palestinian organizations boycotted the visit of Lord Allenby and Lord Swinton, the women organized a 'silent demonstration' in the Old City, which they considered 'unique in the history of Palestine'. According to the firsthand contemporary account of one of the participants, the procession moved to the Masjid, or Mosque, of ‘Umar, which stood with its high minaret before the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. There, undeterred by heavy rains and watchful police, Matiel Mogannam, a Christian, writes that she offered her speech from the pulpit of the mosque. ‘We see before us the shadow of our complete extermination as a nation’, Mogannam said, as she asked the ‘imperialistic administration’ to fulfil its ‘national pledges’ to the Arabs: ‘For fifteen years we have made repeated appeals to the Mandatory Government for a change of its destructive policy’. In Mogannam’s account, the demonstrators proceeded silently to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, where Ouni ‘Abd al-Hadi, a Muslim, gave her remarks, denouncing ‘the calamities which have befallen the

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92Mogannam, Arab Woman, pp. 69–76; Fleischman, Jerusalem Women’s Organizations, p. 26.
93Mogannam, Arab Woman, p. 76.
94Ibid., pp. 79, 83.
95Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister, 1st Earl of Swinton, Secretary of State for the Colonies 1931–5.
Arabs in this country and the sufferings which they underwent in consequence of the unjust British policy' and British 'failure to keep their promises' to the Arabs for liberty and independence.96

The First Arab Women’s Congress of Palestine had the effect of stimulating the formation of women’s societies and unions in both small and large municipalities across Palestine, starting with Acre, Haifa, Jaffa, Nazareth, Ramallah, Safed, and Tulkarem. These developments continued into the next two decades, with entities such as the Jaffa-based Zahr al-Uqhuwan, or The Lilies, in 1936, and the Women’s Solidarity Society, in 1942.97 The Arab Palestinian Women’s Union, or al-Ittihad al-Nissa’i al-‘Arabi al-Filastini, of Jerusalem, was established in 1921; it helped orphaned children, ran literacy and sewing classes for women, and by the late 1930s was aiding the nationalist cause.98 In 1937 and 1944, the union was involved in the First and Second Pan-Arab Conferences for Women, in Lebanon and Egypt respectively.99 The Eastern Women’s Conference to Defend Palestine was held in Cairo, 15–18 October 1938, under the leadership of Huda Sha’rawi, with women attending from Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria and Palestine. Of the twelve women who offered speeches, five were from Jerusalem.100

Political Parties

The first modern Palestinian political party to be organized along ideological as opposed to clan interests arose from among the pan-Arab elements, namely, the Istiqlal, or

96Mogannam, Arab Woman, pp. 93–100.


100 Fleischman, Jerusalem Women’s Organizations, p. 32.
Independence, party, established in 1932 by the lawyer Awni ‘Abd al-Hadi. It summoned younger nationalists through its ‘uncompromising concentration on the demand for national freedom’. It tried to separate itself from the competition between the Husseinis and their rival clan, the more gradualist Nashashibis, but fell apart because of factional infighting after only two years, a victim of splits between pro-Saudi and pro-Hashemite elements, as educated youth poured from its remains and towards the Husseini camp. Before its demise, it gave birth to a new form of anti-British activism, one based on the assumption that by ending the British Mandate, Zionism would be denied its protector. The short-lived Istiqlal platform called for independence in the context of Arab unity, abolition of the mandate and the Balfour Declaration, and parliamentary governance for Palestine.

These demands, although rooted in the notion of Arab unity, were Palestinian in identity and reiterated petitions of the previous decade with only subtle differences; they remained the Palestinian position until Palestine ceased to exist on world maps. The idea that Arab unity could give birth to independence would not be conclusively abandoned until the years just before the intifada.

As Jewish immigration increased exponentially at the start of the 1930s, Arab meetings in the Istiqlal idiom of Muslim militancy (anti-British, and calling for Arab unity, nullification of the mandate and the Balfour Declaration, and parliamentary self-governance) deliberated more subversive techniques for fighting it and its British protectors. Although the grand mufti did not openly countenance defying the authority of the mandatory government, many of his close associates supported the aggressive groups, and his publication, al-Jami’a al-Arabiyya, or Arab Society, steadily inveighed against the British. The new propaganda approach and anti-British tone were different from Haj Amin’s traditional anti-Jewish stance and had a

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102 Porath, ‘Political Organization of the Palestinian Arabs’, pp. 16–17.
103 Lachman, ‘Arab Rebellion and Terrorism’, p. 54.
major impact on emerging youth organizations. The political strategies of resistance engendered from within the Istiqlal tendency included withdrawal of cooperation, breaking contact with British administrators, resignation from official jobs, and civil disobedience—methods that would be reasserted fifty years later in the literature of the intifada and its leaflets. When the Arab Executive convened an assembly of Istiqlalists and a youth congress on 24 February 1933, ‘lethargic leaders’ were attacked, brokers and middlemen who sold land to Jews were condemned as traitors, and civil disobedience and boycotts of British goods were exhorted as the only steps that might produce a response to their grievances from the mandatory government. A manifesto from the Arab Executive, in March 1933, urged Palestinians to ‘get ready for the serious acts which will be imposed’ by an assembly planned for 26 March. At the Grand National Meeting on that date, support for the principle of noncooperation was based on using ‘every legal means’ to end British rule.

The conference of five to six hundred Palestinians, held in Jaffa, was called the Noncooperation Congress (Mu’tamar al-La-ta’awun). The body adopted the principle of noncooperation, but limited its applications to three forms: social boycotts of government receptions, political boycotts of government boards, and a consumers’ boycott of British and Jewish products. Nonpayment of taxes was discussed but rejected as the owners of land held sway. Although the meeting, attended by ‘all classes and parties’, decided to reject the authority of the government, its resolutions were never implemented due to internal strife.

In 1933—the year the National Socialists won 44 per cent of the votes in the 5 March German elections—Jewish immigrants from Germany alone numbered approximately 1,000 a month. Among the 15,000 that had arrived during the preceding six months, thousands

104 Kayyali, Palestine, p. 169.
105 Peel Commission Report, p. 83.
106 Resolutions enclosed in a dispatch from the chief secretary, 1 April 1933, CO 733/239/17356/4, part 1, in Lesch, Arab Politics in Palestine, p. 192 fn 40.
107 Elpeleg, Grand Mufti, pp. 31–2; Kayyali, Palestine, pp. 169–70.
possessed no immigrant permits and had either come as tourists and remained or had crossed borders illegally.\textsuperscript{108} By the end of March, Hitler had assumed full dictatorial powers. On 13 September 1933, as the flow of authorized and illegal newcomers increased substantially, the Arab Executive staged a one-day general strike in Jerusalem—without applying for permission—led by figures from all persuasions, in a temporary reuniting of clans and factions. Other towns staged a strike on the same day. When demonstrators clashed with police in Jerusalem, another rally was scheduled for Jaffa four weeks later. A group of Nablus nationalists wrote a memorandum to the high commissioner on 30 September threatening the adoption of self-defence against the arriving Jewish newcomers.\textsuperscript{109} On 13 October in Jerusalem, several thousand Palestinians demonstrated in defiance of the commissioner’s orders.

The recorded number of authorized Jewish immigrants to Palestine in 1923 had been 7,421; ten years later, in 1933, as the Nazis took hold of Germany, 30,327 legal Jewish newcomers arrived; by 1935, the number of authorized immigrants entering Palestine was 61,854.\textsuperscript{110} Extralegal immigration particularly distressed the Arabs, and the lack of precise figures led to exaggeration and rumours.\textsuperscript{111} As the percentage of Jews in the population climbed from 17 per cent at the end of 1931 to 31 per cent by the spring of 1936, tensions rose among the Arabs. The numbers may have been small if judged by the desire of the Zionist movement for a Jewish state or examined against the restrictive immigration policies of Australia, Britain, Canada, the United States, and other countries, but the figures were


\textsuperscript{109} Kayyali, \textit{Palestine}, p. 171.

\textsuperscript{110} Peel Commission Report, pp. 81–2, 279.

\textsuperscript{111} Elpeleg, \textit{Grand Mufti}, p. 36. A letter of 2 September 1934 by the private secretary to the high commissioner, Thomas Hodgkin, notes that 800 illegal Jewish émigrés were arriving each month, either smuggled by sea or eluding police on the northern and eastern frontiers: ‘This has been infuriating the Arabs for very few of the illegal immigrants ever get deported. . . . The result has been that the Arabs have been organizing what are practically private armies, patrols, to watch the coast. . . . The Jews have of course replied to that by starting their own patrols to prevent this and to help the Jews who are trying to enter the country’.

large and threatening to the indigenous population of Palestine, which in 1936 stood at 1,336,518.\textsuperscript{112} In four years alone, between 1932 and 1936, the Jewish population virtually doubled.\textsuperscript{113} It was calculated that if held at only half the number of newcomers arriving in 1935, by 1962 the number of Jews in Palestine would exceed the Arab population.\textsuperscript{114}

In Jaffa, on 13 October 1933, seven thousand demonstrators armed with sticks filled the streets; ‘so excited and so dangerous was the temper of the Arab rioters that the police were forced to use their firearms before order could be restored’.\textsuperscript{115} Twelve demonstrators were shot and killed and 78 wounded; among police, one was killed and 25 wounded. In response to what Palestinians called the Jaffa Massacre, a countrywide general strike was announced.\textsuperscript{116} Street demonstrations broke out elsewhere, as Palestinians from across the country filled thoroughfares. In Nablus, riots erupted, and buildings and police were stoned. Haifa was barricaded, the railway station attacked, stones thrown at police, and scores wounded by police fire before the harbour was closed for three days.\textsuperscript{117} On 28 and 29 October in Jerusalem, one police officer and twenty-six other persons were killed; one hundred eighty-seven were injured.\textsuperscript{118} Safed, Nazareth, and Tulkarem were occupied by British troops on 28 October.\textsuperscript{119} The general strike was sustained until 2 November, when it was lifted.


\textsuperscript{113}Peel Commission Report, p. 280.

\textsuperscript{114}Elizabeth Monroe, \textit{Britain’s Moment in the Middle East, 1914–1956} (London, Chatto and Windus, 1963), p. 86.

\textsuperscript{115}Peel Commission Report, p. 84.

\textsuperscript{116}Kayyali, \textit{Palestine}, p. 173.

\textsuperscript{117}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{118}Peel Commission Report, pp. 83–4.

\textsuperscript{119}What had been considered the inadequacy of police and troops to put down the uprisings of 1929 had, by 1933, been altered by police reorganization and the creation of a permanent garrison composed of two infantry battalions. Kolinsky, ‘Collapse and Restoration’, in Cohen and Kolinsky, \textit{Britain and the Middle East in the 1930s}, p. 148. Regular battalions in World War I were comprised of one thousand soldiers. Denis Winter, \textit{Death’s Men: Soldiers of the Great War} (London, Allen Lane, 1979), p. 53.
The incendiary actions of 1933 were, however, limited; Jews were not its targets and none of them was hurt. The thrust was against the British mandatory government. The March noncooperation platform and October demonstrations were infused with Istiqlal advocacy, and the new militance inspired by such strategies was intended to force a cessation of contacts between moderate leaders and the British, so that any gradualists would be driven closer to armed struggle as the method for resisting further immigration.

'Moderate Arab leaders . . . were reluctantly compelled to stand in with extremists', noted the British governor. Militant Muslim organizations describing their purpose as the defence of Muslim holy places and mobilization against Zionism gained in members and influence during this period, as a decline ensued in the traditional Muslim-Christian societies that had been important during the 1920s and were guided by the notable families and merchants in major cities.

The Rise of Qassamite Armed Resistance

By 1919, a secret anti-Zionist commando group, al-Fida‘iyya, or Self-Sacrifice, made up of Arab police and gendarmerie, had come into existence. Small armed bands emerged in greater numbers in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Among the main groups was the Green Hand, or al-Kaff al-Khadra, which circulated in the mountains among Safed, Nazareth, and Acre, gathering stolen or smuggled arms. Joined by Druzes who had fought the French, they termed themselves mujahidin, or warriors of holy struggle, and their blending of religious and nationalist purposes became common among the rebel bands of the

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120 Kayyali, Palestine, p. 174.
121 Lachman, ‘Arab Rebellion and Terrorism’, p. 54; Elpeleg, Grand Mufti, p. 40.
122 Storrs, Orientations, p. 374.
124 Kayyali, Palestine, cites Haganah archives, pp. 70–72.
125 Lachman, ‘Arab Rebellion and Terrorism’, p. 56.
1930s. Although the Green Hand survived for only four months—it had appeared as early as October 1929—it was indicative of the insurrectionary groups that would come to dominate the Palestinian political landscape later in the 1930s.

After the uprisings of 1929, secret armed cells were organized by Shaykh 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam, a 'dignified, charismatic and morally motivated puritanical' Muslim religious leader who had moved to Haifa in 1921 from Syria, where his activism against the French had led to his flight. While at al-Azhar University in Cairo, he may have been strongly influenced by Rashid Rida (1865–1935), the Muslim leader who, during one of the most fertile periods of Islamic reform, propounded the idea that Islam needed its own political system in order to address Western Christendom, including a revived caliphate, or khilafa, the successor to Muhammad in a temporal sense. As early as 1902, Rida had discerned that Zionist ambitions were political and aimed at national sovereignty, rather than spiritual, and he urged 'deliberation, determination, communal strength, ... promptitude in organising means of defence ... acts and deeds, not talk and words'.

From 1921 to 1925, most land purchases by Jews had been from absentee Palestinian landlords. As expanding Jewish immigration pressured Zionist institutions to acquire more land, and as landowners were able to sell land at inflated prices to Zionist organizations, peasants were displaced. By 1931 an estimated twenty thousand peasant families were

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126 Nevo, 'Palestinian-Arab Violent Activity', p. 171.
127 Seikaly, Haifa, p. 242.
130 Issa Khalaf, 'The Effect of Socioeconomic Change on Arab Societal Collapse in Mandate Palestine', International Journal of Middle East Studies 29:1 (February 1997): 95. The historian Rashid Khalidi contends the Zionist settlers of the first 'aliya treated the Palestinian peasants much as had former Arab or Turkish landlords—disappropriating their land, but not displacing them. With the second 'aliya, early in the twentieth century, the doctrine of the 'conquest of labour' introduced more exclusive colonization, and Zionists took over not only technical ownership of the land, but its cultivation. Rashid Khalidi, 'Palestinian Peasant Resistance to Zionism before World War I', Blaming the Victims: Spurious Scholarship and the
bought out and evicted under court orders by police. Driven from their land, and precluded from working under restrictive Zionist labour legislation, their way of life destroyed, they drifted to Old Haifa where many of them encountered Shaykh ‘Izz al-Din al-Qassam.\textsuperscript{131}

Popular support for Qassam’s challenge to British authority was keenly felt in Haifa, where accumulating social, economic, and political grievances were radicalizing large segments of society, and support was growing for aggressive confrontation. Although the mandatory authorities tended to regard any belligerency as the work of ‘brigands and lawless peasants’, all classes of the Palestinian populace in the port city were alarmed, as its Arab character was ‘squeezed, altered and slowly phased out’.\textsuperscript{132} Refusing to leave the slums and shantytowns of Old Haifa, Qassam gathered around him loyalists who were men of faith and nationalism.\textsuperscript{133} One of the founders of the YMMA in Haifa, Qassam helped to guide it until his death.\textsuperscript{134} He preached against alcohol, gambling, prostitution, imperialism, and submission to the Jews and British alike, both of whom he considered aliens and infidels.\textsuperscript{135} He thought that the lawlessness and unregulated violence in the uprisings of 1929 were self-defeating and believed that political impact could be achieved by preparing cadres to strike selected targets.\textsuperscript{136} Such marks would include moderate Arabs seeking an accord with the Jews, insufficiently nationalistic politicians, and those suspected of selling land to the Zionists.\textsuperscript{137} Two groups that emerged in this period strongly influenced subsequent


\textsuperscript{132}Seikaly, \textit{Haifa}, pp. 240–41.

\textsuperscript{133}Johnson, \textit{Islam}, p. 40.

\textsuperscript{134}Seikaly, \textit{Haifa}, p. 228.


\textsuperscript{136}Lesch, ‘Palestine Arab Nationalist Movement’, p. 33.

Palestinian armed struggle, and their cohorts were central to the ‘great revolt’, or *al-thawra al-kubra*, which lasted from 1936 to 1939. Both were emboldened by the reverses embodied in the so-called Black Paper of February 1931, as appeals were issued for the development of clandestine paramilitary training centres. The first was *al-Jihad al-Muqaddas*, or Sacred Struggle, led by ‘Abd al-Qadir al-Husseini—the mufti’s relative and the father of Feisel Husseini, who would prove to be a significant figure in the *intifada*. The father of ‘Abd al-Qadir was Musa Kazim al-Husseini, uncle of Haj Amin, who had been mayor of Jerusalem and head of the Arab Executive. In central and southern Palestine, ‘Abd al-Qadir organized and trained seventeen secret cells of young villagers with weapons that he had procured. Others from similarly wellborn families in Haifa and Safed did the same in the northern sections. By one account, in 1934 there were 63 secret cells, 400 cohorts, and 7 hidden training centres. While Haj Amin kept one foot in the camp of nonviolent resistance, maintaining that he did not want to break his ties with the authorities, he also approved of ‘Abd al-Qadir’s army and later covertly became its leader.

The other organization was *al-Kaff al-Aswad*, or the Black Hand, a militant clandestine group that had become active in Jaffa as early as 1919 and may have had a branch in Haifa in which both Muslims and Christians participated. A Muslim Self-Sacrificing Society was reportedly operating in Haifa in 1922, its aim being to ‘kill Britishers and Christians who were pro-British’.

Shaykh ‘Izz al-Din al-Qassam was convinced that only the poor peasants and wage labourers of Palestine would be able to prevail against the colonialism of the British and

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139 Elpeleg, *Grand Mufti*, p. 38. Mattar concludes unambiguously that Haj Amin did not lead one single act of violence between 1920 and 1936, and judges that the political violence of 1920, 1921, 1929, and 1933 did not constitute revolts, but were ‘localized spontaneous riots’. Mattar, *Mufti of Jerusalem*, p. 149.

140 Seikaly, *Haifa*, p. 163.

141 The Arabic name is not on record, but a branch in Nablus was known as *al-Jam’iyya al-Rahiba*, or The Fearful Society, said to have been started by Hilmi Fityani. District Commandant of Police–Samaria to Director of Public Security, CID, 29 July 1922 (ISA 2/166 Pol 12), in Seikaly, *Haifa*, pp. 163, 177 en16.
Zionism. Having taught literacy classes at night, he was appointed ma’dhun, or Muslim marriage official, and travelled to villages, where he discreetly took his message of reform for Islam and its protection through holy war, or jihad. His conception of holy war was of religious preservation of the homeland and the lifting of oppression from the populace; he thought those who were pious might be the country’s salvation. Affirming reforms that Rashid Rida had preached, he denounced the repetition of God’s name in formal ceremonies, emphasis on mourning and visiting cemeteries, and mixing of the sexes.\textsuperscript{142} As it became evident that the nonviolent methods of protest and persuasion used by the renowned families of the Palestinian leadership were ineffective against British policy and Zionist settlements, perhaps seen as words rather than action, and as the problems of the Palestinian peasantry grew dramatically in the early 1930s, Qassam recruited from the displaced fellahin.\textsuperscript{143} Secret organizations of youth and boy scouts became involved in clandestine arms acquisitions and target practice.\textsuperscript{144} Radical groups were supported by key figures from the Istiqlal party, and both armed and unarmed forms of resistance were among the progeny of the defunct political entity, of which Qassam is reported to have been a member.\textsuperscript{145}

Nels Johnson’s explanation for why Qassam’s movement catalysed a shift in struggle is that the dilemmas faced by the Palestinian fellahin, combined with the inability to alleviate them, led to the standard conditions for the emergence of a redemptive movement: strains from land sales, evictions, and the collapse of their way of life from Zionist pressures on the one hand, and an absence of results from actions taken by the Palestinian Arabs facing the British and Zionists on the other hand. The internal logic of Qassam’s idiom of Islam

\textsuperscript{142}Porath,\textit{ Palestinian Arab National Movement}, p. 133; Johnson,\textit{ Islam}, pp. 40–42.


\textsuperscript{144}Guerrilla activity was spawned in three centres—the Hebron-Jerusalem-Ramallah area, the Nablus-Tulkarem-Qalqilya region, and Haifa along with lower Galilee. Nevo, ‘Palestinian-Arab Violent Activity’, p. 171.

was powerful: ransom, or redeem, the evicted, landless, poverty-stricken, and alienated fellahin into a different practice of resistance. Notions of national interests or nationhood were alien to the peasantry; indeed, the name ‘Palestine’ had barely replaced that of ‘Southern Syria’. Confronting their successive losses caused by immigrants of one faith and the administrators of another—both of them seeking dominion over land considered by Muslims to be second in holiness only to Mecca and Medina—the Palestinian peasantry turned to Islam. In Johnson’s analysis, the path to redemption and restoration lay in the concept of jihad, since protecting the faith was a matter of conscience. For dispossessed labourers, Islam, as interpreted by Qassam, became the source of the coming mass resistance, much of it violent.\footnote{Johnson, Islam, pp. 56–8.}

Spurning classic nonviolent political techniques in response to the 1929 unrest, Qassam organized a secret gang that first struck in April 1931 and killed three Jews. The shaykh’s coterie, Ikhwan al-Qassam—or the Brotherhood of Qassam, as the Qassamite secret fighting societies were known—had perhaps two hundred trained adherents, with possibly one thousand in its overall cellular structure.\footnote{Ibid., p. 44.} After two additional murders, Qassam went underground, reemerging in 1935 as legal and illegal Jewish immigration continued unabated. After an illicit shipment of arms and ammunition addressed to a Jewish merchant was discovered in Jaffa harbour on 18 October, Qassam called some of his followers together on 12 November and told them that the time had come to show themselves. Intending to call the fellahin to revolt in the villages, Qassam and his associates were intercepted and brought down in Ya’abid, near Jenin. When surrender was demanded, Qassam is said to have replied, ‘Never, this is a jihad for God and the homeland’, as he called his adherents to ‘die as martyrs’\footnote{Ibid.}.
Qassam’s death while battling the police pinpoints the turn towards peasant armed militancy, including a pattern of directing it against the traditional leadership, which, it might be added, did not attend Qassam’s funeral. The Ikhwan al-Qassam did not disband, and its viewpoint only gained adherents, as more Palestinian Arabs accepted that the British, like the Zionist settlers, were equally the enemies of the faith, if not more so.\textsuperscript{149}

Musa Kazim al-Husseini had died the year before, resulting in the dissolution of the Arab Executive, which he had held together by dint of his personal influence. Half a dozen political parties were by this time in action.\textsuperscript{150} Five days after Qassam’s death, the leading figures in the five main parties (excluding the Istiqlalists) joined together and met with the high commissioner to discuss another proposal for a legislative body. They also presented the high commissioner with a memorandum asking for a halt to Jewish immigration, cessation of land sales to Jews, and self-governance for the Palestinian Arabs. The extent to which momentum was already shifting away from nonviolent political methods and towards armed insurgency is shown by the fact that the memorandum from the newly unified parties was conveyed with notice that if a suitable reply were not received within the month, the parties would seek other means of pursuing their purposes.\textsuperscript{151}

In December 1935, one month after Qassam’s death and probably not coincidentally,


\textsuperscript{150}The six main Arab organizations in 1934, ‘largely concerned with mutual jealousies and recriminations’, had, by 1935, melded into five ‘more efficient “parties” ’ and united themselves to address the mandatory government—the exception being the Istiqlal party. Peel Commission Report, p. 87. The National Defence party came into being in December 1934, and was headed by Ragheb Nashashibi. For a contemporary British account of the party, see Erskine, Palestine of the Arabs, pp. 172, 176–8. The Palestine Arab party emerged in April 1935, and was led by Jamal al-Husseini; in May, the Arab Youth Congress was formed. Two other parties had been in existence since 1933: the Reform party, or Islah, led by the Khalidis, and the National Bloc, guided by Abdul Latif Salah. Kayyali comments, ‘The personal and selfish motives behind the proliferation of Arab parties were apparent to all Palestinians, and the ceaseless bickering between these parties exposed them to public derision’. Kayyali, Palestine, p. 178.

\textsuperscript{151}High commissioner to colonial secretary, secret, 7.12.1935, CO 733/278/75156, part 2; CID report, 30.10.1935, FO 371/18957, in Lachman, ‘Arab Rebellion and Terrorism’, p. 73. Lachman says this meeting was the first time that the five parties succeeded in putting aside their chronic differences to form a united position on a major issue. Indeed, they called themselves the United Front.
the British high commissioner, General Sir Arthur Grenfell Wauchope, proposed a new constitution that described his own duties and powers as well as the composition and powers of a legislative entity, in which Muslims would elect eight members, Jews three, and Christians one, with Arabic, English, and Hebrew to be used in the council's debates.\textsuperscript{152} Even after the House of Commons in London criticized such a legislative council following Zionist pressure against the idea, the leaders of the new Arab parties were still hoping that something could be worked out in London through a subsequent delegation.\textsuperscript{153}

Qassam's example of guerrilla warfare through secret societies set the pattern followed during the revolt of 1936–9 by Islamic revivalist factions and in the present era. This was the first appearance of nationalism among the peasantry and working classes, the first clear evidence that nationalism had overcome barriers of class, and the first organized use of violence, according to Porath; 'it should be borne in mind that this happened when the struggle was expressed and understood as an Islamic necessity'.\textsuperscript{154} Basic principles of fighting the mandatory authorities through armed national resistance, both ideologically and organizationally, were canonized by Qassam, and he came to be the standard-bearer for armed insurgency.\textsuperscript{155} He is increasingly viewed in the literature as the progenitor of Palestinian armed struggle.

The 'Great Revolt'

The 'great revolt' began with a general strike, called for at a nationalist conference that began in Nablus on 19 April 1936. Four days earlier, on 15 April, a Qassamite group held up a convoy of ten automobiles on the Nablus-Tulkarem road and robbed the


\textsuperscript{153}Lesch, 'Palestine Arab Nationalist Movement', p. 34.

\textsuperscript{154}Porath, \textit{Palestinian Arab National Movement}, p. 137. Italics in original.

\textsuperscript{155}Nevo, 'Palestinian-Arab Violent Activity', pp. 173, 186–7 en17.
passengers. Three Jewish passengers were taken to the rear of a truck and shot, two of whom died. The next night, intruders broke into the home of orange-grove workers in Petah Tiqva and killed two Arabs at close range, apparently in retaliation. At the funeral for the first Jew to die, in Tel Aviv, cries were heard for a Jewish army to be raised. On 19 April in Jaffa, Arabs were denied permission to march in a counter-demonstration. A mob formed at the news of the rejection of a parade permit, and it moved towards Tel Aviv, killing nine Jews and two Arabs, and wounding forty Jews and ten Arabs. The Palestinians felt themselves attacked by foreigners who were inhabiting their country, publicly asserting their intentions to take it over, and talking about raising an army to be authorized by the British, who controlled their country. The immediate stimulus for the general strike was the refusal of the authorities to grant the permit to march. This was the final straw: legitimate, political protest and persuasion were no longer permitted. ⑮

On the day after the strike was called, 20 April, an Arab National Committee was established, which resolved that a general strike should be sustained until Palestinian demands had been met. Similar committees were organized in towns and villages. This was to be a last attempt to mobilize all Arab political tendencies into a interlocked programme of noncooperation, now that protest had been ruled out. On 21 April, the leaders of the five main Arab parties ratified the decision taken at Nablus and appealed for a general strike of ‘all Arabs engaged in labour, transport, and shopkeeping’, to begin the following day. ⑯

⑮ Barbara Kalkas, ‘The Revolt of 1936: A Chronicle of Events’, in Abu-Lughod, Transformation of Palestine, pp. 238–41. Kalkas argues that if, instead, recommendations of previous commissions of inquiry had been followed, with their limits on immigration, regulation of land sales, and establishment of a government, the strike would probably not have taken place. Had the authorities only concurred with the recommendation concerning immigration, the Arab Higher Committee would probably have begun negotiations on its nationalist demands. See especially pp. 254–5. Besides specific provocations, the main cause of the ‘last, biggest and most successful’ Arab rebellion was its ‘chief and simplest cause’—the arithmetic of Jewish immigration. Monroe, Britain’s Moment in the Middle East, p. 86. Nels Johnson holds that the start of the revolt was Qassam’s death and that the customary chronology, dating its start to six months later, is an ‘historiographic fiction’ derived from the revolt’s broadening, when national committees were established and the strike was declared. Johnson, Islam, p. 53.

⑯ Peel Commission Report, p. 96.
Gaza, several hundred veiled Muslim women paraded on 25 April. Also on 25 April, the Arab Higher Committee, or al-Lajna al-‘Arabiyya al-‘Ulya, was formed, in what Nels Johnson calls a ‘cosmetic unification’ composed of ten members, including leaders from the five parties, the Arab Youth Congress, and Christian representatives, with Haj Amin as its elected president. Its demands were to halt Jewish immigration, restrict land sales to Jews, and establish ‘a National Government responsible to a representative council’—in effect, an independent Palestinian state. The Arab Higher Committee issued a manifesto calling upon the ‘honourable nation’ to adhere to the strike by ‘exhibiting patience, quietness and determination until further notice’, while exempting ‘flour mills, bakeries, clinics, dispensaries, means of transport and cafes’. Two days later, national committees were organized for relief provisions for the poor, raising funds, legal services, and promotion of Arab products, to help sustain the general strike.

Quickly, local committees of the national body were organized. Although each committee had its own demands, these largely pertained to limiting immigration, regulating land sales, and establishing self-government in Palestine. Innovation was allowed. A group of twenty-five Bedouin leaders travelled from Beersheba to Jerusalem with a petition that included pardons for imprisoned demonstrators. A Motor Transport Strike Committee was organized, as an adjunct to the ‘Arab Car-Owners’ and Drivers’ Committee’, and by late April had issued a manifesto urging nonpayment of taxes until the authorities concurred in

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158 Kalkas, ‘Revolt of 1936’, p. 244.

159 Johnson, Islam, p. 47; Elpeleg, Grand Mufti, p. 42.


161 Correspondence of Sir Arthur Wauchope, to J. H. Thomas, 24 April 1936, CO 733/378-8, as cited in Kayyali, Palestine, p. 190. Colonial secretary in Stanley Baldwin’s government, Thomas had proposed yet another new constitution for Palestine on 12 March 1936 on behalf of the Colonial Office.

162 Falastin, 27 April 1936, in Kayyali, Palestine, p. 190. In 1987, the popular committees that provided food and health care in the intifada would come into being with similar alacrity.
limiting immigration.\textsuperscript{163} On 7 May, a convention of the strike committees and various militant figures convened in Jerusalem, where it resolved to continue the strike, strive for ‘no taxation without representation’, and the aim of the overall struggle was articulated as ‘complete Palestinian independence within the framework of Arab unity’.

Stoppage of immigration, although not necessarily permanent, was a precondition for ending the strike; once accomplished, negotiations could begin anew on other demands, principally the formation of a democratic national government.\textsuperscript{165} Without a halt to immigration and land sales, the ability to press for responsible national government would be impossible.\textsuperscript{166}

Sentiment was expressed for civil disobedience:

The [Arab Higher] Committee intimated that, while they were not responsible for it, the agitation in favour of ‘civil disobedience’ must be regarded as a spontaneous expression of national feeling, and they added that they could not use their influence to check illegal action or to call off the strike unless Jewish immigration were suspended.\textsuperscript{167}

On 10 May, student committees met in Jaffa which, along with women’s organizations,\textsuperscript{168} were particularly active in the coordination of demonstrations. They called for a boycott of Zionist- and British-made products and withdrawal from the British Boy Scout movement. The high commissioner’s dissenting private secretary recorded at the time,

Resistance to the Government is not confined to men: women and schoolboys and schoolgirls have initiated demonstrations and presented protests in many of the towns. Most of the boys and girls attending Government schools in the

\begin{footnotes}
\item[167] Peel Commission Report, p. 97.
\item[168] Kayyali makes it clear that far from holding an auxiliary role, women’s groups were in the vanguard in April and May 1936 in urging more militancy. Kayyali, Palestine, pp. 191–2.
\end{footnotes}
towns have gone on strike and the schools have been closed down.\textsuperscript{169} Rural committees convened in Nablus and advocated nonpayment of taxes, condemned the installation of police stations at the expense of villagers, and set up local branches of national committees in all Palestinian villages.\textsuperscript{170} Younger militant forces wanted a more confrontational approach.\textsuperscript{171} Group after group joined with the local committees—Bedouins, chambers of commerce, labour groups, Muslim and Christian sports clubs, Arab ‘national guard’ units, and a Jaffa boatmen’s association—all of them guiding aspects of the strike in loose coordination with the Arab Higher Committee.\textsuperscript{172}

In short order, the rural areas were as strongly mobilized in support of nationalist action as were urban quarters.\textsuperscript{173} ‘Those few Arabs who kept their shops open or otherwise abstained from striking were soon won over or intimidated by representatives of the national committees, which, staffed largely by younger Arabs, kept a highly efficient watch on the conduct of the strike’.\textsuperscript{174} By 11 May, six hundred arrests of Palestinians had been made, the majority of the cases brought to court. In the same month, British reinforcements started arriving; six battalions were transferred from Egypt, units arrived from Malta, and by mid-summer, troops equivalent to an infantry division were garrisoned in Palestine.\textsuperscript{175} On 18 May, the British declared the latest immigration quota of Jews as 4,500 certificates for the

\textsuperscript{169}Hodgkin, \textit{Letters from Palestine}, p. 197.


\textsuperscript{171}Elpeleg, \textit{Grand Mufti}, p. 42.

\textsuperscript{172}Lesch, ‘Palestine Arab Nationalist Movement’, p. 34; Kalkas, ‘Revolt of 1936’, p. 248.

\textsuperscript{173}Peasants participated minimally. Their losses would have been extreme if they had failed to harvest the spring crops, and they were given the right to sell produce during specific morning hours. Porath, \textit{Palestinian Arab National Movement}, p. 168.

\textsuperscript{174}Peel Commission Report, p. 98.

\textsuperscript{175}A division includes three brigades, each of which is comprised of four battalions. Kolinsky, ‘Collapse and Restoration’, pp. 149, 164 en10. Among regular units in World War I, a division under a major-general had approximately 12,000 soldiers, a brigade approximately 4,000, and a battalion, as mentioned, approximately 1,000. Winter, \textit{Death’s Men}, p. 53. In Palestine, however, the units were not regular.
following six months, which led to eruptions of violence.\textsuperscript{176} Five days later, sixty-one strike organizers were locked up, and in Nablus, police killed four Palestinians.\textsuperscript{177}

The local committees were largely autonomous, a fact that may explain the strike's durability. As one local leader was locked up, another took over.\textsuperscript{178} Mayors met in Ramallah on 30 May, and those from Bethlehem, Jaffa, Jenin, Lydda, Nablus, Shefa'amr, and Tulkarem voted to lead their citizenry on strike at the beginning of June. The mayors of ten larger cities voted to follow suit the following week if the authorities did not heed their requests.\textsuperscript{179} Palestinian officials in the mandatory government tithed their income for a strike fund.\textsuperscript{180} Such employees could have incapacitated the government by striking, but the ambivalence of the Arab Higher Committee about such a bold measure prevented the move.

Nonetheless, by month's end, 137 senior Arab officials in the mandatory government submitted a memorandum urging the government to accede to Palestinian pleas; soon after, 1,200 middle-tier Arab civil servants assembled a similar memorandum and presented it.\textsuperscript{181} By the end of June, nearly all Palestinian businesses and transportation had ground to a halt.

The British response was one of issuing collective fines, mass arrests, and house demolitions.\textsuperscript{182} On 2 June, the strike was declared illegal, and the forced opening of businesses

\textsuperscript{176}This six-month quota of 4,500—each certificate issued to the Jewish Agency or governmental department of immigration permitting a married man to be accompanied by an entire family—was a significant increase over the 3,250 certificates for the preceding six months. Kalkas, 'Revolt of 1936', p. 254.

\textsuperscript{177}Kayyali, Palestine, p. 193.

\textsuperscript{178}Johnson, Islam, p. 48.

\textsuperscript{179}Kalkas, 'Revolt of 1936', pp. 248–9.

\textsuperscript{180}Philip Grant, 'Nonviolent Political Struggle in the Occupied Territories', Arab Nonviolent Struggle in the Middle East, ed. Ralph E. Crow, Philip Grant, and Saad E. Ibrahim (Boulder, Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 1990), p. 46.

\textsuperscript{181}Kalkas, 'Revolt of 1936', p. 249.

\textsuperscript{182}Immediately any act of sabotage occurred, such as mines on the road or a railway derailment, the Striking Force of the Battalion was at once sent out and, before any warning could be given, surrounded the village. . . . The Commanding Officer then entered the village and selected the houses to be blown up . . . When . . . the villagers themselves had been collected at a place of safety, the necessary explosives were placed in position and the demolition carried out . . . [At Bala] six demolitions were carried out on one afternoon as a punishment'. Second Battalion, Lincolnshire Regiment, on Special Service in Malta and Palestine, 19 September 1935–20 December 1936, diary (London, n.p., 1937), Imperial War Museum Library, p. 20.
and detention of strikers began shortly thereafter. On 19 June, Colonial Secretary William George Arthur Ormsby-Gore announced the detention of 2,598 Palestinians. As many as four hundred leaders of strike committees were imprisoned. Still, the strike persisted.

Haj Amin—holding the offices of grand mufti of Jerusalem and presidencies of both the Arab Higher Committee and the Muslim Supreme Council—had positioned himself as leader of the Arab nationalist movement and was able to straddle groups that favoured continuation of the strike and those that sought to break it. While the British pressured him to communicate a moderate line, and the citrus growers and shopkeepers clamoured for an end to the strike, the young militants wanted him to head an armed revolt. Haj Amin, according to one of his biographers, wanted a violent struggle against the Jews, but also one under his control that avoided clashes with British forces; in June 1936, his posture was that he opposed bloodshed ‘because violence will not bring any positive results, and because ... the government is more powerful, and it will put us down because it has the power to do so’.

By the end of June, a changeover from strike to revolt had become evident, a shift in which the Qassamite secret armed bands were in the vanguard. Railway lines were blasted, two trains derailed, a bridge blown up, roads obstructed, and telephone wires sliced. The most onerous development was the presence of secret bands of armed Arabs hidden on hillsides.

On 16 June in the Old City of Jaffa, which offered sanctuary to the rebels with its tangled alleys and labyrinthine arrangement of houses, Royal Air Force aeroplanes overflew Jaffa to drop leaflets announcing what was to happen next: British troops mounted a two-week


184Mogannam, Arab Woman, p. 305.

185Elpeleg, Grand Mufti, pp. 44, 43.

186Lachman, ‘Arab Rebellion and Terrorism’, p. 78. ‘Armed bands which a fortnight previously consisted of 15–20 men were now encountered in large parties of 50–70. The bands were not out for loot. They were fighting for what they believed to be a patriotic war in defence of their country against injustice and the threat of Jewish domination’, Sir Vice Marshal Peirse to Air Ministry, 15 October 1936, CO 733/317, p. 15, in Kayyali, Palestine, pp. 196–7, 224 en10.

operation to demolish housing and clear roads to eliminate roosts of snipers.\textsuperscript{188} Also on 16 June, three thousand Jaffa Jews were evacuated to Tel Aviv.\textsuperscript{189} Nablus, brazenly defying the mandate, had to be reoccupied.\textsuperscript{190} The Palestinians were suffering higher losses than was the Jewish community.\textsuperscript{191} The strike also resulted in a strengthening of the Zionist policies of economic self-reliance and ‘Hebrew labour’, as David Ben-Gurion declared that jobs vacated by Palestinians were to be permanently filled by Jews, markets for gravel, fruits, and vegetables previously served by Arabs were to become Jewish, and reliance on the Arab port of Jaffa was to be shifted elsewhere.\textsuperscript{192}

Violence intensified during the summer in response to house-to-house searches by the British, the destruction of sections of Palestinian villages, and incarcerations. Fortified by word that Syrian nationalists seeking independence from the French had achieved all of their concessions through a fifty-day strike,\textsuperscript{193} the Palestinians pursued theirs through the summer. The tactics chosen by the various parties to the strike, although directed against the mandatory government, were also internally aimed at equivocating Palestinian leaders who were mired in the closely linked politics of clan, municipality, nationalism, and Islam. On 30 August, the Arab Higher Committee announced that it would persevere in the strike. In early September in London, the cabinet resolved to crush the resistance. By mid-September, British emergency forces were in the country, comprised of 12 battalions, engineers, and a signal


\textsuperscript{189}Kayyali, \textit{Palestine}, pp. 196, 224 en33.

\textsuperscript{190}Ha’Aretz, 15 June 1936, as cited in Porath, \textit{Palestinian Arab National Movement}, pp. 180, 347 en142.

\textsuperscript{191}Grant, ‘Nonviolent Political Struggle’, p. 46.


corps, as preparations were being made for martial law to end the guerrilla warfare. 194

The strike which had almost paralysed the country was ended, without martial law, by the Arab Higher Committee on 10 October 1936, after a joint appeal was issued the day before by the monarchs of Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Transjordan, who were invited into the local matter by the Palestinian leaders, and gave the pretext needed for calling off the strike. 195 The strike had lasted more than one hundred seventy days—nearly six months:

The prolonged strike created a sense of pride and power in the Palestinian camp. After one hundred days, it was described as 'one of the wonders of the world'. When it finally ended . . . there was a feeling of real victory, and the Arab press was full of praise for the leaders, fighters, and masses. 196

The cessation of the strike was followed by the arrival of the Peel Commission on 11 November 1936. It stayed until mid-January 1937. Against advice from the military, High Commissioner Wauchope decided not to try to disarm the rebels. 197 The violence subsided until a few weeks before the release of the commission's report in July 1937, when parts of it were leaked, disclosing that Lord Peel intended to recommend the partition of Palestine. The rebellion was renewed. 198 It entered a second stage in early summer, when it was realized that the commission's recommendation for partition had been accepted in London. 199 The


196 Elpeleg, Grand Mufti, p. 47.


198 Porath cites Subhi Yasin's calculation that the rebels at their peak numbered between 9,000 and 10,000, including 3,000 full-time 'members', 1,000 urban rebels, and 6,000 villagers who were available as needed. Subhi Yasin, al-Thawrah al-'Arabiyah al-Kubra fi Filastin, 1936–1939, or Great Arab Revolt in Palestine, 1936–1939 (Cairo, Dar al-Hana, 1959), p. 42, as cited in Porath, Palestinian Arab National Movement, pp. 247, 367 en 117.

199 '[T]he Palestine Arabs had obviously gained nothing by peaceful methods', Hodgkin writes in July 1936, noting that they were also moved towards violence by London's parliamentary debates on the legislative council proposals: 'In these debates, which were fully reported in the Arabic press and closely followed by the
Arab leadership split, with the Husseinis and their allies adamantly opposed to partition, and the Nashashibis and others who had wearied of the revolt willing to make terms with it.

Ragheb Nashashibi resigned from the Arab Higher Committee, thereby ending all pretence at unity among the urban Arab leaders from notable families. After the assassination in Nazareth on 26 September of the acting district commissioner for Galilee, Lewis Andrews, and his guards, the Arab Higher Committee was declared illegal. Several of its members were arrested and deported, the national committees were declared illegal, and efforts were instituted for the mufti’s arrest. Among his own people, Haj Amin’s stature rose, as he took sanctuary in the inviolate Haram al-Sharif, from where he stayed in contact with rebel leaders. Dismissed as president of the Supreme Muslim Council, he fled to Lebanon, disguised as a Bedouin.

After the harvest in November 1937, the Ikhwan al-Qassam launched a campaign. Qassam’s original followers became principal commanders of the revolt’s armed bands, five of them major commanders. This time, the carnage was directed more at Arabs than anyone else, and was characterized by internecine murder, blood feuds, and the evening of

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Arab public, die-hard imperialist [sic] and labour pro-Zionists united to condemn any movement in the direction of giving any measure of independence to the irresponsible Arabs. The subsequent offer of an Arab delegation to London was regarded by many as the Government’s first step in a planned graceful retreat from its legislative council proposals’. Hodgkin, Letters from Palestine, pp. 195-6.


Andrews was regarded as the ablest of the Palestine Service and spoke Arabic and Hebrew. Sykes, Wingate, p. 136. The Arabs believed that he was expediting the transfer of Galilee to the Jewish state, as called for in the partition plan. Nevill Barbour, Nisi Dominus: A Survey of the Palestine Controversy (Beirut, Institute for Palestine Studies, 1969; repr. 1946, London, George G. Harrap and Co.), pp. 188–9. He was the most senior British official to have been slain in Palestine. Lesch, Arab Politics in Palestine, p. 221.

The partition plan of the Peel Commission would have joined the Arab portion of Palestine with Transjordan, placing it under the rule of Abdullah, to which the Mufti was opposed. In hopes of inducing the abandonment of the partition scheme, Haj Amin organized a congress at Bludan, a Syrian summer resort, to rally the involvement of other Arabs in the predicament in Palestine. On 8–10 Sept 1937, 411 delegates, 128 of them Palestinian, met. See Elie Kedourie, ‘The Bludan Conference on Palestine, September 1937’, Middle East Studies, 17: 1 (January 1981): 107–25.


Porath, Palestinian Arab National Movement, p. 183. Porath indicates the Qassamites did not have criminal records prior to the revolt and earned reputations as ‘devout and righteous fighters’. Ibid.
old scores, including the liquidation of those considered to be moderates or traitors, many of them intellectuals or wellborn. Although the British had attempted to weaken the second phase of the revolt by numerous means, including the spreading of false rumours and impersonation of the leaders of rebel bands, by the autumn of 1937 little additional stimulation was necessary, as the rebels were already riven by creedal, kinship, and intraregional disputes, personal resentments, and criminal deviance. Transportation and communications were sabotaged as rail tracks were torn up, and bands of armed rebels and gangs moved to seize control of towns, collect taxes, and hold court. Although the bands and their paramilitary operations, such as the Qassamite Black Hand and ‘Abd al-Qadir al-Husseini’s al-Jihad al-Muqaddas, had been intended to oppose and confound the British and Zionists, civil war now raged among the Palestinians.

Yet another policy paper from London deferred action on the Peel Commission’s recommendations. By the following summer, August 1938, even more chaos had overtaken events, with the murder of mukhtars who were inhospitable to the rebels, the collapse of civilian institutions, growing vulnerability of roads and public buildings, and organized intimidation. Remorseless extortion, kidnapping, and assassination proceeded, with the arbitrary murder of intellectuals and others suspected of accepting the partition of Palestine. Mayor Hasan Shukri of Haifa was murdered; communist and labour-union leaders such as Sami Taha and Michel Mitri were killed; and Druze and Christian communities were

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205Ibid., p. 249.

206'Presumably in imitation of the [British] Military Courts, the rebel leaders set up summary "Courts" of their own, before which informers and "traitors" were tried, and, if convicted, punished or reprimanded'. John Marlowe, Rebellion in Palestine (London, Cresset Press, 1946), p. 191.

targeted.\textsuperscript{208} Much of the violence was directed at the Nashashibi family and its supporters.\textsuperscript{209} The Palestinian moderates became the prime victims of the new wave of violence. . . . The unity achieved in early 1936 collapsed because of British intransigence which encouraged extremism and violence on the one hand and weakened the case for moderation on the other.\textsuperscript{210} More than 1,000 belligerent acts during a six-month period had been recorded by April, including 55 political killings and 32 attempted assassinations.\textsuperscript{211}

The mandatory government lost control in Beersheba, Bethlehem, and the Old City of Jerusalem for periods during the autumn of 1938, such that the British had to recapture the Old City and other areas once under their suzerainty. The British Foreign Office had never been enamoured of the idea of partition, particularly if implemented by force, and in March 1938 a committee chaired by Sir John Woodhead was appointed.\textsuperscript{212} The Woodhead Commission reconsidered the Peel recommendations and proposed abandoning partition, as published in the White Paper of 9 November 1938, when it was decided in London that some concessions would have to be made to Arab demands, resulting in a dual policy of ‘appeasement and suppression of violence’.\textsuperscript{213}

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\textsuperscript{209}For a list of ‘conspicuous’ figures who were killed, see Zionist Federation of Great Britain, ‘Arab v. Arab: The Inner Arab Terror in Palestine’, London 1939 pamphlet, Imperial War Museum Library, appendix, pp. 12–14. Although propagandistic—until April 1936, in the words of the polemic, ‘the Arab people were happily sharing in the general rising prosperity of the country brought about by the steady Jewish progress in building up their National Home’—the pamphlet cites bona fide British journalistic sources. Ibid., p. 1.
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\textsuperscript{210}Nashashibi, \textit{Jerusalem’s Other Voice}, p. 98.
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\textsuperscript{211}Papers of Sir Charles Tegart, box 2, file 3, Middle East Centre, St. Antony’s College, Oxford, as cited in Kolinsky, ‘Collapse and Restoration’, p. 155. A district commissioner notes that during 1938, there were 5,700 cases of major crime; 430 assassinations in which 77 British, 255 Jews, and 500 Palestinian Arabs died; and encounters in which between 2,000 and 3,000 members of Arab armed bands were killed or wounded by the military. A thousand attacks were made on the police and military, Jewish settlements were attacked 600 times, telephone lines sabotaged on 700 occasions, and roads and railways interrupted 340 times. Edward Keith-Roach, \textit{Pasha of Jerusalem: Memoirs of a District Commissioner under the British Mandate}, ed. Paul Eedle (London, Radcliffe Press, 1994), pp. 192–3.
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\textsuperscript{212}Porath, \textit{Palestinian Arab National Movement}, p. 278.
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\textsuperscript{213}Kolinsky, ‘Collapse and Restoration’, p. 160. Woodhead proposed that the Jewish share of Palestine would be approximately 400 square miles around Tel Aviv, where Jews were then the majority. The concept was utterly rejected by the Zionists, and the Palestinians rejected it on principle. CO, ‘Palestine Partition Commission’ [Woodhead Commission Report], October 1938, Cmd. 5854 (London, H. M. Stationery Office).
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suppression and proposed changes in policy brought the rebellion to a close, but only after 547 Jews and 494 Arabs had been killed in the three-year revolt, many of the deaths occurring in its closing months. During the turbulence, the British army had called upon the Haganah for volunteers to serve in Zionist Field Squads and 'Special Night Squads', trained and commanded by Captain Orde Wingate, to help put down the revolt. Members of the Haganah, thus trained and armed, also defended Jewish settlements. The number of Arab gangs was reduced, and the Qassamite and Husseini organizers defeated, although pillagers continued to operate in remote steep hills.

The White Paper published in London on 17 May 1939 envisaged a Palestinian state within ten years and limits to Zionist land acquisition and immigration. It said that the framers of the mandate had not 'intended that Palestine should be converted into a Jewish state against the will of the Arab population of the country'. In it, Britain's preference was defined as a binational state with independent Arab and Jewish states within Palestine. It may have been less Arab in contour than the Palestinian Arabs believed was their due, yet it stated that Jews would not comprise more than one-third of the population and Jewish immigration would be limited to 75,000 over five years, after which none could continue

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214Ibid., p. 162. A Palestinian historian says 5,000 may have been killed and 14,000 wounded, citing data compiled from official British sources, Appendix 4, From Haven to Conquest: Readings in Zionism and the Palestine Problem until 1948, ed. Walid Khalidi (Beirut, Institute for Palestine Studies, 1971), pp. 846–9.


'unless the Arabs of Palestine are prepared to acquiesce in it'.Ironically, the British acceptance of the Palestinian plea for majoritarian independence in ten years, prohibitions of Jewish immigration, and a ban on land sales to Jews came about 'just as the British finished them militarily and destroyed their national leadership'. The 1939 White Paper was opposed by both sides. Beset by Nazism in Europe, Jews unanimously condemned it for placing them in a minority status in a hostile Arab state. Haj Amin's rejection of it—because it denied the Palestinians immediate independence—accorded with the position of the rebel leaders and was decisively influential with large numbers of his countrymen and women.

After the first phase of the 'great revolt' of 1936–9, the British government had recognized that the situation was unworkable and irredeemable, as the Palestinian Arabs had consistently said. Although the general strike had been well organized and nonviolent—its boycotts and noncooperation methods carefully implemented through local coordinating committees—its ultimate manifestation was one of self-destructive anomy. After the second phase, with its slayings of Jews and bloodbath of Arabs, the proposal for partition was scuttled. The Zionists remained opposed to any curtailment of immigration or abandonment of partition. The second stage of the revolt had made reconciliation with the Palestinian Arabs appear impossible. The Palestinians were crushed militarily. Zionist armed resistance grew stronger.

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219 Kimmerling and Migdal, Palestinians, p. 122.

220 Though astute, charismatic, uncorruptible, and ascetic in his dedication to his people, Mattar concludes, 'the Mufti's policies ... were a failure and unwittingly contributed to the dispossession of the Palestinians'. Mattar, Mufti of Jerusalem, p. 149. Haj Amin's refusal to compromise on the partition of Palestine and spurning of opportunities to bargain with the British has ensured him lasting condemnation, and he is often blamed for the sequence of events that resulted in what Palestinians call the catastrophe, or nakba, of 1948. Yet Haj Amin's defiance would, decades later, lend credibility and legitimacy to his kinsman, Feisel Husseini, who, by the late 1960s, would begin leading the turn to nonviolent struggle in the Palestinian occupied territories.

Conclusion

What may be called the first stage of the modern Palestinian nationalist movement ended in 1947 with the partition of Palestine, followed by defeat of the Arabs in what Ilan Pappé expresses by a simple calendrical name: ‘the war of 1948’. Subsequent to the establishment of the State of Israel, three-quarters of a million Palestinian refugees—half the Palestinian population in 1948—fled their homes or property and suffered other losses.

It has been professed that for the length of the Arab-Zionist conflict, ‘the Palestinian leadership has consistently taken the most extreme, violent stands, preventing a resolution of that conflict’. Yet such a conclusion is not substantiated by reviewing the events of the 1920s and 1930s. Between the promulgation of the Balfour Declaration as policy and the onrushing events of World War II, which made the mandate unsustainable, the nonviolent strategies that were attempted by the Palestinians resulted in little if any effect on the British policy and Zionist goals. The divisions within the Palestinian élites and their party politics were indeed obstacles to effective action, but this conventional explanation offered by historians and political scientists for the failures of the Palestinians overlooks other, instrumental questions involved. When British policy was influenced by the Palestinians, it was through wild bloody riots and paramilitary operations. Temporary suspensions of immigration were made by High Commissioner Samuel after the riots of May 1921. The Passfield White Paper, which would have reversed Britain’s policy on self-government for

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222 Pappé, Making of the Arab-Israeli Conflict, p. ix.


the Arabs, proceeded from the uprisings of 1929. Following the slaughters of 1936–9, changes were proposed in the May 1939 White Paper. Yet, even these passing nods of recognition that the Arabs had legitimate claims were tangential and fleeting.

Over two decades, what stands out as the more indicative Palestinian pattern is a persistence in the use of classic, nonviolent methods of protest, despite their inconsequential results. As use of ‘every legal means’ and the standard, political methods of persuasion failed to produce basic changes in British and Zionist policies, these techniques were replaced in the late 1930s by massive noncooperation measures. When these, too, proved impotent, Qassamite guerrilla operations and mass popular insurgency supplanted them. Neither the British nor the Zionists responded to the expression of grievances through the employment of nonviolent measures, thus reinforcing the Qassamite alternative. By the autumn of 1938, as historian J. C. Hurewitz observes, ‘these events taught the lesson that the use of violence as a political weapon produced results which otherwise appeared unobtainable’.225

With the advantage of historical retrospect, it can be seen that the cherished ideal of the Zionist settlement of Palestine would lead to affrays of epic proportions with the Muslim and Christian Arab inhabitants. It can also be observed that the Arabs had the right to insist, however ineffectively or unsuccessfully, on consultations over the major alterations to their society that would result from Zionist immigration. Despite decades of Jewish immigration, by 1948 the Arabs still comprised the majority of the population and were entitled—as a matter of principle, if not of Great Power adjudication—to decide on partition. The turmoil of the Palestinian Arabs in response to the decision of the United Nations did not subside, and two instrumentalities for struggling for the protection of Palestinian patrimony evolved—one nonviolent, the other violent. The eclipse of the nonviolent techniques that had been predominantly in use during the 1920s and 1930s by subsequent decades of a

225Hurewitz, Struggle, p. 93.
policy of Qassamite armed resistance only makes more trenchant the question of how nonviolent civilian methods came to be reasserted in the intifada, where the unity of the uprising and its rejection of the use of arms contrasted starkly with the second phase of the 'great revolt'.
Chapter Three

CIVILIAN MOBILIZATION AND MASS RESISTANCE

In the 1950s, Palestinian resistance movements arose in the refugee centres of the diaspora, taking up the call to armed struggle because of the perceived failure of Arab unity to 'liberate' Palestine. A decade or more later, inside the territories captured by Israel in the June 1967 war, the Palestinians began to organize themselves. Among the various Palestinian groups, the communists were the only one that retained acceptance of the UN partition plan—a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza alongside the State of Israel—and did not adhere to the consensus on the need for 'armed struggle' to liberate Palestine. By the early 1970s, the communists' pursual of political methods to build local institutions had goaded the most powerful of the Palestinian armed factions, Fateh, to focus on the territories and turn towards civilian nonmilitary forms of mobilization. At the same time, a more conciliatory view of Israel was being ventured by Palestinians in the territories—where armed struggle held little attraction.

Alterations in popular ideologies are hard to trace, although immensely significant; sometimes the configuration of shifting political thought is revealed by organizational changes. This chapter will show that a combination of political stimulation from the communists, a need for alternatives to armed struggle, probes on the acceptability of two adjacent states, and the activation of previously uninvolved sectors of the populace brought about major organizational changes in the Palestinian nationalist movement. These, in turn, had an effect on their participants, further encouraging political modification. Accompanied by a surge of enrollment in secondary and higher education, Palestinians by the thousands became involved in the broad, popular mobilization of small movements; they stopped waiting for the PLO to act and took responsibility for opposing the Israeli military occupation themselves. As the old élitists atrophied and the centres of power diversified, a new local leadership developed, and ganglia of committees learned how to function even as
their leaders were imprisoned. Surreptitious networks 'outadministered' the military occupation by providing services to address neglected needs. As the Israeli Civil Administration failed to provide basic services and infrastructure, it turned a blind eye as villages and committees openly organized to provide apparently innocent services. A large proportion of the Palestinian population was, for twenty years, developing the capacity for nonmilitary civilian-based defence—a form of nonviolent resistance—and laying the organizational groundwork for the intifada.

**Palestinian Exiles Adopt a Policy of Armed Struggle**

While Zionism had early in the twentieth century become a sophisticated global political movement fortified by a Great Power, most of the Arabic-speaking world was still under the European colonialism that replaced Ottoman rule after World War I. Independence had been promised and repromised to the Arabs, yet the idea of independent statehood for the Palestinians was never considered, apart from the concept of a binational state compatible with the Balfour Declaration and Britain's strategic interests. In 1947, UNSCOP had estimated that Arab-owned land comprised 85 per cent of Palestine. In December 1948, the UN General Assembly passed Resolution 194 recognizing the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and 'live at peace' with their neighbours. After the UN Security Council called a truce to end the fighting, and armistice agreements were concluded in Rhodes in January 1949, however, 77.94 per cent of the land was under Israeli occupation. Following the establishment of temporary frontiers, the Arab strategy that

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2UN documents S/1264/Rev. 1; S/1296/Rev. 1; S/1302/Rev. 1; and S/1353/Rev. 1, as cited in ibid., p. 324 en9. The United Nations had approved partition and recognized the State of Israel, but it did not condone the expulsion of the Palestinian population. Don Peretz's study on refugee compensation notes that the UN Conciliation Commission for Palestine estimated that more than 80 per cent of the land in Israel was 'abandoned' by Arabs. Peretz admits, 'It is questionable whether Israel would have been able to bring in so many new immigrants so rapidly had it not taken over and used abandoned Arab property'. 'Of the 370 new Jewish settlements established between 1948 and 1953, 350 were on absentee property. In 1954, more than a third of Israel's Jewish population lived on absentee property'. Don Peretz, *Palestinian Refugee Compensation*, 108
developed was based on forming an alliance that could undo the effects of the 1948 war. Theoretically, the Arab governments were in a state of war with Israel, their objectives being the establishment of a Palestinian state in what had been mandatory Palestine and elimination of the Jewish national presence and the State of Israel.

In December 1948, a Palestinian congress attended by luminaries and mayors in Jericho had approved the annexation of the West Bank of the River Jordan by Trans-Jordan. A process of 'Jordanization' began that affected major portions of the population, eventually phasing out the term 'Palestine', banned by King 'Abdullah, who substituted the term 'West Bank of the Hashemite Kingdom' in official papers.\(^3\) For approximately the next twenty years, any striving for political aspirations was through the Hashemite Kingdom which, according to Kimmerling and Migdal, employed 'active suppression and repression to prevent any public voicing of a national Palestinian identity'.\(^4\) Concurrently, the Egyptians were exploiting Gaza for their own purposes. The All-Palestine Government, or Hukumat 'Ummum Filistin, set up by Haj Amin al-Husseini in Gaza in 1948,\(^5\) and the Palestinian fida'iyun, 'self-sacrificers', or guerrillas, of the mid-1950s, were both viewed as instruments of opposition to Israel by Egypt.\(^6\) The Arab states were in the throes of decolonization and tended to act as competitors more interested in their own self-aggrandizement than in anything Palestinian, revealing their disunity and corruption. Beyond the Middle East during the 1950s, the assumption grew in the United States and to a lesser


\(^6\)Ma'oz, *Palestinian Leadership*, p. 6.
degree in Europe that 'the Palestinians would literally be absorbed into the Arab states', a view that subsequently gave way to a picture of them as 'stateless exiles'.

To throw a sop at the despair of the Palestinians, the formation of a 'Palestinian entity' was encouraged at the first Arab summit meeting, in Cairo from 13 to 16 January 1964. More properly, its purpose was to limit the struggle of the Palestinians, to preclude the possibility that the Palestinians would drag the Arab states into unwanted war with Israel, and to neutralize pressure on Egypt's Gamal 'Abd al-Nasser to deliver liberation; Palestinian fury over Arab impotence vis-à-vis Israel had led to a vesting of hopes in the leadership of Nasser, based on the belief that he could unite the Arabs, rescue the Palestinians, and destroy Israel. Ahmad Shukairy, a Palestinian lawyer who had served as assistant secretary general of the Arab League, was chosen to set up the Palestine Liberation Organization and establish an Executive Committee. The overarching theory was that Arab unity could still bring about the restitution of Palestine. The first Palestine National Council, al-Majlis al-Watani al-Filistini, or PNC, since 1948 was held in Arab East Jerusalem, under the auspices of King Hussein, in May 1964, and Shukairy was elected to chair the Executive Committee of the PLO. The Palestinian National Covenant, or Charter, issued on 28 May and approved on 2 June, resolved among its thirty-three articles the 'immediate opening of camps for military training of all Palestinians, in order to prepare them for the liberation battle which they affirmed could be won only by force of arms'. Doubtless under direction from Nasser, however, whose Egyptian border abutted Gaza, who rigidly controlled the Palestinians in the strip, and who was concerned about Israeli reprisals, the PLO would prohibit commando

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operations against Israel. Indeed, the new organization secured the support of Arab governments precisely because it was not violent. Viewed as a ‘tool’ of the Arab states, the PLO became known for restricting Palestinian guerrilla activities.

The Israeli occupation in 1967 of lands set aside by the United Nations for the Palestinians brought about a temporary loosening of controls exerted by the Arab regimes on those Palestinians in the diaspora who were dependent on their sponsorship. By the close of 1967, Shukairy had been relieved of his position, and Fateh, which had been founded in the late 1950s, moved to seize the initiative. In February 1969, Fateh took over the PLO, and Yasir Arafat was elected to chair the organization; Fateh gained control of the administrative structure, the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA), and the Popular Liberation Forces, the guerrilla units formed from the PLA. The PLO, rather than representing social sectors and regions as it had in the past, under Fateh’s control became an umbrella, or front, sheltering factions, divisions, and splinter groups of different ideologies, but allowing each to retain its

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10Dhaher, ‘Palestine Liberation Organization’, p. 73.


12‘The strictly clandestine character of various Palestinian resistance movements until 1967 was due less to the Israeli enemy than to the attitude of the Arab states, where Palestinian militants were often put under house arrest, thrown in jail or even worse’. Leila S. Kadi, ‘Origins of the Armed Resistance’, Palestine: The Arab-Israeli Conflict, ed. Russell Stetler (San Francisco, Ramparts Press, 1972), p. 129. Kadi, editor of Basic Documents of the Armed Palestinian Resistance Movement, offers an ‘official’ PLO archivist’s perspective from unattributed sources.


14Hisham Sharabi, Palestine Guerrillas: Their Credibility and Effectiveness, Monograph Series No. 25 (Beirut, Institute for Palestine Studies, 1970), p. 33.
own Arab sponsor or sponsors. The PLO from its start, thus, possessed an exceedingly high tolerance for divisiveness and fragmentation, because this patronage of the neighbouring Arab states promoted each regime's interests, rather than that of the Palestinians. In the absence of coercion such as that used within the Algerian nationalist revolutionary movement, unity among these Palestinian factions would be improbable. In one example of such divisiveness, Italy, Austria, Greece, and other countries had worked out arrangements with Fateh so that no guerrilla operations would be carried out on their terrain, but other factions ignored these agreements, undermining Arafat's ability to speak for the whole. This pattern has contributed to a broad and persistent perception of the PLO as ponderous and unwieldy in the making of decisions.

Fateh had begun the military training of cadres in the late 1950s, when it was the sole organization advocating the principle of armed struggle as the only way of liberating Palestine and the Palestinians. In 1958 in Beirut, the Palestinian writer Tawfiq al-Huri and Yasir Arafat started the newspaper Filistinuna—Nida' al-Hayat, or Our Palestine—The Call of Life, which editorialized for five years prior to the formal 1964 adoption of armed struggle.

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17Quandt, 'Revolutionary Elites', p. 9; Quandt, 'Political and Military Dimensions', pp. 56, 69-71, 75. Developments among the numerous competing Palestinian factions and splinter groups in the period 1967 through 1970 are summarized by Quandt (see especially pp. 52-78). My purpose here is briefly to establish the growth outside the territories of an adherence to a policy, or myth, of armed struggle, as background for discussing how almost two decades of civilian, nonmilitary mobilization inside the occupied territories prepared the way organizationally for the intifada, where a policy of political struggle gained supremacy for more than two years.

18Laqueur, Age of Terrorism, p. 220.

19Filistinuna, October 1964, pp. 2-3; 'A Dialogue with Fateh', al-Taliah, June 1969, p. 11, as cited in Dhaher, 'Palestine Liberation Organization', p. 76.
struggle that the time was coming for action (because of disenchantment with the Arab regimes). The successful end of the Algerian war, in 1962, also fired the imaginations of some Palestinians to believe that they could do the same thing. After establishing military training camps in Syria and Jordan in 1963–4, Fateh sent its first reconnaissance team into Israel in 1963. In 1964, the Palestinian wing of the Arab Nationalist Movement (ANM), or Harakat al-Qawmiyyun al-Arab, founded in Beirut in 1950, established a military group also to launch reconnaissance missions inside Israel. The ANM’s decision was adopted at a September 1964 conference which concluded that armed struggle was the only way to liberate Palestine. Fateh launched the first guerrilla operation against Israel on 1 January 1965. Its strategy was based on persuading the Americans and Israelis that ‘there would be no end to armed conflict and political instability’ until territorial forfeiture and recognition of

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23 Sayigh, Peasants to Revolutionaries, p. 149; Dhaher, ‘Palestine Liberation Organization’, p. 77. At the American University at Beirut in 1948, three medical students, George Habash, Wadi Haddad, and Ahmad al-Khatib founded a student nationalist club. In 1950, they formed the Palestinian branch of the ANM. Upon graduation in 1951–2, each went back to his country of residence to promote the ANM. George Habash and Wadi Haddad went to Jordan and set up free clinics for refugees. Khatib returned to Kuwait and became a leader of the opposition. Bassam Abu-Sharif, two-hour interview (Washington, D. C., 30 October 1997).

24 Cooley, Green March, Black September, p. 138; Kadi, ‘Armed Resistance’, p. 134. According to Abu-Sharif, in 1964, the ANM decided to establish an organization called Shahab al-Th’ar, or Youth of Vengeance. It was pure ANM, straightforward, direct, trained by Egyptians. When the PLO was established, together with the PLA—Palestine Liberation Army—we [in the ANM] decided to send five leading members into the PLA, to create a commando operation that would be armed, trained, and financed by PLA, because we didn’t have money. Called Abtal al-‘Awda, or Heroes of the Return, it was known as PLA, but it was ANM’. The purpose of armed struggle was ‘to light a candle in the darkness of Arab defeat’. Abu-Sharif, interviews (24 January 1996; 30 October 1997).

25 Cooley, Green March, Black September, pp. 95–6; Rubin, Revolution until Victory? p. 7. For later, internal guidance on such missions, see ‘Guidelines for Attacking Civilian Targets in Israel’, p. 10, Target Selection and Timing of the Operation, in Israeli, Selected Documents, p. 31.
the PLO occurred. The June 1964 edition of *Filistinuna* had posed the issue of 'sacred violence', the chimera popularized by the Martinique psychoanalyst Franz Fanon. Fateh was small and there were limits to the damage it could inflict.

Liberating Palestine Takes Precedence over Arab Unity

The PLO's decision in favour of armed struggle is normally associated with Fateh's departure during its early days from the prevailing theory that Arab unity would achieve the liberation of Palestine. Fateh inverted the equation: instead, the liberation of Palestine would produce Arab unity. The goal of liberating Palestine took precedence over Arab unity, and secondarily it was concluded that armed force was necessary to reach this aim. Fateh's idea of 'revolution', or *thawra*, substituted mass engagement for passivity and ideological speeches, and refocused on the Palestinians as the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The Palestinians had been disarmed by the British during the suppression of the 'great revolt' and, again, after the 1948 war, when those crossing as refugees into

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27 *Filistinuna* translated and carried Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth, The Damned*, and *Black Skins, White Masks*. These works were additionally summarized and serialized in a series of pamphlets, 'Revolutionary Lessons and Experiences', especially nos. 3, 7, and 11. Dhaher, 'Palestine Liberation Organization', p. 75 fn24.


31 Sayigh, *Peasants to Revolutionaries*, p. 146. Foremost among Fateh's concerns was the necessity to prevent the Arab regimes from negotiating a compromised end to the Palestinian struggle in return for withdrawal from the territories. Ibid., p. 145.
surrounding Arab states had any weapons confiscated by their new ‘host’ country. Armed struggle was to be the means of achieving a democratic polity in Palestine, in which Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs were projected as having equality. The struggle was codified in the Palestinian National Charter, al-Mithaq al-Watani al-Filistini, as revised by the fourth PNC, meeting from 10 to 17 July 1968:

Armed struggle is the only way to liberate Palestine and is therefore a strategy and not tactics. The Palestinian Arab people affirms its absolute resolution and abiding determination to pursue the armed struggle and to march forward towards the armed popular revolution, to liberate its homeland and return to it... to exercise its right of self-determination in it and sovereignty over it. 33

The adoption by the PLO of the concept of armed struggle represented a conscious resurrection of the thinking of Shaykh ‘Izz al-Din al-Qassam.34 It was also rebellion against the Arab bureaucracies that had exploited the threat of Israel for their own self-aggrandizement (only to use Israel’s superiority as justification for their failure to stand up to it).35 The PLO placed doctrinal emphasis on armed struggle to magnify the plight of the Palestinians, which in theory would mobilize the masses, thereby triggering full-scale warfare between Israel and the Arabs. These goals were, as William Quandt says, ‘shot through with contradictions’, and Fateh in particular relied on the ‘mystique produced by activism’ to offset the pressures from various Arab regimes.36 Since the fida‘iyun were doing something, as opposed to nothing, it made it harder for the Arab regimes to intrude, lessening the difficulty of striving for independence when dependent for support on numerous capitals. Three types of operations evolved: episodic PLO cross-border raids from

32Ibid., p. 152. ‘We shall launch our revolution with sticks and knives, with old revolvers and crooked hunting rifles’. Filistinuna, October 1964, p. 2, as cited in Dhafer, ‘Palestine Liberation Organization’, p. 76.


35Sayigh, Peasants to Revolutionaries, p. 145.

36Quandt, ‘Revolutionary Elites’, p. 16.
emplacements in Lebanon and Jordan, bombings, and the shelling of Israeli settlements.\textsuperscript{37} These created strains for the Israelis, but had little impact on the situation.\textsuperscript{38}

**Inside the Occupied Territories**

In 1967, Nasser's closing of the Gulf of Aqaba and the Straits of Tiran provided an opening for Israel to take the offensive, and active warfare resumed. Six days of fighting ended with the Arab states bitterly defeated by Israel, which captured not only the West Bank and Gaza Strip, but the Golan Heights of Syria and the Egyptian Sinai Peninsula as well. Arab East Jerusalem also came under Israeli authority. Under Israeli control, the most common appellation for these lands became 'the occupied territories'.\textsuperscript{39} On 23 September 1967, the government of Israel renamed portions of the occupied West Bank 'Judea' and 'Samaria'.\textsuperscript{40} After 1968, the occupied territories as a whole were classified by Israel as the 'administered territories'.\textsuperscript{41}

\textsuperscript{37}Laqueur, *Age of Terrorism*, p. 216.

\textsuperscript{38}Hisham Sharabi's study of obituaries in the Israeli daily newspaper *Ma'ariv* questions whether such operations did not have more of an impact on Israeli mortalities than was officially acknowledged. Sharabi, *Palestine Guerrillas*, pp. 10–13. Yet, as Kitty Warnock observes, while such operations may have helped Palestinian morale, revealed Israeli vulnerabilities, and preserved the Palestinian soul, the result was to increase the vigilance by the Israeli military and raise the antagonism and fear of the Israeli public. Kitty Warnock, *Land before Honour: Palestinian Women in the Occupied Territories* (London, Macmillan, 1990), p. 16.

\textsuperscript{39}Of the 1,668,200 Palestinians living inside what had been Mandatory Palestine—pre-1967 Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza Strip—more than 300,000 who had resided in the West Bank or Gaza were exiled over the next few months, and a sizeable number of those who had been temporarily abroad were not allowed to return. 'Probable Distribution of Palestinians Just before and after the War Began on 5 June 1967', by Janet Abu-Lughod, 'Demographic Characteristics of the Palestinian Population', annex 1, part 2, *Palestine Open University Feasibility Study* (Paris, UNESCO, 30 June 1980), p. 29, repr. in Edward W. Said, et al., *A Profile of the Palestinian People*, table 7, in Said and Hitchens, *Blaming the Victims*, p. 269.


Inside the occupied territories, the hostilities of June 1967 provoked some
Palestinians into thinking that if they were ever to get back any of their land, they must do it
on their own, and without arms. Humiliated under outright military occupation of what
remained of their land, ‘average persons realized that they were being lied to by the Arab
leaders’.43 Once the Jordanian and Egyptian administrations ended in 1967, the fate of the
occupied territories became the custody of the inhabitants themselves;44 collective action
against the military occupation was presumed unlikely.45 Avowedly political purposes for
organizations were forbidden.46 The guerrilla organizations there were dismantled, and the
populace once again disarmed.46 Yasir Arafat crossed into the West Bank in mid-August
1967 with a team of thirty, to set ablaze armed resistance and establish covert headquarters
in Nablus.47 By early 1968, the severity of Israeli countermeasures and the general
disinclination of the populace to involve itself in military action had led him back across the
River Jordan, the cause of fomenting armed revolution in the territories ‘damaged beyond
repair’.48 The Palestinians in the Gaza Strip posed the only real threat to Israeli authority.
Arms caches remained from the period of Egyptian rule, and by the close of 1970 the

42 Sari Nusseibeh, one-hour interview (Washington, D.C., 5 July 1994). Nusseibeh, former professor of
philosophy at Bir Zeit University, now president of al-Quds University in East Jerusalem, was until the early
1990s a member of Fateh. Daoud Kuttab, ‘Interview with Sari Nusseibeh: The Peace Process and the

43 Rashid Khalidi, ‘Palestinian People: Twenty-Two Years after 1967’, in Lockman and Beinin,
Intifada, p. 113.

44 R. Hiltermann, Behind the Intifada, pp. 3, 4.


46 Alain Gresh, ‘Palestinian Communists and the Intifadah’, tr. Diane Belle James, Middle East Report

47 Yezid Sayigh, ‘Turning Defeat into Opportunity: The Palestinian Guerrillas after the June 1967

48 Ibid., p. 263; Helena Cobban, ‘The Dilemma of the PLO’, Middle East Report 13
(November–December 1983): 4. Vitriolic esoteric appeals, particularly of Marxist-Leninist vocabularies, were
repugnant to the middle class and adversely affected popular support for guerrilla violence. Bard E. O’Neill,
Armed Struggle in Palestine: A Political-Military Analysis (Boulder, Colorado, and Folkestone, England,
fida‘iyun were in control of the refugee camps and, by night, the towns. This situation persisted until General Ariel Sharon smashed the Gaza guerrilla strongholds in 1971. The Israeli view after the 1967 war was that the Palestinians had become inconsequential to the Middle East: ‘the Palestinians did not exist in the political consciousness of most Israelis’.

In an atmosphere of adversity, with their predicament worsened, the Palestinians began an effort to politicize the struggle for independence on a civilian basis. Numerous instances of nonviolent direct action took place. In August 1967, teachers’ associations went on strike to contest the curriculum changes planned by the Israelis, and teachers signed protest petitions when asked to give written endorsement for Israeli textbook censorship: ‘to cooperate with the occupation authorities is to allow them to strike deeper roots in the soil of our beloved country, and it gives the occupying power a justification for continuing its occupation’. Most schools reopened in November after the Israelis made some concessions, but episodic strikes continued throughout the year. The passage of UN Security Council Resolution 242 in early November underscored a growing realization that the occupation would be protracted. In the spring of 1968, strikes were called in Jenin, Jerusalem, Nablus, and Tulkarem. Public protests were made against the demolition of homes in Hebron and Nablus and the intrusion by soldiers into girls’ schools in Ramallah. Major unrest swept the territories in the autumn of 1968, as the military authorities closed schools, imposed curfews,

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50 Schiff and Ya‘ari, Intifada, p. 41. To Israeli Labour leader Golda Meir, ‘There was no such thing as Palestinians. When was there an independent Palestinian people with a Palestinian state? ... It was not as though there was a Palestinian people in Palestine considering itself as a Palestinian people and we came and threw them out and took away their country from them. They did not exist’. ‘Golda Meir: Who Can Blame Israel?’ interviewed by Frank Giles, Sunday Times, 15 June 1969, p. 12. Two decades later, Likud prime minister Yitzhak Shamir referred to Palestinians as ‘grasshoppers’: ‘We say to them from the heights of this mountain and from the perspective of thousands of years of history that they are like grasshoppers compared to us’. Adrian Hamilton, ‘Grasshoppers Ready to Jump on Racist Israel’, Observer Sunday, 3 April 1988, p. 27.


52 Lesch, Israel’s Occupation, p. 54. Israeli authorities rejected seventy-eight textbooks outright; the remaining fifty-six were reprinted with deletions. Jerusalem Post, 30 August 1967, as cited in ibid., p. 50.
and deported eight Nablus teachers. A general strike on the second anniversary of the June war led to the deportation to Jordan of nine strike coordinators from Jerusalem, Nablus, Ramallah, and Tulkarem. Nablus’s mayor declared that a strike was a ‘peaceful and legitimate action’, and ‘the only way to express the people’s dissatisfaction’.

As political organizing surged, the institutions being set up on the West Bank of the River Jordan and the Gaza Strip made no pretense to military solutions. The recruitment of guerrilla cadres in the Palestinian refugee camps was emphasized in neighbouring Arab countries. While some organizing of secret military cells persisted in the occupied territories, armed cells in the territories subsided during the 1970s. The military factions increasingly saw themselves being replaced in the Palestinian political imagination by the activism of the politically oriented communists, the group that first revived organized Palestinian political activities in 1969.

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53 Lesch, Israel’s Occupation, p. 56.

54 Lesch, Political Perceptions, pp. 35–7.


56 Debates raged within Fateh in the diaspora over when and how armed missions should be undertaken, particularly from 1970 to 1973, as the PLO’s factions quarreled about the social parameters of revolution. For the dynamics within Fateh during this period, see Sayigh, Armed Struggle and the Search for State, pp. 195–317.


58 Nusseibeh, interview (5 July 1994). ‘Fateh wasn’t very well organized; it was basically a very tiny organization within a very large structure. Ibid. ‘People in Fateh began to realize that its military wing would make Fateh lose’. Sari Nusseibeh, two-hour interview (East Jerusalem, 6 November 1994).

Foundational Arguments for a Two-State Solution

A Communist Alternative to Armed Struggle

The evolution of a two-state solution has its origins earlier in the century. The idea of binationalism began circulating in the mid-1920s, although it was often expressed through the words ‘equal representation’ and ‘parity’. Unfolding in Zionist circles—it was clearly the Jews who hoped to change the status quo ante in their own favour—it was often associated with ‘moral justice’, although the exact meaning of the expression varied from person to person. Small, marginal movements contended that the Jewish state had to reconcile itself with the existence of the Arabs, yet these were in the minority. Within a broad spectrum of Zionist thought, philosophers such as Asher Ginsburg, who used the pen name Ahad Haam, or One of the People, and Aharon David Gordon argued that Zionism was not merely the physical migration of Jews to Palestine, but a renewal of Judaism in which the treatment of the Arabs was a principal test of whether Zionism could rise to its moral imperative and justify its existence. This assumed the validity of a Jewish nation which had a right to return to Palestine, yet with an obligation to demonstrate justice. The philosopher-theologian Martin Buber and the American-born rabbi Judah Magnes argued eloquently during the 1920s for brotherhood in a binational state.

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60 It will be recalled that one of the earliest extant Arab issuances expressing opposition to Jewish immigration to Palestine called it a ‘grave peril’ but also says, ‘Our Jewish compatriots shall enjoy our common rights and assume the common responsibilities’—an implied binationalism. ‘Memorandum Presented to the King-Crane Commission by the General Syrian Congress’, 2 July 1919, in Laqueur, Israel-Arab Reader, p. 33. Acceptance of political compromise with Israel, although rooted in the past, would await the intifada.


63 Magnes resigned from his pulpit at Temple Emanu-el in New York during World War I and moved to Palestine, where he established Hebrew University in Jerusalem and became its first president until he died in 1948. His plan advocated controlled immigration to allow Jews in the same number as Arabs in Palestine, and equal representation for each group in the government of a binational state. ‘Our view is based on two assumptions’, he testified before the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry which published its report in April 1946, ‘First, that Jewish-Arab cooperation is essential for a satisfactory solution, and, second, that it is possible’. Bartley C. Crum, Behind the Silken Curtain: A Personal Account of Anglo-American Diplomacy in Palestine and the Middle East (New York, Simon and Schuster, 1947), p. 252.
the movement another Zionism, now almost forgotten ... except by scholars', I. F. Stone notes, 'which was prepared, from the deepest ethical motives, to face up to the reality that Palestine was not an empty land but contained another and kindred people'.

Within Palestinian families, concepts of either a binational or two-state solution had been under discussion for decades. Such ideas were not new to Palestinian intellectuals, literati, communists, or those who argued for the recognition of Israel:

Even in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s ... you had people saying, 'We cannot live on the assumption or dream that we're going to be able to defeat Israel; Israel is a fact of life, and we have to ... realize our political aspirations alongside'. ... There's always been a school of thought that—not really liking the fact—nonetheless saw that it was necessary to ... make the best of it.

Political parties such as the Palestine Communist Party (PCP) proposed a vision of a 'binational' state and the sharing of power and land. Throughout the 1920s, the PCP was overwhelmingly Jewish, and the first Palestinian Arabs did not join the PCP until between 1927 and 1929. From then until 1943—the latter being when the PCP split into two wings over the fundamental incongruities of Arab nationalism and Zionism, becoming the Israeli Communist party and the National Liberation League (NLL)—the party was composed of both Arabs and Jews who, despite difficulties, generally endorsed a binational state and coexistence. The Hashomer Hatzair, or Young Guards Workers' party, proposed a programme of cooperation called 'communal federalism' and a binational constitutional system with advisory councils which, it believed, could reconcile the national aspirations of

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65 See Nashashibi, *Jerusalem's Other Voice*.

66 Nusseibeh, interview (5 July 1994).


both peoples without domination and with parity. Marxism had considered that national divisions would eventually disappear as socialism evolved. Opposed to armed struggle, Palestinian and Jewish communists worked together, particularly on labour questions, each considering the other to be part of the overall equation. Even during the late 1930s, in reaction to the ‘great revolt’, the PCP maintained a unified position, and when leafleting was aimed at Jews it proclaimed that the revolt was on behalf of Jews as well as Arabs. Prevention of further bloodshed, it was believed, required a united front of Jews and Arabs.

For its views on a ‘binational’ state and the sharing of power and land, the PCP was opposed by both the British mandatory government and world Zionism. After the PCP’s division into two wings, the NLL operated under the presumption that the interests and rights of both peoples could be met through a democratic secular state in Palestine. With the passage of UN General Assembly Resolution 181 in 1947, however, implementation of the partition plan and establishment of two states were accepted by the league. Although separated in 1948 from the Arab communists living in the State of Israel, the league maintained itself until 1951, still advocating the establishment of a separate Palestinian state according to the partition plan. After the 1948 war there were three distinct Palestinian communist entities: in Israel proper, part of the NLL merged with the Israeli Communist party; after Jordan’s annexation of the West Bank, in 1951 the remainder of the league formed the Jordanian Communist party (JCP); the Palestinian Communist party of Gaza (PCPG) was the third entity.

The wing of the PCP that had first become the NLL and later the JCP was the only significant political group to oppose the annexation of the West Bank to Jordan.

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69See The Case for a Bi-National Palestine: Memorandum Prepared by the Hashomer Hatzair Workers’ Party, in Hebrew and English (Tel Aviv, Hashomer Hatzair Workers’ Party, 1946).


71Gresh, ‘Palestinian Communists’, p. 35.

72Cohen, Political Parties, pp. 28, 57; Ma’oz, Palestinian Leadership, p. 10.
took the form of leafleting,\textsuperscript{73} that is, until a demonstration was organized by the NLL, in Nablus on 31 March 1950, in protest of parliamentary elections proposed by Jordan's King 'Abdullah, because they would legitimize the merger of the East and West Banks of the River Jordan, which was still in process.\textsuperscript{74} The JCP became the most powerful party of the 1950s among Palestinians, although, at its peak in 1956–7, the party never had more than one thousand members, the most numerous sub-group of which was comprised of teachers.\textsuperscript{75} With an 'independent Arab state' no longer imminent, the party had to adjust to reality and stand on its own feet.\textsuperscript{76} The JCP's programme called for a two-state solution to be worked out through political struggle and negotiations—a Palestinian state alongside Israel and not in lieu of it.\textsuperscript{77}

The communists played a leading part in large demonstrations and riots in 1955 and 1956, the aftermath of a communist-led national front having been disbanded by the Jordanian government in 1954.\textsuperscript{78} On 25 April 1957, political parties were outlawed by King Hussein, who, in his public broadcast announcing the measure, specifically singled out the treachery of the JCP for maintaining ties to Israel and calling for peace with the Jewish state.\textsuperscript{79} Eventually, the JCP's demand for the establishment of the independent state to which the Palestinians were entitled under the UN partition plan became muted, along with talk of

\textsuperscript{73}The JCP was alone in attempting to place its message before the public through a publications programme, and had its own printing press which, although seized in 1952–3, was replaced in 1954. Members functioned through secret cells, where contact was managed through the circulation of written materials and supported by couriers, or murasil. Face-to-face sessions were rare. Cohen, \textit{Political Parties}, pp. 43–53.

\textsuperscript{74}Ibid., pp. 28–9. The fifty participants were arrested, shackled, and made to walk to Amman, where—with the exception of one marcher who died en route—they were gaoled for two months. This 'was the first time that West Bank communists had openly challenged the authorities; their overt activities up to this time had been restricted primarily to the distribution of leaflets'. Ibid.

\textsuperscript{75}Ibid., pp. 58, 56.


\textsuperscript{77}Hiltermann, \textit{Behind the Intifada}, p. 40.

\textsuperscript{78}Laqueur, \textit{Communism and Nationalism}, pp. 132–3.

\textsuperscript{79}Cohen, \textit{Political Parties}, p. 38; Amman Radio, 25 April 1957, as cited in, ibid., p. 256 en41.
pacific coexistence with Israel, although the party continued to assert the right of refugees to return to their homes. Driven underground, the JCP split into two wings. By late 1967, one had come to favour peaceful settlement of the conflict under UN Security Council Resolution 242, approved on 22 November 1967 and intended to address the consequences of the war that year, which came to provide an internationally accepted basis for ending the occupation. The resolution mandates Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories and is chiefly premised on the ‘inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war’. The other wing of the JCP advocated armed struggle and formed its own military unit. The clandestine structure of the JCP in the West Bank permitted its cadres to maintain some activities under occupation, although its scope was circumscribed. Jealous of maintaining both independence and parity with the PLO, the communists emphasized the building of institutions. By delivering social services, they were afforded ‘legitimacy they lacked as non-believers in a traditional religious society’.

In the late 1960s, opposition to armed struggle by Palestinian communists had less to do with principle than it did with the reality of the Israeli reprisals attendant to the sorties and infiltration from the guerrillas outside. While the notion of armed struggle had become a symbol for Palestinian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria, the Palestinian populace of the occupied territories, particularly of the West Bank, knew that cross-border guerrilla raids meant that Israeli retaliatory detentions and collective punishments would be aimed against

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82 Lesch, *Political Perceptions*, p. 33.


84 Gresh, ‘Palestinian Communists’, p. 35.
them. The Palestinian *fidayi* had all developed outside the occupied territories, where the depth of support for the guerrillas and recruits was almost unlimited.  

Ideological factors also pertained to the communists' rejecting armed struggle; they were hoping to achieve long-range political goals that could only be brought about through comparably long-term changes in the social structure, and which they considered more important than short-term political aims.  

After the 1967 war, JCP members in the West Bank were severed from their counterparts on the East Bank of the River Jordan. The political posture of the communists in the West Bank condemned the Israeli *de facto* annexation of East Jerusalem and called for restoration of Jordanian sovereignty, meaning that they were now in opposition to a Palestinian state. According to Ghassan Khatib, the communists were the only organized political group that not only concentrated its work in the occupied territories, but focussed on popularly based activities and the use of 'nonviolent approaches and methods of struggle within the different strata of the Palestinian people'. The party argued that 'mass, popular, nonviolent struggle was the most suitable in our case, and would help us to survive', a viewpoint that gained adherents in the West Bank under the leadership of Bashir al-

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85 Rosemary Sayigh notes, 'Few peoples have been more systematically kept helpless in the face of attack than the Palestinians, and it is not surprising that the symbol of their resurgence after 1967 was the gun'. Sayigh, *Peasants to Revolutionaries*, p. 154.

86 Ibid., pp. 157.


88 Ghassan Khatib, two-hour interview (East Jerusalem, 15 December 1997). Khatib runs the East Jerusalem Media and Communications Centre (JMCC). Born in Nablus in May 1954, Khatib was arrested five times; his longest prison term was four years. Having joined the communist party as a youth, in 1982 he was graduated from Bir Zeit University, where he was elected five times as a member of the student council, and often chaired it during student upheavals. He received the master's degree in economic development from Manchester University. Upon returning from Britain before the beginning of the intifada, he joined the cultural studies faculty at Bir Zeit and established the JMCC a few months after the uprising started. Having determined that foreign journalists and fact-finding missions needed help in understanding the uprising, he organized delegations to the depths of our society—Balata refugee camp, meetings with the popular committees. Although Khatib was again arrested, JMCC, which publishes *Palestine Report*, continued. A member of the Palestinian delegation to the Madrid peace conference in 1991 and the Washington negotiations that followed, Khatib ceased his official involvement in politics after the Oslo accord. Ibid. Also see 'Ghassan Khatib', John Wallach and Janet Wallach, *The New Palestinians: The Emerging Generation of Leaders* (Rocklin, California, Prima Publishing, 1992), pp. 246–68.
Barghouti, a journalist in Ramallah who was the head of the communist party and editor of al-Fajr. Where the West Bank communists had once jealously protected their links to their East Bank confederates, by 1973, because of changed circumstances—military occupation had forced them to function separately from Jordan for more than five years—the West Bank communists wanted independence from the Jordanian branch. By 1973, the West Bank communists instead began calling for an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and threw their weight behind the recognition of the PLO as the representative of the Palestinians. Embracing Palestinian nationalism, the political organizing of the communists became even more assertive than before.

Aziz Shehadeh: ‘Declare a Palestinian State’

Into the debate about whether victory could result from ‘armed struggle’ and whether a state could be achieved in the whole of Palestine stepped an individual who has had a lasting effect because of his impact on persons who are still active. For purposes of both political history and the historical evolution of ideas, the contributions of Aziz Shehadeh merit consideration. Instrumental though he was in the evolution of a non-belligerent view

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According to Khatib, Barghouti ‘led this tendency in the party, with its belief in grass-roots activities, belief in popular struggle versus individualistic military struggle. . . . If one person deserves the credit for this kind of thinking, it is he’. Khatib, interview (15 December 1997). Barghouti’s influence extends beyond communist circles. A subsequent editor of al-Fajr and nonofficial spokesperson for Fateh during the intifada, Hanna Siniora, said, ‘It was through Mr. Barghouti that I learned to accept Resolutions 242 and 338—when 242 and 338 were in the Palestinian dictum synonymous with treason’. The communists had ‘better foresight’, Siniora noted; ‘when the 1947 partition plans were announced, the Israelis accepted them, but the Arab world—including the Palestinians—refused them. Only the communist party had the foresight to say we will accept the partition plans, and one of its leaders in Haifa was killed because the party accepted partition’. Hanna Siniora, one-hour interview (East Jerusalem, 16 December 1997). Barghouti is minister of industry for the Palestinian Authority.

In 1974, the Arab League declared the PLO as ‘sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people’—a rallying cry with popular support both inside and outside the occupied territories—although suspicousness remained in the territories about armed struggle and the ‘liberation’ of all of Palestine.

In 1977, they proclaimed, ‘We the communists, members of the Palestinian Communist organization in the West Bank, declare clearly and frankly, that we are struggling for the existence of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, following a complete Israeli withdrawal from all the territories conquered in June 1967, for the repatriation of all Palestinian refugees from 1948 to their homes, and for the Palestinian state to have borders, secure from Israeli or other aggression’. ‘Together with the PLO to Create a Palestinian State’, repr. from al-Watan, clandestine organ of Palestine Communist party, 31 January 1977, as cited in MERIP Reports: Middle East Research and Information Project 55 (March 1977): 17.
towards sharing land with Israel, he is rarely mentioned in the literature, and it is therefore appropriate to interweave his biographical information through these pages.

A British-trained attorney who had practised law since the 1930s, Shehadeh was not the only individual to raise the issue of a Palestinian state with an implied acceptance of Israel, but he may have been the first Palestinian to be quoted publicly in the news media talking about such an approach. Shehadeh had broached the idea of two states side by side in 1948, when ‘the prevailing view was one of pan-Arabism, instead of narrow Palestinian nationalism’.92 The journalist Muhammad Abu Shilbaya and two other prominent Palestinians separately also proposed such a state: Shaykh Muhammad ‘Ali al-Ja’bari, former mayor of Hebron, and Dr. Hamdi Taji al-Faruqi of Ramallah.93 Those who suggested this compromise were denounced and even put their lives at risk.94 In the case of Faruqi, after petitioning for a Palestinian state, in the early hours of the morning a missile was fired through the stone of his bedroom wall.95

The Jordanians, according to Jonathan Kuttab, a Palestinian-American lawyer who subsequently completed his legal training in Shehadeh’s Ramallah law offices, considered Shehadeh’s idea dangerous and suppressed it. ‘The official objection was that insistence on a Palestinian state at that time would diminish ... the importance of pan-Arabism and the need to liberate all of Palestine’.96 Unofficially, the Hashemite Kingdom opposed the idea because it undermined their own annexation of the West Bank and efforts at ‘Jordanization’ of the

92Jonathan Kuttab, thirty-minute interview (East Jerusalem, 18 March 1997). ‘Aziz is the first person publicly quoted as talking about a separate Palestinian state’. Ibid.

93Lesch, Political Perceptions, pp. 40, 48 en5, 49 en22. Abu Shilbaya published to this effect in al-Quds, 29 December 1970 and 6 January 1971; a statement by Faruqi appeared in the New York Times on 19 September 1970, as cited in ibid., p. 49 en22. Lesch notes that Abu Shilbaya in 1971 wrote a book No Peace without a Free Palestinian State, about which no details are offered, and she cites other advocates, including the teacher Ibrahim Duaybis, the poet Samira Khatib, and the journalists Yusif Nasr and Jamil Hamad. Ibid., pp. 41, 49 en22.

94Lesch, Political Perceptions, pp. 34.

95Raja Shehadeh, the son of Aziz Shehadeh, thirty-minute personal communication (East Jerusalem, 12 December 1997).

96Kuttab, interview (18 March 1997).
Upon implementation of Israel’s military occupation in September 1967, Shehadeh raised the concept again, having concluded that any potential for military victory against Israel by the Arab states was an erroneous proposition. He thought a group should approach Israel, declare a Palestinian state in the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, including Jerusalem, and make a peace agreement with Israel on that basis: an Israeli state and a Palestinian state. His proposal sought Palestinian self-government with provisions for limited independence and included the establishment of a parliament and other institutions of government. Of particular concern was timing; Shehadeh thought that such an action, to be successful, needed to be taken before attitudes calcified. As Shehadeh recounted to Jonathan Kuttab, he had told the Israelis, including Defence Minister Moshe Dayan,

The Jordanians are out of the picture now—it’s you and us. You’d better make peace. To have one and a half million Palestinians within your borders will be a tremendous threat to you. There is no way that four million Israelis can rule over two million Arabs... Every street will be a danger to you. Why don’t you make peace with us?... We will be your bridge to the Arab world.  

According to Aziz’s son Raja, two Israelis visited Shehadeh shortly after Ramallah was captured by the Israelis in 1967: Dan Bawly, a retired chartered accountant, and David Kimche, at the time associated with the Israeli intelligence services and later the secretary-general of the Israeli foreign ministry. They reportedly passed Shehadeh’s proposals on to the Israeli government, where differences of opinion prevented their acceptance; Bawly and Kimche are believed to have tried to win support for the concept of two states from subsequent Israeli governments. High-level Israelis came to the Shehadeh home to discuss such ideas.

97Ibid.
98Ibid.
99Raja Shehadeh, forty-five-minute interview (Ramallah, 18 March 1997). Then sixteen years of age, Raja was present at the meetings. David Kimche and Dan Bawly confirm such meetings on the West Bank immediately after the war and specifically mention Aziz Shehadeh in their book The Sandstorm: The Arab-Israeli War of 1967: Prelude and Aftermath (New York, Stein and Day, 1968), pp. 239, 311.
100Shehadeh, interview (18 March 1977).
Nationalists who were on salaries from Jordan might boycott the Israelis, Kuttab observed, but he viewed Aziz’s perspective as more practical.\textsuperscript{101} For example, Israeli control of zoning orders created many difficulties, at a time when the town leaders would have nothing to do with the Israelis. . . Yet, as one poignant example, the graveyard in Ramallah was full, and there was no room for more graves. People asked Aziz to talk to the Israelis about granting a zoning permit to allow establishment of a new graveyard at a new site. On a matter as serious as burial, you must deal with those who have authority, never mind if it is unpopular.

When the lawyers were on strike in 1967,\textsuperscript{102} Aziz was the first to break it. People were besieging him . . . [for help]. Other lawyers might be proud that they were boycotting the military courts, but Aziz’s response was, ‘These people need representation. . . If the bar association thinks this is treason, that is their problem. This old man wants me to defend his son’.\textsuperscript{103} His mentality, ‘Truth is Truth’, allowed him to negotiate with Israelis.\textsuperscript{104}

At the turn of the century, the Shehadeh family, which had been living in Ramallah, moved to Jerusalem. Once embarked on his law career, Shehadeh moved to Jaffa. The family of his wife, Widad, also a Shehadeh, had pursued a similar course and was also living in Jaffa. Upon their marriage, they moved into a new house in the coastal city and asked that the owner make renovations for them. When war broke out in 1948, the family fled back to Ramallah, yet they continued to pay down their debt for work on a house in which they could not live. A ‘visionary, moralist, ethicist, and determined man’, Shehadeh knew that his idea for resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict ‘went against the grain, at a time when there was immense hatred of Jews and Israelis’ for the losses that had been sustained by the Palestinians. ‘He was himself a refugee and had lost his property. . . He had suffered as much as anyone and had the same emotions as everyone else; the only difference is that he had come to a point of maturity, . . . and had the capacity to overcome his emotions and think

\textsuperscript{101}Kuttab, interview (18 March 1997).

\textsuperscript{102}The lawyers’ strike in the autumn of 1967 was prompted by Israel’s decision to shift the Court of Appeals from Jerusalem to Ramallah. Many lawyers and judges deemed the move illegal, refused to practise in the courts, and got ‘strike support’ salary from the Jordanian government. Lesch, Political Perceptions, p. 34.

\textsuperscript{103}Kuttab, interview (18 March 1997).

\textsuperscript{104}Ibid.
clearly about what should be done'.

Shehadeh was elected as an officer of the General Refugee Congress at a 17 March 1949 Ramallah meeting attended by five hundred delegates. This 'marked the attempt of the refugees to take charge of their own affairs', according to the Israeli 'new' historian Avi Shlaim. Borrowing money to go to Lausanne that same year to meet with the UN Conciliation Commission for Palestine, Shehadeh and three other Palestinians sought compensation for the refugees. Neither Nimer al-Hawari, who was elected president, Shehadeh and Yahya Hamuda, who were elected as deputies, nor Nasib Boulos, member of the executive committee, were allowed to testify, although as Shlaim observes, they had been authorized to negotiate on behalf of the Palestinian refugees on all matters pertaining to them. The General Refugee Congress delegation was not recognized since it did not represent a state. This formulaic response devoid of human sympathy and substance only reinforced Aziz's determination, according to Raja.

Aziz wrote articles and made himself available to Israeli and foreign journalists.

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107 Avi Plascov, The Palestinian Refugees in Jordan, 1948–1957 (London, Frank Cass, 1981), p. 20. See Appendices 3 and 4 for the resolutions passed at the General Refugee Congress and the aims and policies of the congress. Ibid., pp. 220–23. Also see Shlaim, Collusion, p. 489. Hawari’s summary of the resolutions includes: 1. Insistence on return of the refugees regardless of the political fate of the country; 2. No party may represent the refugees except for delegates elected by the refugees themselves, provided there is one delegate for every thousand; 3. Contacts with refugees in Arab countries will be made to encourage their representation in the congress; 4. The elected delegates are authorized to represent the refugees before official and quasi-official international bodies, provided no decision is taken without consultation with the congress; 5. All such organizations are to be contacted to safeguard the refugees’ interests; 6. All expenses are to be borne without reliance on outside sources; 6. Delegates are to be sent to all official and private international bodies; 7. The Arab Union, Arab states, and UN Conciliation Commission are to be kept informed. Muhammad Nimer al-Hawari, The Secret of the Disaster, or Sir al-Nakbeh (Ramallah, 1955, n.p.), excerpts tr. Raja Shehadeh.

108 According to Uri Avnery, Aziz Shehadeh ‘approached the Israeli delegate, Eliahu Sasson, and told him that the Palestinians were ready to make peace with Israel. After consulting his government, Sasson rebuffed them bluntly. The government of Israel was not interested in dealing with people who did not represent any government’. Uri Avnery, My Friend, the Enemy: Conversations with the PLO (London, Zed Books, 1986), p. 58.

109 Shehadeh, communication (12 December 1997). Ilan Pappé notes the encounter. Pappé, Arab-Israeli Conflict, p. 223. Two other delegations, one led by Muhammad Nimer al-Hawari, also claimed to represent the refugees at Lausanne. Shlaim, Collusion, p. 490.
Critics thought it perfidious to consider giving up 70 per cent or more of Palestine, even if the Palestinians retained Jerusalem. Defenders said that Shehadeh was not a politician and did not court ideological purity:

He would not soften language to make it saleable. . . . He was honest to a fault and a deep patriot. He really cared about Palestine, but he had no time or patience for patriotic talk that was full of slogans. . . . He was realistic. . . . He realized that to hold on to empty slogans was not helpful.  

At a time when the PLO was opposed to the idea of setting up a government on less land than Palestinians had once possessed, Shehadeh was suspiciously viewed. Detractors said he had ‘attempted to take Palestinian destiny into his own hands rather than leave it to the PLO’.  
In the 1970s, the Fateh leadership threatened a military tribunal to bring to trial those who were calling for a Palestinian entity in the occupied territories only. Raja Shehadeh noted,

The PLO was struggling for survival and the assertion of itself as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. . . . Aziz was seen as enemy number one because he was trying to make a deal with Israel, and was not for armed struggle. . . . The PLO radio broadcast . . . threats against him. I remember very clearly a quote from somebody in the PLO, possibly Arafat, saying ‘We will never accept this mini-state’, using a diminutive form of state, duwayla, to make it derogatory, because at that time, they were for all of Palestine. . . . They were also extremely worried about somebody calling for local leadership—a voice from within calling for a solution which would have rendered irrelevant their activity. . . . He suffered from opprobrium, was called a traitor, lost his Jordanian passport, was persona non grata in Jordan, and ostracized in local society.  

From the beginning, Aziz recognized the need for compromise, Raja observed,

The generation of people that were born or were in their formative years in 1948 had great depth of anger. . . . Armed struggle was a way to release the anger. . . . [and turn] your back on your family’s defeatism. . . . My father was trying to . . . develop life here, . . . to establish a national university, to


111Frisch, ‘Transformation’, p. 99. Shehadeh’s views are construed by Frisch as falling within the reform tradition of those who, taking inspiration from the evolution of Germany and Japan into democratic states, believed that a democratic state would evolve out of Israeli occupation. Ibid.


113Shehadeh, interview (18 March 1997).
improve the legal system and municipality. In the late 1970s, the idea of developing life here was looked on with suspicion, because the exiled leadership could survive only by remaining the leadership, and any attempt to have alternative leadership here could imply the creation of an alternative.  

Between 1969 and 1972, more than one hundred articles on the idea of a Palestinian entity appeared in *al-Quds*—the only East Jerusalem newspaper in 1969—a number of them by Shehadeh. From 1968 to 1971, Shehadeh also wrote articles for a London publication edited by the Anglo-Zionist writer Jon Kimche—editor of the *Evening Standard*, older brother of David Kimche, and another visitor to the Shehadeh home. These have been called 'the most comprehensive series of articles in the English language' advocating the idea of a Palestinian entity.  

One of them urged Israel and the Arab governments to accept Security Council Resolution 242 and counselled the Arabs to negotiate with Israel on this basis: Some among us have taken the course of military struggle against Israel; others, perhaps the majority, still believe in a peaceful solution. ... [and] hope Israel will ... search for an honourable solution within the framework of the United Nations resolutions. ... We Palestinians of all creeds ... have been the principal victims of the stumbling, tottering and faltering leadership of the Arab states. They accept the Resolution [242] ... but they refuse to negotiate the terms of the peace.

Kuttab recalled Aziz saying that the Palestinians were never serious about armed struggle: Aziz said, 'I am not a pacifist. If the Palestinians had really gone underground ... there might be a point to it. But they were never serious, ... it was just slogans and bombastic rhetoric and an odd skirmish here and there, but no systematic, organized armed struggle. So why fool themselves and the world, pretending they wanted to liberate Palestine? ... They never had a plan to liberate Palestine with armed struggle. ... Don’t talk about it if you are not doing it. Let’s negotiate. ... Let’s talk about what we can achieve'.

In Shehadeh’s envisioned Palestinian entity, Palestinians may assert their identity and seek protection, returning when they choose, ceasing to be refugees ‘wandering in the wide world

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114*ibid.*


117Kuttab, interview (18 March 1997).
without a destination and no protection'. He cautions, 'Military solutions have nothing to offer the Palestinians and the call for such solutions can only create complications that would ultimately lead to the loss of everything'.\textsuperscript{118} Yet, according to Kuttab, Moshe Dayan and the other Israelis with whom Shehadeh had met ‘were genuinely scared’:

They really thought, Aziz said, that the idea made sense but that the security problem would be too much. Unfortunately, they did not follow through with it, and soon found out how easy it was to rule the territories, that we were not much of a threat, and that we were not really serious about armed struggle. So, he said, they decided they could have their cake and eat it, too—they could keep the territories, plant settlements, and didn’t need to negotiate with us.\textsuperscript{119}

When U.S. secretary of state Cyrus Vance visited Israel in 1977, a year before the Camp David accords would be signed, he met with a group of Palestinians. Shehadeh gave him a letter:

> It is imperative that both Israel and the Arab states recognize the basic rights of the Palestinian Arabs to set up a state of their own. . . . Israel and the emerging Palestine State would . . . sign a non-aggression pact, providing that none of the parties would invite foreign armed forces on its territories or enter into a military pact with a third party, without mutual consent.\textsuperscript{120}

Shehadeh wrote not for purposes of scholarship, but to advance an argument.\textsuperscript{121} The Arab Studies Society, established by Feisel Husseini in 1980, undertook to prepare an index of Shehadeh’s personal papers—since disappeared—and Husseini, a key actor in the political and social process leading to the intifada, despite being under house arrest in East Jerusalem between 1982 and 1987, met frequently with Shehadeh in Ramallah. Jonathan Kuttab was similarly active in the years prior to the 1987 uprising. Referring to Husseini and Kuttab, Raja commented,


\textsuperscript{119}Kuttab, interview (18 March 1997).

\textsuperscript{120}Aziz Shehadeh, letter to Secretary of State Cyrus Vance (Ramallah, 10 August 1977). See Appendix 1 here for the full text of the letter. Shehadeh and others broke a Palestinian boycott against contact with U.S. officials, called by the nationalist mayors who had been elected in 1976 in the occupied territories.

\textsuperscript{121}‘One of his mistakes was that he was inexperienced with the news media. . . . He would leave it to editors to edit, and they would edit to suit their own interests. . . . He was willing to speak with journalists at any time but had no control over what they wrote’. Shehadeh, interview (18 March 1997).
Though younger, these intellectuals and activists were more careful and circumspect than was Aziz. They are willing to work for a Palestinian state in stages, slowly. They are more cautious and guarded than was my father. He saw the Israeli settlements being built on a large scale and believed time was running out. He said, ‘If we wait any longer, it will be impossible to have a Palestinian state because there will be no land for a state’. 

At a time when there was widespread opprobrium in Palestinian circles against talking with the ‘Zionist entity’, Aziz Shehadeh believed that one should talk with the Israelis precisely because they were the enemies. At a minimum, this perspective cleared the way for Palestinian political aims to begin to undergo change. On 2 December 1985, the life of one of the early promoters of coexistence was ended at the hands of a murderer who was never brought to justice by the Israelis, who bore responsibility for criminal justice, police, and security matters. Shehadeh was stabbed to death at the entrance to his Ramallah home.

Confidants of the family say that the outcome of the investigation was never disclosed; thus, they believe that he was killed by someone aided by the Israelis, that is, a collaborator.

Although it would not be until November 1988, eleven months after the start of the intifada, that the explicit concept of a Palestinian state side by side with Israel would be propounded in the public utterances of the PLO, Aziz Shehadeh had a major effect on the thinking of agents of change who would influence the intifada. Not the least of Aziz’s lasting legacies was his impact on his son Raja, who had been called to the bar at Lincoln’s Inn in London in 1976 as a barrister and has practised law in the West Bank since 1977. In 1979, Raja established with others, including Jonathan Kuttab, the first Palestinian human rights organization, al-Haq, also called Law in the Service of Man. Al-Haq allowed the reprimands of the Palestinians to be carried into transnational circuits, through the centre’s affiliation with

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122 Shehadeh, interview (18 March 1997). Israeli settlements in the occupied territories, according to Yehoshafat Harkabi, major general (ret.), IDF, and former chief of military intelligence (1950–59), were meant to ‘foil’ Israeli loss of the territories. Likud policy was ‘reified’ by settlements; relinquishing them would have constituted ‘history’s condemnation of the role of Jabotinsky’s movement in Zionism’. Yehoshafat Harkabi, ‘Arab-Israeli Conflict at the Threshold of Negotiations’, The Struggle for Peace: Israelis and Palestinians, ed. Elizabeth Warnock Fernea and Mary Evelyn Hocking (Austin, University of Texas Press, 1992), p. 252.

123 Interviews in East Jerusalem and Ramallah with persons who knew Shehadeh.
the International Commission of Jurists in Geneva. Raja's conviction that Palestinians should fight for their rights by using the principles of the rule of law and Israeli standards and military orders has shaped a methodology that challenges Israel's legal claims on its own terms by monitoring the contradictions in literally thousands of Israeli civil and military administrative codes that circumscribe often benign or meaningless activity. His approach represents one of the earliest and most significant endeavours by Palestinians to use nonviolent methods of documentation and denunciation, through the systematic gathering of data.

1974: 'National Authority'

Despite the Palestinian communists' more or less consistent support for an autonomous state, articles about two states in the Palestinian print media in the occupied territories, and Aziz Shehadeh's persistence in writing and speaking of a sovereign Palestinian entity in the West Bank and Gaza alongside Israel, the idea of two states was rarely featured in the public statements of exiled Palestinian nationalists. In 1970, Nayef Hawatmeh and the Democratic Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DPFLP) had publicly argued for

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124 According to Jonathan Kuttab: 'Al-Haq has helped to move the Palestinian population away from its own narrow view of things and into the international arena. Partly in order to avoid the accusation of being a political organization, al-Haq insists on a set of universal objective standards and courtroom quality documentation, that is open, available to neutral observers... by documenting precisely what happened in cold, clinical terms that lead the reader to conclude that there was injustice. This approach was totally new, I think, to this society. People were full of their own feelings ("we are oppressed") and felt that their case was so clear that they didn't have to prove it, or document it—all they had to do was use rhetoric to describe it. They were surprised when the outside world dismissed their claims or seemed psychologically incapable of acknowledging them. Al-Haq's scholarly, legal approach led us to be blamed in the early days. People would say, "How come this happened and you didn't print a denunciation in the paper?" Denunciations in Arabic newspapers mean nothing. Instead, we painstakingly documented it, prepared affidavits, analysed it in terms of international law, and produced, months later, a publication that would be viewed seriously by jurists throughout the world, but might not even be quoted in the local Arabic papers'. Jonathan Kuttab, two-hour interview (East Jerusalem, 12 December 1997).

125 These were the principal techniques used under military dictatorship in Argentina by Professor Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, who won the 1980 Nobel Prize for Peace, the result of his work with Madres de la Plaza del Mayo, or Mothers of the Disappeared—a group that protested the preventive detention and killings of thousands who came to be known as los desaparecidos, or the disappeared. Argentina: A Country Study, ed. James D. Rudolph, Area Handbook Series (Washington, D.C., Foreign Area Studies, American University, 1986); Amnesty International 1981 Annual Report (London, Amnesty International, 1982); Lawrence Weschler, A Miracle, A Universe: Settling Accounts with Torturers (New York, Pantheon Books, 1990). These methods have since been spread to twenty-nine countries in the Western Hemisphere by Servicio Paz y Justicia (SERPAJ), the Latin American movement for peace and justice, founded by Pérez in Buenos Aires. Both al-Haq and Raja Shehadeh have won international recognition for their probity and conscientiousness.
'dialogue' between Palestinian and Israeli socialists. Just before the October 1973 war, Hawatmeh, at the time the only Palestinian leader of an armed faction with connexions to the Israeli left, put forth the concept of a state in the West Bank. Hawatmeh had, in 1969, founded the DPFLP, which, in that year, split from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), which had been founded in 1967. The DPFLP placed more credence in political rather than guerrilla activity. In June 1974, at the twelfth PNC meeting in Cairo, the DFLP advanced the notion of a Palestinian state alongside Israel that would occupy only a portion of Palestine. The DFLP's initiative was adopted by Fateh and Arafat, although the 1974 resolutions were obscurely worded—a 'national authority' on 'part of Palestinian land to be liberated'. Prior to establishing this benchmark, the goal of a 'secular democratic state' in all of Palestine, enunciated by Fateh in 1969, had predominated, with its implicit suggestion of the dismantling of Israel. Although using a formulation discernible only to the initiated, in the early 1970s the PLO had embarked on a route towards conceptualization of a state alongside Israel. 'The right of Jews to remain in Palestine was gradually asserting itself in Palestinian political thought', a French journalist notes.


127 Hawatmeh told John Cooley in 1971 of his contacts with Matzpen, Rakah (the Israeli communist party), and faculty and students at Hebrew University. Cooley, Green March, Black September, p. 143.


131 Alain Gresh, The PLO: The Struggle Within: Towards an Independent Palestinian State, tr. A. M. Berrett (London, Zed Books, 1985), p. 37. Gresh notes that the PLO position of a 'secular democratic state' is an interpretation; PLO documents do not use the word 'secular'. However implausibly, it was to be a state of Muslims, Jews, and Christians, defined in nonsectarian terms. Gresh, PLO: Struggle Within, revised edn, 1988, pp. 34–50.
crucial but circuitous change in 1974,

It was in the context of destroying Israel, but constituted a formal turning point. When the leadership marketed the 'national authority' theory, they did so in a package that made it look from an American or Western point of view unacceptable, because it was set up to 'destroy'. Yet, within the Palestinian context, the opposition knew exactly what it was about.

A 'new trajectory' established the idea of partitioning Palestine, although the term partition was not used and a programme for a two-state solution lacked clarity. The trend towards accepting the irreversibility of the Israeli state had been marked in permanent ink.

Moscow was also shifting towards endorsement of the formation of an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and starting to recognize the PLO as speaking for the Palestinian people. In the autumn of 1975, the communists in the occupied territories agreed with the JCP to organize the Palestinian Communist Organization (PCO) in the West Bank. Israel's own interests led the government to an appearance of subdued tolerance for the communists, because the party's ideology emphasized Israel's right to exist within its pre-1967 borders, and it derived support from both Arab and Israeli communists in Rakah, who were functioning within the Israeli political system. Having abandoned their long-held position supporting the binational state of the United Nations partition plan, and despite their shifting identity vis-à-vis the Jordanian question, the communists fundamentally

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132 Sari Nusseibeh, two-hour interview (East Jerusalem, 5 November 1994).


134 The period of 1968 to 1973 saw intensifying terrorism. With the 22 July 1968 hijacking of an El Al airliner to Algiers, the PFLP 'initiated the era of international Palestinian terrorism', with operations outside Israel. Merari and Elad, International Dimension of Palestinian Terrorism, pp. 5, 14. It was considered more important to prevent the struggle from slipping into oblivion than it was to attack the adversary, according to Gerard Chaliand, who writes that 'transnational terrorism was also an admission of powerlessness'. Gerard Chaliand, Terrorism: From Popular Struggle to Media Spectacle (London, Saqi Books, 1987), pp. 82, 88. Even at their peak (late 1967, and October 1969 to September 1970), the guerrillas were 'more of a psychological nuisance than military threat' to Israel. Cooley, Green March, Black September, p. 155.


hewed to a commitment to an independent Palestinian state and leaned towards political organizing.\textsuperscript{137} With the PLO and Fateh focusing on the ‘liberation’ of the whole of Palestine, and showing only nominal interest in political organizations on the ground, the communists had few serious competitors.\textsuperscript{138}

In 1982, the PCO announced a new, free-standing, and independent Palestine Communist party (PCP).\textsuperscript{139} In April 1987, the PCP would formally became part of the PLO’s Executive Committee, at the eighteenth meeting of the PNC in Cairo, although never having been part of the consent on the validity of armed struggle.\textsuperscript{140} After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the cold war, the PCP was renamed the People’s Party.

\section*{Communist Stimulation of Nonmilitary Organizing}

Although Fateh regarded itself as the ‘dominant ruling party’ in the PLO,\textsuperscript{141} after 1967 it came to believe that it would not be able to maintain that position by remaining a covert military organization in the occupied territories. Nusseibeh described the process:

Fateh had always been a military organization. The only people who were not military were the communists. Immediately after the 1967 war, the communists acted on the political front—in labour unions, grass-roots organizations, everywhere—and they were the driving force behind the formation of first the National Front and then the National Guidance Committee. They were trying to create ... a leadership here on the ground to represent the people. That always met with opposition from the PLO, because the PLO felt that the politicization of the movement—taking it inside, into the occupied territories—basically meant disempowering the PLO, which was outside and was a military organization.\textsuperscript{142}


\textsuperscript{138} Sahliyeh, \textit{Leadership}, p. 118.

\textsuperscript{139} Ibid., p. 97.

\textsuperscript{140} Gresh, ‘Palestinian Communists’, p. 35.


\textsuperscript{142} Nusseibeh, interview (5 November 1994).
In July 1973, 107 well-known Palestinians signed an appeal to the secretary-general of the United Nations demanding an end to the occupation and affirming their right to 'self-determination'. In August 1973, a Palestinian National Front was created as a coalition of groups and politicians to resist military occupation and to press for self-determination and the return of the refugees to their homes. Territories wide and clandestine, the multi-party National Front combined political activity with military-style operations. The October 1973 war, in which Egyptian and Syrian forces sustained battle against Israel, raised hopes in the occupied territories, even though the hostilities ended with Israeli forces astride the Suez Canal and in control of still more territory on the Golan Heights. After October, the National Front's politicians linked their call for recognition of the PLO with explicit demands for an independent state in the West Bank and Gaza. 'For the first time in the history of Palestine after 1948, there was a political unity between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank', 'Abd al-Jawad Saleh recalled. The front staged several instances of civil disobedience in the territories, although the mixing of political noncooperation on the one hand with acts of sabotage on the other held little potential for eliciting a positive response from Israel.

The National Front reflected the PLO's increasing emphasis on the occupied territories. Rivalry between the communists and Fateh heightened with the PLO's newfound focus, but it also laid a basis for cooperation with West Bank communists (although the relationship did not remain amicable for long). Having been routed during the upheaval of near civil war in

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146 Lesch, Political Perceptions, p. 55.
148 Muslih, 'Palestinian Civil Society', p. 263.
Jordan during Black September in 1970, the PLO had lost its ability to retain a military presence in that Arab state, which has the longest border with Israel. After moving to the refugee camps of Beirut and south Lebanon, where the absence of a cohesive central government and competition among confessional groups offered relative autonomy, the PLO decided to refocus its attention on the occupied territories. There, a battle ensued for control of the labour unions. Trade unions had been the domain of the communists since the 1920s, and a Palestine Arab Workers' Society had begun to operate in 1925. Throughout the 1940s, the Arab Workers' Congress was the largest union of Palestinian labourers, perhaps numbering 20,000. In 1972, at the tenth PNC meeting in Cairo, the first resolutions were passed calling for the organizing of trade unions and provisioning of resources and assistance to institutions and organizations in the occupied territories. When the DFLP and the PFLP took on the challenge of drawing the labour unions away from the communists and into the column of the PLO, they derived benefits from their ties to the PCP and also gained advantage from the rivalry between the PCP and Fateh. Fateh moved huge cash reserves into the resulting altercation during the late 1970s and early 1980s, the so-called war of the institutions. Although an August 1981 split resulted in two different General Federations of Trade Unions, Fateh ultimately won over the unions.

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151Rubenstein, *Communist Movement in Palestine and Israel*, p. 262.


The disputes between the PLO and the communists were numerous and bitter, based partly on Fateh's assumption that the communists were more interested in international Marxism than in Palestinian nationalism. Not only were the goals of the communists at issue, but so were their means.\(^{155}\) The PFLP, on the other hand, still holding to armed struggle with the goal of eliminating Israel, withdrew from the National Front as it began to support ideas of limited territorial compromise and international efforts to bring Arab and Israeli contestants to the peace table. The front, which fell apart, was the last multi-pronged effort in the occupied territories until early 1988, when a multi-party leadership unit would be set up to guide the intifada.

**Camp David**

In 1977, President Anwar al-Sadat of Egypt reversed Egyptian policy and flew to Israel for an official visit to the Knesset. On 17 September 1978, the Camp David accords were signed. By 29 March 1979, a formal peace treaty would be signed between Egypt and Israel. 'To allay Israel's stated fears, the option of a Palestinian state was . . . explicitly precluded' from the accords, William Quandt states.\(^{156}\) The Palestinians in the occupied territories were the central subject of the 'framework' in the Camp David accords, yet they had not been consulted, nor asked for their concurrence.\(^{157}\) Secretary of State Henry Kissinger had, in 1975,

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\(^{157}\) President Jimmy Carter later stated, 'When we negotiated the Camp David accords, . . . we did not give adequate attention to the needs, desires, yearnings, and problems of security relevant to Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and the Palestinians'. Jimmy Carter, 'The Middle East Consultation: A Look at the Future', *Middle East Journal* 42:2 (Spring 1988): 191. Regarding the exclusion of the Palestinians from Camp David, I have heard Carter say publicly, 'We did not intend to be presumptuous'. Aziz Shehadeh writes, in his August 1977 letter to Secretary Vance, with whom he and three others met 10 August, at the home of Moshe Dyan, 'We Palestinians must not be ignored in the search for peace. We must play a part in working out our own future'. (See Appendix 1.) On 29 September 1978, Shehadeh and other Palestinian luminaries, including Anwar Nusseibeh, father of Sari Nusseibeh, met with the State Department's Alfred Atherton and Harold Saunders days after the signing of the Camp David accords. Seeking to explore how to retrieve from the agreements some form of self-determination, the group was disappointed. Aronson, *Israel, Palestinians and the Intifada*, pp. 170, 182–4; Lesch, *Political Perceptions*, pp. 89–90.
defined a ban on official American contact with the PLO, and successive administrations had
elected to maintain it, arguing that the PLO did not represent the majority of Palestinians, was
committed to terrorism, and sought the destruction of Israel. Washington elected to consider
conversations with anyone from the PLO as the equivalent of negotiations with and
recognition of the PLO.\textsuperscript{158}

Prime Minister Menachem Begin’s plan for Palestinian ‘autonomy’ was perceived by
the Palestinians from its first proposal in December 1977 as ‘a scheme for continued
occupation under a more permanent guise’.\textsuperscript{159} Although the framework offered lip-service on
self-rule, it did not recognize the Palestinians as a people with rights to self-determination,
and the accords seemed to deepen Israel’s control of the territories, while encouraging an
‘Israeli-American preference for resolving the Palestine question without the Palestinians, and
largely at their expense’.\textsuperscript{160} The West Bank and Gaza are only the ‘rump’ of Palestine,
diplomat Anwar Nusseibeh told Ann Mosely Lesch, yet ‘we are denied even that rump’.\textsuperscript{161}

Between 1 October and 7 November 1978, the Israeli authorities allowed four public
meetings to be organized throughout the territories at which Palestinians were able to voice
their dismay about the provisions of the accords. The final assembly, on 7 November in
Nablus, was attended by five thousand people, after which the military government reasserted
its ban on political gatherings.\textsuperscript{162} From that point on, public meetings in townships ceased,
and political expression moved underground, although occasional demonstrations occurred.\textsuperscript{163}

\textsuperscript{158}William B. Quandt, ‘The Uprising: Breaking a Ten-Year Deadlock’, paper delivered at the 8
December 1988 conference of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, D.C.,

\textsuperscript{159}Aronson, Israel, Palestinians and the Intifada, p. 179.

\textsuperscript{160}Rashid Khalidi, ‘The Palestine Liberation Organization’, The Middle East: Ten Years after Camp
261–78.

\textsuperscript{161}Lesch, Political Perceptions, p. 12.

\textsuperscript{162}Ibid., p. 13. Article 1, Military Proclamation 101, 27 August 1967, on p. 27 en35.

\textsuperscript{163}Lesch, Political Perceptions, p. 13.
A resolution had been adopted at the 1 October session calling for the creation of a National Guidance Committee to coordinate opposition to the 'autonomy' provisions in the Camp David accords. Formed before the end of the year, it was comprised of nine of the mayors who had been democratically elected in the 1976 municipal elections and some women's and students' organizations. Israeli authorities, according to Don Peretz, viewed the committee as 'an "arm of the PLO", responsible for "subversive activity", "political and ideological violence", and "deterioration of the security situation".' The leftist sympathies of the committee perturbed moderates in the PLO, while the communists would have preferred a more militant stance against Israeli military authorities.

The belief of the communists in popular governance and organizing of community-level institutions as the best means of preparing for independence dovetailed with the need to safeguard against Israeli military intrusion into political activities. The organizing of civilian Palestinian groups took place under the rubric of social or cultural agencies and societies, rather than under the usual covert cellular procedures of the established Palestinian factions. Maintaining the appearance of gathering for nonpolitical purposes, local Palestinian women's, sports, cultural, and youth clubs or federations were organized. 'By the mid-seventies it was becoming very clear that there was a large sector that was still unmobilized even at the political level, and actually it was the women who discovered this fact', according to Rita Giacaman. 'A women's movement emerged that was trying to go to the villages...'

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164 The balloting was carried out with the consent of Israel, which hoped to identify alternatives to the increasingly popular PLO, and was similar to elections allowed in some cities in 1972.


166 Sahliyeh, *Leadership*, p. 76.

instead of expecting the villages to come to it'. Literacy classes, nursery schools and kindergartens, day care, and sewing workshops run by women’s committees in refugee camps and villages seemed innocuous, yet they were avenues through which their members learned the rudiments of democratic self-governance and became part of the process of building a civil society. From 1978 onwards, after the first such women’s committee formed in Ramallah, a generation of women developed who were ‘capable of full participation in political life’.

By 1979, the Union of Palestinian Medical Relief Committees (UPMRC) was offering health services to refugee and village neighbourhoods, with the additional demand that local committees be organized to establish community priorities and support the clinics. With health professionals volunteering their time, ‘the effect was electric’. Having started with ten professionals, by 1988 there were seven hundred clinicians serving fifty thousand patients. Of these, 52 per cent of the health union’s members were women, as were 32 per cent of its physicians. The union ‘neither applied to the [Israeli] authorities for permission to operate, nor was it willing to admit to the need for such authorization for action to begin’. Collateral efforts in trade union organizing simultaneously led to a revival of the labour movement.

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172McDowall, The Palestinians, p. 97.


174Hiltermann, Behind the Intifada, p. 65.
The structure and capacity for 'new patterns of struggle' had begun to crystallize.\textsuperscript{175} It has been acknowledged in the literature that developments occurred within Palestinian society during the ten-year period prior to the December 1987 outburst of the intifada,\textsuperscript{176} yet, as will continue to be borne out here, a more accurate estimate would be closer to twenty years.

**Fateh Broadens Its Political Programme**

Since its founding in 1964, the PLO had placed limited emphasis on popular mass organizing. It established a programme of regional offices across the Arab world, \textit{al-tanzim al-sha'bi}, or popular organizing, although Arab opposition to its democratic slant and its policy of conducting a census of Palestinians living in the host Arab states caused the effort to fail.\textsuperscript{177} Despite its doubts, the PLO was by the mid-1970s emphasizing mass mobilization by establishing new entities and reinvigorating existing ones, in addition to its customary military cohorts. By the late 1970s, the cumulative effects of the National Front, the electoral campaigns of 1976, and the National Guidance Committee—although limited in purpose and never able to organize a coherent programme based on the voicing of objections to the Camp David accords\textsuperscript{178}—had reinforced Fateh's perception that focusing solely on military activities could cause it to lose politically. Political organizations came to be viewed as the best offence for coping with opposition from the communists.\textsuperscript{179} Factions politically to the left in the PLO—principally the DFLP and PFLP—stepped into the front ranks of those

\textsuperscript{175}Hillel Schenker, 'To Channel This Energy', interview of Azmi Bishara, associate professor of philosophy, Bir Zeit University, \textit{New Outlook}, August 1988, p. 18.

\textsuperscript{176}Hiltermann, \textit{Behind the Intifada}, p. 4.


\textsuperscript{178}Aronson, \textit{Israel, Palestinians and the Intifada}, p. 195.

\textsuperscript{179}Nusseibeh, interview (5 November 1994).
leading popular mobilization in the occupied territories. Fateh followed, and eventually took the lead, although remaining ambivalent about mass organizing. According to Musa Budeiri, the DFLP and the PFLP, ‘chased the communists and started aping them, then Fateh joined them’. To Budeiri, the communists always used traditional methods of mass organizing of women, students, and trade unions, in order to ‘channel people’s energies’, and to build their own organization, because this was a way of winning members. In a sense, the communists had no choice about the way they moved. The left-wing groups, like the Democratic Front and the Popular Front, started to copy them, a) because they weren’t getting very far with armed struggle, and b) they realized that Israel also distinguished between two kinds of activities—why they put people into gaol for three life sentences for using an explosive. The realization was seeping in here that [the territories] were an important arena.

Fateh’s vacillation over political mobilization and preference for guerrilla strategies may have been partially geographic and partly related to class. The movement had scant support among the West Bank political élites, and although Fateh had a number of intellectuals at its helm, many of the party’s founders came from more modest backgrounds, and some had been born in Gaza or western Palestine, which was generally poorer than the West Bank. Fateh was more ‘proletarian’ than the more ‘radical’ PFLP or DFLP. As the main military corpus of the PLO, and having antedated its formation, Fateh had become the PLO’s principal party because of its nationalist approach and ‘acute disdain toward


181 Musa Budeiri, professor of political science at al-Quds University, one-hour interview (East Jerusalem, 28 January 1996).

182 Ibid.


185 According to Laqueur, in military bases outside the occupied territories in 1975, the PFLP had 500 combatants, the DFLP 300, while Fateh had ‘between 10,000 and 15,000 under arms’. Ibid., p. 191.
The vague political content of Fateh’s doctrines was not accidental. Its ideologists said that the goal was to bring together all revolutionary forces involved in the struggle for the liberation of Palestine and discouraged ‘Byzantine discussions’ concerning the social infrastructure after liberation. Its aims were stated so as to appeal to the left and the right, domestically and internationally. A former commando writes, ‘It was a fighting organisation in a time when others only talked about the theories of war’.

To the extent that Fateh and the PLO in the diaspora had an architect for a policy of civilian mobilization, it was Khalil al-Wazir, whose nom de guerre was Abu Jihad. Second-in-command of the PLO and in charge of the occupied territories, Abu Jihad played a catalytic role in supporting the surge of politicization and served as the main link between the PLO and local groups that would be involved in creating an organizational infrastructure for the intifada. As if personifying the larger Palestinian strategic debate, he was in charge of Fateh’s military efforts inside the territories, while endorsing the concept of a political direction. When the June 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon and evacuation of the PLO leadership from Beirut and Tripoli in August (after seventy days of fighting) made the military option even more remote, Abu Jihad embraced more fully the hypothesis of mass movement.

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188 Laqueur, Terrorism, p. 193.

190 Nusseibeh, interview (5 November 1994). In an interview, Abu Jihad described how his family had been expelled from Ramle, near Lydda, lost to IDF armoured units led by Major Moshe Dayan on 11 July 1948. Khalil al-Wazir, one-hour interview (Tunis, 14 October 1984). His account coincided with Michael Palumbo’s chronicle based on IDF records, The Palestinian Catastrophe: The 1948 Expulsion of a People from Their Homeland (London, Faber and Faber, 1987), pp. 126–38, 204–5, in which Ramle experienced brutal mass civilian deaths.
political organizing in the occupied territories: ¹⁹¹

He helped, as much as possible, to make those grass-roots movements grow and didn’t really care about how many, or where, or how efficient ... he helped everybody who came to him with a proposal to set up anything. He used to pour money into it. He knew that most of the money would probably be squandered on the way, but he used to say that even if a trickle reached [the people], that would be a major achievement ... he wanted people to set themselves up—unions, student groups, federations—on every level. ¹⁹²

Fateh’s success became linked to its ability to rebase itself in the territories after the 1982 débâcle in Lebanon. Although among PLO factions Fateh had been the latecomer to political organizing, once decided, it led the initiative. Fateh cadres ‘tipped the balance and mobilized the majority of West Bank and Gaza communities into conscious participation in the nationalist political effort’. ¹⁹³ Scale was involved, according to Bassam Abu-Sharif:

The communists, from 1967, started it, but when Fateh and the Popular Front [PFLP] adopted civilian mobilization, in 1973, in one year they did much more than the communists had done because they were more able. I am not saying that the communists are not able. Where Abu Jihad would have a budget of 20 million dollars for the West Bank and Gaza, the communists wouldn’t have 20 thousand dollars. ... Abu Jihad managed to build a network of social organizations and civil work that the communists would never have been able to do—clinics in the camps, clubs, football teams. ¹⁹⁴

Fateh ‘could not remain aloof of the natural tendency of local Palestinians living under prolonged occupation to establish institutions of their own in order ... to ameliorate their conditions’. ¹⁹⁵

The mass organizations formed during the 1970s and 1980s thus often had connexions to the main factions of the PLO, whose social depth and heraldic identification was

¹⁹¹ Cobban, ‘The PLO and the Intifada’, p. 82.

¹⁹² Nusseibeh, interview (5 November 1994).


indisputable. While fida'iyyun units were by definition specialized, small, and secret, the most prominent feature of the civilian organizations is that they were nonmilitary, or nonviolent, and involved large numbers. The civil society groups worked to address concrete material needs, preserve cultural traditions, raise political consciousness, build social-welfare institutions, develop free-standing and often highly representative institutions, and to embody the perspective of the Palestinians under occupation whenever possible in international fora.

**Antecedents to the Intifada**

The intifada was preceded by a series of upheavals. Five separate tributaries of civilian mobilization in the occupied territories will be considered here, all of which contribute to the emerging civil society and its course towards the uprising of 1987.

**Voluntary Work Committees**

After 1967, among the first civil society organizations to be formed were volunteer work committees associated with the Community Work Programme of Bir Zeit College. Although the initiative for creating these committees came from the PCP, they were not party...

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196 The decentralized 'loose amalgamation of parallel organizations and cadres' not only enabled it to weather arrests and deportations, its leaders were less threatening to the PLO than were the charismatic figures in the earlier National Guidance Committee, and were often affiliated with external PLO factions. Meir Litvak, ‘Inside Versus Outside: The Challenge of the Local Leadership, 1967–1994’, *The PLO and Israel: From Armed Conflict to Political Solution, 1964–1994*, ed. Avraham Sela and Moshe Ma’oz (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1997), p. 179.

197 A journalist retroactively confirmed this dimension: ‘Until the 1970s the PLO was principally involved in the armed struggle against Israel. That meant harnessing the energies of a tiny fraction of the Palestinian population to launch guerrilla attacks. But since then . . . the PLO has broadened its base, unified its operational commands, and cemented tactical alliances in the territories. Starting in the early 1980s, PLO factions began sinking deeper roots at the local level, expanding grass-roots organizing and labor unions, university and student councils, women's organizations and volunteer groups’. George D. Moffett III, ‘PLO Shows It Can Capitalize on Unrest: Deeper Roots in Occupied Lands Help Build Loyalties’, *Christian Science Monitor*, 31 December 1987.

198 Bir Zeit College has its origins in the 1920s as a secondary school. Having been a two-year college in the 1960s, after 1967 it became the first Palestinian institution of higher learning in the occupied territories, and after being made into a four-year institution, during the academic year 1975–6 became Bir Zeit University.
organizations. They were nonpartisan institutions in which participants of any persuasion were welcome; ‘tens of thousands of people participated in the voluntary committees in the 1970s, the vast majority of them not party members’, Ghassan Khatib noted. The programme began in 1972, and as Lisa Taraki has pointed out, numerous leaders of the student, labour union, and women’s movements of the late 1970s and 1980s received their introduction into national politics through this local movement. Teachers and professors at schools and colleges in the Ramallah and al-Bireh area came together in 1972 under the sponsorship of ‘Abd al-Jawad Saleh, then mayor of al-Bireh, for meetings in the public libraries of both towns. A participating mathematics teacher recalled, ‘The mayors of Ramallah and al-Bireh encouraged us to use the public libraries and facilities of their municipalities for our activities. . . . The whole country was suffering from neglect; volunteer work in refugee camps and villages would be appropriate’. Participants planned work programmes and discussed the works of Arab and international literary or political figures. By the end of 1973, committees had begun to form in Nablus, Hebron, and Jericho to plan projects of manual labour, including the building of roads, agricultural reclamation, and help for farmers during the harvest. The effort gained momentum after the 1976 elections in the West Bank, when leaders invited the involvement of work camp participants in municipal upkeep. Some let the students in the voluntary programme work alongside the regular public works staff in municipal projects. The volunteers were soon running literacy programmes in refugee camps and villages.

Saleh is explicit in attributing the foundation for the intifada to such predecessor movements of the 1970s: ‘Not only the voluntary work movement, but other movements,

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199 Khatib, interview (15 December 1997).


201 ‘Institution Building on the West Bank’ (Siham Barghuti), in Najjar and Warnock, Portraits, pp. 126–7.
mass organizations, were really the backbone of the intifada. And without it, without its spirit, without its mobilization, [the uprising] might have broken, but not with its intensity and continuity. Emanations of the coming intifada could be seen in two distinctive features of the voluntary work committees: the intermingling of the sexes and validation of manual or agricultural work. Men and women worked alongside each other in the first community effort to bring young men and women together. As al-Bireh’s mayor, Saleh was criticized for departing from tradition:

In one of the mosques, the movement was condemned because of this. So I went to the shaykh and told him, ‘Why don’t you protest against labourers going to work in Israel? ... You never shouted against [labourers working in Israel] as you have shouted against people working for their own country’... The next Friday, he preached in favour of voluntary work... My own sister said, ‘Brother, it is a great shame that you are working with these girls; people will talk against you’.

Manual labour was encouraged to break the class and social barriers between physical labour and intellectual work, and to span the isolation of towns and rural areas. For example, volunteers from Ramallah and Bir Zeit held a two-week work camp in the Hebron area, which resulted in the secluded hamlet of Udaysa becoming connected by a feeder road to Hebron, and thereby to the world beyond its village gates. ‘We were aware that by doing physical labor we were making a statement that all work, including manual labor, is valuable’, commented a participant who worked with her sister to repair the playground of al-Ama’ari refugee camp school run by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNWRA). ‘We wielded shovels and shared the work equally [with the men], and, eventually, other women joined us.’ Whether on foot or on tractors,

201 Abd al-Jawad Saleh, two-hour interview (Ramallah and al-Bireh, 16 June 1995).
203 Saleh, interview (16 June 1995).
entire villages took part: ‘children, women, men, old people, traditional people, students, teachers . . . reclaiming the land’. Its nationalist intentions, Saleh said, were indisputable:

We started it as . . . a way to work back to the land, preserve our identity, and to be able to resist the occupation. That’s why . . . it spread all over. . . . We also started a committee to rehabilitate the victims of war . . . and I was the first mayor to get permission . . . to have food, fruits, and sweets brought to the prisoners. The whole town was involved—Ramallah and al-Bireh—and it was really fantastic. . . . A traditional mayor saw me working with them and he told me, ‘You brought shame to us, working with these sick people’. . . . It was revolutionary, not accepted by some personalities who look at office as something not spiritual but for status, not serving the people.

Among the impediments faced by this civil society movement was the apparent interest of Israeli officials in inhibiting such a development of national consciousness. *Mukhtars* were turned against the programme, military check-points were set up near work sites to deter volunteers or deny them access, and the fact that Palestinian mayors were working with local women was sensationaly advertised by the Israeli authorities. As the movement began to spread, Saleh was deported on 10 December 1973. Representatives from Nablus called on him the very morning of his expulsion, before he had been informed of the deportation proceedings, to ask how to build a voluntary work movement there. After ten years in exile, he observed, ‘We formulated . . . a new form of struggle: voluntary work and a movement of nonviolent struggle against military occupation. The Israelis considered this very dangerous. . . . [T]his nonviolent struggle might be the basis for political movement in the West Bank.

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207Ibid.

208Saleh, interview (16 June 1995).


210When Saleh was allowed to return from exile in Jordan twenty years later, he became actively involved in the Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence and its offshoot, the Palestinian Centre for Democracy and Elections, both in East Jerusalem.

After the deportation of Saleh, the voluntary work committees lost their national orientation and became divided along party lines, such that Fateh had its own committees and the communists had theirs. Increasing factionalism beset West Bank organizing, and political competition began to lessen cooperation while, at the same time, paradoxically increasing the numbers of local committees, although on a decidedly less utopian basis. By 1980, a Higher Committee for Voluntary Work had been established to coordinate among the thirty-seven local committees and their 1,200 members. By 1982, only two years later, 6,500 participants from ninety-six local voluntary committees had recovered 6,000 dunums of land, had planted 34,000 fig and olive saplings, and had retrofitted innumerable water pipes and sewage lines and fixed countless roads. While literacy remained a focus, during the 1980s the committees also sought to bolster Palestinian land management and agriculture, with the purpose of rendering confiscation by Israel of supposedly neglected or untended land a more complicated matter.

University Student Movements of the Late 1970s

Student political activism—one of the few forms of political activism allowed by Israeli military authorities—increased as university students saw a way to assume a major role in West Bank politics. The trend, although not immediate, coalesced during the first decade of occupation. By the late 1970s, student political activity had become a proxy for the normal

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212 Saleh, interview (16 June 1995). Frisch’s analysis complements Saleh’s account and Taraki’s analysis. Although Frisch seeks to prove the emergence of a robotic, in-bred command in the intifada, subordinated to hierarchical and ideological factional controls, he acknowledges the ‘insulation from outside influences’ of such organizations as the Shabiba committees for social work, the communist voluntary work committees, and four women’s groups associated with the communists, DFLP, PFLP, and Fateh. Frisch, ‘Middle Command’, p. 261.

213 Robinson, Building a Palestinian State, p. 30.

214 Ibid., p. 29. In 1982, a member of a voluntary work committee described its purpose as ‘providing what is necessary for residents during strikes, to advise people, and to help them set up popular committees’. Daoud Kuttab, ‘Ramallah and al-Bireh Resident Clean Up’, al-Fajr, 9–15 April 1982, p. 11.

215 Sahliyeh, Leadership, p. 117.
political impulses of a civil society. Bir Zeit University, twelve miles north of Ramallah, described by al-Ayyam as the ‘backbone and main foundation’ of student activism, became a meeting place for protagonists from every conceivable political tendency; its vox populi was demonstrated beyond doubt when it was singled out as one of the first targets in a crackdown after the Camp David accords. Bir Zeit graduated thousands of Palestinians who would form a generation of youthful popular leaders. At new West Bank universities in Bethlehem and al-Najah, and at a college newly built in Hebron, student activism went hand in hand with the growth of academia, and it often resulted in the punitive closure of such institutions by Israeli military authorities for weeks or months:

The level of political consciousness among Palestinians living under Israeli occupation is unmatched in the Arab world. . . . They learn the names of PLO leaders before they have learned to read and . . . can tell you the difference between Zionism and Judaism. . . . Soldiers, batons, tear gas, rubber bullets, arrest, torture, curfews, closure of entrances, administrative detention, and town arrest are all part of the refugee camp’s daily dictionary. . . . From early in life, young Palestinians learn the language of resistance.

While symbolic identification with the PLO was strong, it was not by fiat, and was usually based on what was learned at the hearth. By the mid-1970s, student political groups were being set up to represent the various factions within the PLO. These were increasingly put together openly, with an emphasis on networking between the factions that is remembered as surprisingly cooperative; contests among the different political factions were visible in the universities by the late 1970s, with ‘elections among the various factions, clubs, or societies,

216 Azmy Bishara, one-hour interview (East Jerusalem, 17 June 1995). Bishara heads the Department of Cultural Studies at Bir Zeit. In the Middle East, historian Walter Laqueur notes, ‘The intelligentsia is numerically small, and the weight of the students, frequently the only organized body considering the absence of political parties in the Western sense, is consequently great’. Laqueur, Communism and Nationalism, p. 14.


218 Daoud Kuttab, draft of ‘Stonethrowers’, prior to editing, East Jerusalem, Kuttab private papers. Also see Daoud Kuttab, ‘A Profile of the Stonethrowers’, Journal of Palestine Studies 67 (Spring 1988).
with people presenting themselves as Fateh, Popular Front, Democratic Front, or whatever’, Sari Nusseibeh recalled. This was ‘a major step from Fateh’s point of view because ... in the occupied territories at least, Fateh looked upon itself as secret, clandestine, military ... with a cellular military structure’. 219

Until the 1967 war, student politics had been ‘sporadic, event-oriented, and reactive only to major political developments’. 220 Palestinian students were ideally suited for political mobilization. They saw themselves as agents for modernization. 221 Not only did they have time on their hands, but they lacked sufficient maturity to translate their political energies into power centres that could challenge the diaspora leadership. 222 Significant, if small, movements comprised of students who represented perhaps half of the population of the West Bank and Gaza, therefore, were able to set up, in Nusseibeh’s words, ‘a good network, a collectivity, and could wreak havoc throughout the West Bank and Gaza’. This they did, particularly during the years 1980 to 1982: ‘The primary actors were the student activists. ... You brought things into existence ... by organizing. If you wanted a town to go on strike, you went there, and asked the mayor ... to be involved. I’ve done it myself, personally, from the north to the south, asking people to show solidarity with us’. 223

A gap between the expansion of educational opportunity and a lack of jobs underscored the political activism. 224 In proportionally huge numbers after 1967, Palestinians entered high schools and universities. In West Bank secondary schools in 1969 there were 17,682 students; six years later, there were 33,487. In the Gaza Strip, the number of

219Nusseibeh, interview (5 November 1994).
220Sahliyeh, Leadership, p. 117.
221Ibid., p. 124.
223Nusseibeh, interview (5 November 1994).
224Mishal and Aharoni, Speaking Stones, p. 4.
secondary school students rose from 11,252 to 17,252 during the same period.\textsuperscript{225} When the Israelis occupied the territories in 1967, no universities existed, only post-secondary colleges. From a few hundred students enrolled in teacher-training and vocational institutes in 1968, the numbers in small Palestinian colleges and, later, universities had, by 1983, risen to 16,997.\textsuperscript{226} By the following year, seven accredited universities were awarding degrees, and an additional seven teachers' colleges were functioning. In Gaza, a branch of Cairo's al-Azhar University opened; later, the Islamic University was established, plus a teachers' college. Yet the jobs available were mainly manual labour stints in Israeli construction, industry, or services.\textsuperscript{227} A youthful population mixed with endemic underemployment (or unemployment), and made more palpable by increasing educational opportunity, combined to create conditions conducive to popular participation.

Demographic shifts during the first decade of the Israeli occupation had seen the population of the West Bank and Gaza Strip rise by nearly 19 per cent, and during the following ten years, this figure increased by another 20 per cent. The population of 586,000 in the West Bank rose to 696,000 by 1977, and to 836,000 by 1986; the population in Gaza grew from 381,000 to 451,000 by 1977, and to 545,000 in 1986. The figure of greatest interest for our purposes is that by the mid-1980s, fully one-half the Palestinian population in the West Bank and Gaza was fourteen years of age or younger, and an additional one-third was between fifteen and thirty-four years of age.\textsuperscript{228} Thus, four-fifths of the population of the occupied territories had some education and was of high youthful energy, but facing deadening, bleak futures. By 1986, an estimated 7,000 Palestinians with thirteen years or more of education were yearly searching for jobs. As many as 10,000 university graduates


\textsuperscript{227}Lederman, 'Interpreting the Intifada', p. 233.

\textsuperscript{228}Mishal and Aharoni, \textit{Speaking Stones}, p. 1.
may have been unemployed in 1984, three years before the eruption of the *intifada*.

**Struggles against Israeli Military Orders 854 and 947**

The territories edged towards open revolt when Israeli Military Order 854 was promulgated on 6 July 1980. With this order, the Israelis granted themselves broad powers to restrict academic freedom. Amending a 1964 Jordanian law on education and culture, order 854 brought institutions of higher learning under the purview of the law, imposing upon them restrictions that were usually placed only on elementary and high schools. The order gave the military authorities complete control in the licensing of teachers and institutions, supervision of curricula and textbooks, and decisions over who could be admitted to university. Already roiling against the occupation, the student movements intensified their fervour. Sari Nusseibeh had recently returned home from education abroad, joined the cultural studies faculty at Bir Zeit, and taught a course in Islamic philosophy as a visiting lecturer at the Hebrew University for one year. The next year, while still at Bir Zeit, he was also asked to teach the history of philosophy at the Hebrew University. To Nusseibeh, it was a very hard-core time. . . . Military Order 854 . . . was in direct confrontation with us—straightforward infringement of academic freedom. One of the first conferences held [by the faculty at Bir Zeit] on this order was as a faculty union in 1980 or 1981. . . . [T]he faculty union I belonged to and the student movement combined was perhaps the power in the occupied territories—far more than anything later, even the organization of Fateh. I was a founding member of the Higher Committee of Fateh, but we [in the faculty union during 1981 and 1982] had far more power because of the students.

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230 Raja Shehadeh, *Occupier’s Law: Israel and the West Bank* (Washington, D.C., Institute for Palestine Studies; 1985), p. 171. What incensed educators in the autumn of 1982 was the requirement of a ‘loyalty oath’, whereby all teachers not holding militarily issued identity cards (even if they had been born in the territories) would agree not to provide ‘direct or indirect’ support to the PLO or any other ‘terrorist’ organization. If signed, it included the duty to report on conversations inside and outside the classroom deemed to support such an organization. Having refused to sign, more than twenty-five lecturers from al-Najah University and nineteen from Bir Zeit were either barred from teaching or deported. Ibid., pp. 171–2.

231 Sari Nusseibeh, two-hour interview (Jerusalem, 13 December 1997); idem, two-hour interview (East Jerusalem, 28 January 1996).
Universities were crucial in the 'strategy of building embryonic institutions of power in the occupied territories', Palestinian sociologist Salim Tamari notes, because they were viewed as 'institutional components of future power, so that a Palestinian state... [would] not arrive in a vacuum' and would have its own political and civic institutions to sustain it. Relations between the military authorities and the universities, in Meron Benvenisti's words, were tense:

Stringent enforcement measures in response to what Israel considered acts of sedition, Benvenisti notes, only served to heighten frustration and resistance, thus inviting, in turn, harsher reprisal. Regardless, the fight against 854 was 'consciously conceived as a civilian struggle', and viewed against the subsequent uprising, it could be seen as a major episode in a process of building continuous resistance, one of a series of 'parabolic waves'. In this emerging civil society, some Palestinians demonstrated, got arrested, or advocated civil disobedience; the insurrectionary spirits of others were expressed in nationalist folklore, songs, and pamphleteering.

A year after the issuance of order 854, a Likud initiative undertaken by Prime Minister Begin further intensified popular mobilization. In response to the proposals for 'autonomy' of the West Bank and Gaza Strip associated with the Camp David accords, Israeli Military Order 947 was formally promulgated in November 1981, establishing a 'civilian administration' to

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address the ‘civilian affairs of the inhabitants’. Much as the British had done in 1920 when Sir Herbert Louis Samuel became high commissioner, the Israelis instituted a ‘civil administration’ that gave its military government the ruse of a civilian facade. It was aptly termed by two Israeli authors ‘one of those subtle devices that has enabled Israel simultaneously to practice occupation and to deny it. . . . Conceived as a foil to both the letter and the spirit of the Military Government, though still strictly a part of it’.

The military government delegated some of its powers to a system of ‘Village Leagues’, established by the Israelis three years earlier and supplanting the Village Councils created by Jordan in 1954; of such councils, ninety-six had been operating on the eve of the 1967 war. Regarding the Village Leagues, Raja Shehadeh observes,

> Israel was trying to save face by implementation of its version of the ‘autonomy’ plan and needed the presence of a local group through which it could claim popular acquiescence. . . . Members of the leagues are armed with sub-machine guns provided by the Israeli army and are trained by the army in the use of these weapons. Most [members] are recruited from the lowest rank of society and from amongst society’s outcasts. . . . [T]he leagues were meant to be developed into an army militia which would support the central Israeli policy of encouraging the emigration of the Palestinians from the West Bank . . . by making life intolerable.

Village mukhtars were advised by military authorities that requests to the Israeli government needed to be approved by the leagues, which also procured and dispensed favours

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241 Shehadeh, *Occupier’s Law*, pp. 174–6; David Richardson, ‘Leagues Out of Their Depth’, *Jerusalem Post*, 19 March 1982, as cited in ibid, p. 206 en69. Richardson is quoted as saying 200 were armed and trained.
for those who opposed the PLO.242 These associations were strengthened when General Ariel Sharon became Israeli defence minister and in 1981 sought to turn rural areas against the PLO-allied larger towns.243 In the autumn of 1981, Ramallah mayor Karim Khalaf, an attorney in the West Bank judiciary before becoming politically active, declared a policy of nonrecognition and noncooperation in regard to order 947: ‘This is being done against our will, and we shall not bow to coercion. No one will answer the call to work for such an administration, because that would amount to recognition of the Israeli occupation’.244 As 947 was implemented in November 1981, Don Peretz notes, the residents of the occupied territories were near ‘full-scale insurrection’.245

Civil rebellion broke out against the occupation, during 1981 and 1982, with burning tyres, throwing of stones, demonstrations, and casualties exacerbated by the provocation of Israeli soldiers posted throughout the refugee camps. ‘The line had been stretched so thin that something would break’, Nusseibeh said, and ‘previews of the intifada’ were everywhere; in fact, the term intifada was being used by Palestinians for approximately three years prior to the start of the December 1987 uprising.246 An Israeli policy of purging the local Palestinian leadership of PLO supporters was evident as Palestinian leadership was expelled, collective punishments were imposed on villages and refugee camps,247 and Palestinian economic life

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242 Aronson, Israel, Palestinians and the Intifada, pp. 250–51.


245 Peretz, Intifada, p. 16.

246 Nusseibeh, interview (5 November 1994).

247 Employed by the British to crush the ‘great revolt’, the Israelis have maintained the practice of demolishing homes. See Lynn Welchman, A Thousand and One Homes: Israel’s Demolition and Sealing of Houses in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Occasional Paper no. 11 (Ramallah, al-Haq, 1993), pp. 5–49. For a firsthand account of Israeli demolition of a Palestinian home in Beit Sahour in 1981—a response to a teenager’s throwing of a stone at an Israeli vehicle—see ‘Encounters with Occupation Authorities’ (Salima Kumsiya), in Najjar and Warnock, Portraits, pp. 105–19. More than 2,500 Palestinian homes have been demolished by Israel since 1967, according to witness groups on the West Bank that use the nonviolent technique of ‘accompaniment’. They claim that 239 Palestinian homes in East Jerusalem alone were
was marginalized, further disenfranchising the population. All the while the society was being bureaucratically enmeshed with myriad and often conflicting military orders—1,250 in force in the West Bank and another 900 in Gaza. In March 1982, Palestinian casualties heightened, as Israeli chief of staff Raphael Eitan increased personal and collective punishments. At the same time, the authorities were offering Israeli settlers in the occupied territories more licence. Ze‘ev Schiff, Ha‘Aretz military correspondent, is quoted by Geoffrey Aronson in describing a 21 April demonstration as without parallel: ‘The demonstrators are not afraid as they were in the past’.

On 1 May, a statement was issued by twenty-five Palestinian West Bank towns threatening to close down municipal services unless the Israeli administration was abolished and the deported mayors elected in 1976 were allowed to return. The Likud government interpreted the ‘mini-intifada’ of 1981–2 as having been instigated and organized by the PLO, and the popular civil rebellion became the principal rationale for Israeli’s 1982 invasion of 

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248 Al-Haq, Punishing a Nation, p. 4.

249 Peretz, Intifada, p. 17. Arms were readily available to Israeli armed settler groups from two primary sources: military weapons and ordinance were distributed to soldiers studying at Israeli yeshivas where such armed groups were strong, and firearms were offered under wraps to settler activists by sympathetic army personnel. Aronson, Israel, Palestinians and the Intifada, p. 206.

250 Aronson, Israel, Palestinians and the Intifada, p. 291.

251 Attempts at assassination—apparently by Israeli groups advocating forcible expulsion of all Arabs from Eretz Israel and with the evident knowledge of the authorities—were made on three mayors: Bassam Shaka, Karim Khalaf, and Ibrahim Attawil. Shaka’s legs were amputated after a bomb detonated in his car. Khalaf lost a foot to a bomb and died of gangrene. Attawil found an explosive device in his car and escaped. Mayors Mohammad Milhern and Fahd Qawasmeh were deported. Others were removed from office in one way or another. Aronson, Israel, Palestinians and the Intifada, pp. 166–7, 192–6, 202, 205–11, 225, 240, 278, passim. In November 1979, twenty-one West Bank mayors resigned from their posts to protest deportation proceedings against Shaka, but reversed their action when his deportation order was cancelled. Ibid., p. 194.
Lebanon, the major purpose of which was to destroy the PLO.252 The war and the PLO's removal from Lebanon would come to be viewed as a 'turning point, the watershed that led to the intifada' because 'all of the political, economic, and moral resources of the Palestinian people began to be channelled into the occupied territories, which became the last arena for direct confrontation'.253 The massacre of between 1,000 to 2,000 Palestinians in Lebanese refugee camps at Sabra and Shatila, at the hands of Phalangist forces on 16 September 1982,254 broadened the ranks of those who became active. The leadership of grass-roots committees offered a 'new Palestinianism' and won more support from a broad cross section of the populace.255 Sharon was forced to resign, and news of the slaughter led more than 400,000 Israelis to gather in a demonstration in Tel Aviv led by the Israeli peace group Shalom Achshav, or Peace Now.256

As Palestinians came to realize that the military occupation would not soon be lifted, as initially thought, 'a new social infrastructure' was being erected.257 The historical

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253 Schenker, 'To Channel This Energy', p. 18.
254 Israeli defence minister Ariel Sharon allowed Phalangist commanders into the refugee camps of West Beirut in expanded Israeli operations to control Lebanon and expel the PLO. Sharon may have warned the Phalange forces against attacks on civilian noncombatants, but the Israeli army is now widely believed to have barricaded the camps of Sabra and Shatila and created a path of entry for the Phalangists. If the Israeli soldiers reported their concerns of a massacre, nothing was done in response. Ze'ev Schiff says he learned of the massacre while it was underway and rushed to inform Mordechai Zippori, then minister of communications in Menachem Begin's cabinet. Zippori, in turn, told foreign minister Yitzhak Shamir, and criticizes Shamir for ignoring this information. Ze'ev Schiff, 'Most Likely, Begin Was Fooling Himself', *Ha'aretz*, 17 December 1997, p. 7, English edn, book review of Mordechai Zippori, *In a Straight Line* (Tel Aviv, Yedioth Ahronoth Books, 1997). Rather than a 'search for "terrorists"', Robert Fisk notes, Sabra and Shatila was a war crime beyond 'what the Israelis would have in other circumstances called a terrorist atrocity'. He calls it the 'gravest act of terrorism—the largest in scale and time carried out by individuals who could see and touch the innocent people they were murdering—in the recent history of the Middle East'. Of Israel's Christian allies, he says, 'Israel had armed them, paid them, uniformed them, ... fed them'. Robert Fisk, *Pity the Nation: Lebanon at War* (London, Andre Deutsch, 1990), pp. 360, 365, 387.
256 Amiram Goldblum, former spokesperson for Peace Now, one-hour interview (East Jerusalem, 5 November 1994).
process—with its traumas associated with the events of 1948, ongoing land expropriation, and the military occupation of 1967—was intensifying a collective sense of betrayal in the territories, fueled by a desire to compensate for the ‘dreadful performance of the Arab allies against Israel’. The priorities of the PLO were being questioned, moreover, as residents of the territories contended that they, rather than the exiles in the diaspora, should have been given precedence by the PLO after the military cadres were routed from Beirut and Tripoli in 1982. The cumulative deterioration found its expression in the 1980s in intensified organizing of the civil society structures that would implement and sustain the intifada.

**Women’s and Youth Committees**

At the forefront of the new civil society were women’s committees. Until 1978, women’s organizations had fallen into roughly two categories: traditional charities that reached back to the Ottoman era, while still-functioning branches of the Arab Women’s Union formed the other. Between 1948 and 1967, nine new organizations dedicated to addressing Palestinian social needs were created, almost all of them by women; although the numbers participating were small, their influence was great. Rosemary Sayigh counted thirty-two

258 In 1984, Abu Jihad condemned the Arab world, which ‘confiscated our will in 1948’. He said, ‘We can overcome the Israeli effects on our will, even 184 new settlements inside the occupied territories’, but, ‘will we overcome the Arab renunciation of the Palestinians from 1966 to this day?’ He described a Palestinian family he had met in Abu Dhabi, who spent fourteen days wandering through Arab airports unable to gain entry, until he had brought them to Tunis. Regarding the young in the occupied territories, Abu Jihad recalled John Foster Dulles’s remark that their elders will die, and the youth will forget. Abu Jihad’s response, ‘Our youth is even more determined now’. Wazir, interview (14 October 1984).


260 Rosemary Sayigh, ‘Palestinian Women: A Case of Neglect’, in Najjar and Warnock, *Portraits*, p. 4. As noted earlier, nonsectarian Palestinian women’s organizations were being formed to challenge mandatory rule by 1921, when the Arab Women’s Union was formed. In February 1988, during the intifada, the union’s 100-bed al-Ittihad Hospital in Nablus was visited by the British former Labour leader Neil Kinnock and his wife Glenys, who reported seeing youths who had been shot in the back by Israeli soldiers. Philip Webster, ‘Kinnock Anger over Victims of the West Bank; Labour Leader’s Wife Weeps after Hospital Visit’, *Times*, 18 February 1988.

such women’s associations that had developed before 1967; in spite of the coercions associated with occupation, by 1976 she tallied thirty-eight involved in relief, health, child care, orphanages, elderly care, and the generating of income. Separate all-female social-welfare institutions such as In’ash al-Usra, or Resuscitation of the Family, political institutions, and work committees are not unequal, Ghada Hashem Talhami contended, but superior to comparable groups led by men. The scale of involvement by women has led one political scientist to suggest that a form of de facto governance by women-run organizations was in place by 1990:

Deprived of state-supported social services, and hindered by the social climate from entering male-dominated institutions, Palestinian women... have demonstrated a remarkable facility for creating their own institutions without any outside help. The Occupied Territories are run by a network of women’s social welfare organizations. Given the total absence of government-run social welfare organizations since 1967, these institutions... function as the informal government.

With the entire society reacting to occupation, a separate track of women’s organizing developed that was often affiliated with the various Palestinian political factions. On 8 March 1978, a group of approximately twenty women established the Women’s Work Committees (WWC), which enlisted younger, educated women who had a grasp of issues related to class and sexual discrimination. An outgrowth of both the ferment from the voluntary work committees and the faculty and student activities at Bir Zeit University, many

262 Ibid., p. 9.
265 At a roundtable discussion on democracy, at the Palestinian Centre for Democracy and Elections in East Jerusalem on 15 June 1995, the fact that women were able to vote for the first time in 1976 was cited as the reason for the success of the nationalist candidates in the elections. This explanation was offered by ‘Abd al-Jawad Saleh, the former mayor of el-Bireh who helped launch the voluntary work committees, appointed minister of agriculture of the Palestinian Authority after election to the Legislative Council in 1996. Under Jordanian law, women had been disenfranchised until 1973; the 1976 elections were thus their first opportunity to use the ballot.
of its founders were inspired by the DFLP, the most energetic of all the PLO factions to advocate the transfer of resources to the territories, even though the WWC sought to define itself as broadly nationalistic. One of its original organizers, Siham Barghuti, stated that she did not want ‘us working for them’:

There was a need for a more broad-based women’s organization, with no age limit, one in which decisions were not formulated from the top down, but one which encouraged the participation of rural and refugee women in the decision-making process. It was an achievement if we were instrumental merely in getting a family to allow a young woman out of the house. It became clear we... needed to work on several levels to help women fight triple oppression at home, in the workplace, and under occupation.

The WWC was ‘the first women’s organization that attempted mass recruitment of women’, according to Zahira Kamal, and by 1989, it had 5,000 members in its committees.

We never establish a committee in any village unless the women of the village request it and are willing to run it... We see our role as informing women of their rights, urging them to keep land in their own names, and supporting them to withstand family pressures once they decide to do so... The women’s movement is part of the national movement... Both personal and national liberation go hand in hand. When both sexes are deprived of their freedom and national dignity by the Israelis, it would be inappropriate for us to deal only with sexual inequalities. On the other hand, we will fail both women and our cause if we do not understand that liberating women from discrimination will better equip them for waging a successful national struggle.

This path represented a novel progression since ‘mixed’, that is, male and female, activities had been little known before the 1948 war. The Ba‘th party, ANM, and JCP found new adherents in women; in Israel, similar organizing was stimulated by Rakah. The PLO

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had supported the development of a General Union of Palestinian Women (GUPW), or al-
Ittihad al-'Amm lil-Mara' al-Filistiniyya, in 1964 and 1965, but as an official section of the
PLO it was banned by both the Israelis and Jordanians in 1967.271 Open recruitment of
women for the fida' iyyun did not begin until after 1968.272 From 1967 onwards, Rosemary
Sayigh writes,

Israeli occupation was followed by a sharp rise in women’s participation in all
kinds of resistance, from demonstrations and sit-ins to sabotage. In Gaza, women
participated in a continuous insurrection between 1968 and 1971. They were
killed and imprisoned. Many who were imprisoned were also tortured . . . others
were deported, including ‘Issam ‘Abd al-Hadi, chairwoman of the GUPW’s
Executive Committee. Their acts of resistance were carried out in small groups
or individually, without strong mass participation except in Gaza.273

Despite deportations, the women’s movement in the occupied territories proceeded to
put down deep roots and became central to the process of constructing a civil society
described here. The participants in the various decentralized and autonomous women’s
committees were able to gain greater clout than their counterparts in the diaspora.274 As
factional competition heated up in the early 1980s, splits accompanied the fledgeling
women’s movement. Pro-communist women set up the Union of Palestinian Working
Women’s Committees (UPWWC) on 8 March 1981.275 These committees ran unionizing
workshops that addressed the economic problems of Palestinian women whose only income
was from what Israelis call ‘black work’—jobs inside Israel unwanted by Israelis—plus
seasonal agricultural work, and other unskilled labour jobs.276 Another group, the Palestinian
Women’s Committees (PWC), was formed in 1982 and allied with the PFLP; in 1983, the

271Ibid., p. 10.
272Ibid., p. 7.
273Ibid., pp. 7–8.
274Ibid., p. 9.
275Hiltermann, Behind the Intifada, p. 134.
276“Institution Building on the West Bank’ (Amal Khreisheh), in Najjar and Wamock, Portraits, p.
150.
Social Action Committee was established. The WWC meanwhile decided to change its name to Union of Women’s Work Committees, and by 1989 had become the Federation of Palestinian Women’s Action Committees (FPWAC). The largest of the women’s groups, its flow chart reveals tiers of committees, branches, district and higher committees, secretariats, executive offices, and a general conference—a structure difficult to interrupt through the removal of key leaders or organizers. Despite divisiveness and ideological disputes, factionalism among the women’s committees was more restrained than in the labour unions, and there was less Israeli repression of the women’s associations, probably because of ‘the occupying power’s patronizing conception of women and their role in society’.

The ‘discovery of the villages’, Rita Giacaman noted nine months before the start of the intifada, ‘proved to be crucial in developing a new movement, ... a movement of committees:

Women from the village set up the committee themselves; it could be five women, ten. ... When several centers were closed down, the work went unharmed because it’s a popular grassroots organization ... [and] doesn’t depend structurally on the presence of one or two or even ten people. And you can’t put sixty to seventy thousand peasant women in jail. ... This new form came as a great success against the military. ... While these women are imprisoned for only doing literacy work and are put under town or house arrest, the difference is that the work is extremely effective despite all that.


278Hitlermann, Behind the Intifada, p. 134; Conclusion, in Najjar and Warnock, Portraits, p. 259.

279Chart entitled ‘Structure of the Palestinian Federation of Women’s Action Committees in the Occupied Territories’, in Najjar and Warnock, Portraits, pp. 136–7. Succession in the women’s committees was similar to that which occurred as the leaders of the local national committees were incarcerated by the British during the ‘great revolt’ of 1936–9. This recurring pattern of forming committees which could continue operating, even as successive layers of elected leaders were imprisoned, was perfected by the village women’s committees and others in the popular movements of the 1970s and 1980s. It reappears in the intifada.

280Hitlermann, Behind the Intifada, p. 127.


Miriam Cooke's study of what she calls the War Story—the universal memorializing of the fighting contributions of men, while understating the roles of women—shows through its literary analysis of Palestinian women authors that women had grasped earlier than did men the futility of armed struggle in the occupied territories for addressing their dilemma. Women knew, Cooke argues, that a different way of fighting would be entailed for success, and this knowledge contributed to the growth of nonviolent strategies of resistance, including the need to ‘recognize and negotiate with the humanity of the enemy’.

Another torrent was the movement called al-Shabiba, The Young People, or The Youth. Youth ‘committees for social work’ were established in 1980 and 1981 in the Anabta and Tulkarem refugee camps, and may have resulted from Fateh’s first concrete attempt at political mobilization in the territories. The Shabiba movement reached other camps in 1982. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the training of youth within some clubs started at twelve years of age. Unlike much of the mobilization taking place, the Shabiba set up separate branches for young men and women. From this group would come a socially oriented, disciplined, and highly politicized corps of youths for the intifada. In April 1987, months before the outbreak of the uprising, the Shabiba movement was deemed illegal, despite its having campaigned openly in student elections and never defining itself as a clandestine organization, unlike cellular guerrilla resistance groups.
committees became especially strong in the Balata refugee camp, near Nablus, and it was from Balata that street demonstrations in the West Bank flowed in immediate response to the outpouring from camps in Gaza that launched the intifada. By March 1988, arrests associated with membership in the Shabiba movement began in earnest. During the 1980s, as local organizations proliferated—women’s committees, trade unions, sports clubs, student councils, and professional or cultural societies—the youth clubs, particularly the pro-Fateh Shabiba social-action committees, were spreading in neighbourhoods.

Such organizations were gaining the ‘popular legitimacy a national movement so desperately needs’. Localized women’s committees, councils, societies, youth clubs, labour unions, professional groups, charities, and federations not only reduced vulnerability to Israeli reprisal, but also decreased the control exercised by Israeli authorities.

The ‘Prisoners’ Movement’

Another force at work in the formation of a civil society that would produce the intifada was the ‘prisoners’ movement’ of the 1980s. Operating without any apparent mechanism for coordination, Palestinian political detainees in Israeli gaols, from north to south...


291 Kuttab, ‘Stonethrowers’, p. 21. Musa Budeiri notes: ‘Before the intifada, all that Fateh had was the sha’biba. Fateh wasn’t interested in social mobilization. Fateh tried to appeal to the same constituency as the Jordanians: traditional leadership, heads of clans, businessmen—they weren’t interested in mass organizations, apart from Lebanon. [Later], they mushroomed [in the territories] when they established their presence; people flocked to them because Fateh meant the non-politicals. Easy to join, there was no ideology except “Palestine is our country, our homeland”… They dwarfed everybody else, … but were late-comers’. Budeiri, interview (28 January 1996).

292 Frisch, ‘Transformation’, p. 110. The guerrillas’ actions caused retaliation to be rained on the residents of the occupied territories, resulting in ambivalence and distrust, no basis for a popular movement.

293 Membership in, contact with, or expressed support for the aims of proscribed organizations (e.g., the Palestine Liberation Organization or its constituent elements) is grounds for arrest’. U.S. Department of State, ‘Israel and the Occupied Territories’, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1982 (Washington, D.C., Government Publishing Office, 1983), p. 1159. ‘Educational materials, periodicals, and books originating outside Israel are censored for alleged anti-Jewish or anti-Israeli content and for perceived
south, were successfully able to call for collective actions on a given day and time. The movement worked through vaguely named prisoners’ clubs. Its leadership was annually chosen through committees elected in each prison cell. One hundred gaol cells comprised a section which, in turn, elected a committee. Ten sections elected another committee, and so on, with a final committee representing each prison facility. Each final committee in the prison elected a leader for that installation. The leaders from all the facilities elected a top committee, which had a single spokesperson. The senior-most prison committee in each gaol coordinated with those in other penal institutions, despite the fact that communications were not allowed. Hunger strikes and other measures of nonviolent struggle were coordinated across the length and breadth of prisons in Israel by this movement. Among the methods favoured were the banging of bars to make nerve-wracking noise when a prisoner was beaten, and the ‘cold shoulder’ technique, *den Kolde Skulder*, or *Den Skolden*, used by the Danish Resistance against the Nazis, which involves ignoring, snubbing, or staring.

The first coordinated mass prison hunger strike of the contemporary period occurred in Ashkelon in 1970. Lasting for fifteen days, the prisoners drank water and consumed salt, but ate no food. One of the prisoners involved, 'Abd al-Qadir Abu al-Fahem, died as a result.

Encouragement of Palestinian nationalism. The occupation authorities maintain a list of forbidden publications. Possession of such publications, many of which are legal in Israel and East Jerusalem, by a West Bank or Gaza Arab is a criminal offense, frequently resulting in fine or imprisonment; however, according to Israeli press reports, the list of forbidden publications is not made available to the public'. Ibid., pp. 1,158-9.

Throughout history, prisoners who believed they had no other recourse have used the fast until death. Palestinian hunger strikes appear in oral histories. Lynd, Bahour, and Lynd, pp. 159–60, 161–3, 165, 168–9. Staughton Lynd, a labour historian, was director of the ‘freedom schools’ in the Mississippi Freedom Summer of 1964—‘alternative institutions’ in the American civil rights movement. Gene Sharp classifies the hunger strike within the sixth, the most serious and disruptive category of methods—nonviolent interventions—precisely because such actions intervene, psychologically, rather than simply appeal. Hunger strikes may be used defensively, to thwart, or offensively, to carry the struggle into the opponent’s camp. Change may be induced in the target group, without the adversary being convinced of the validity or desirability of altering behaviour or views, i.e., demands may be granted without a ‘change of heart’. Sharp, *Methods of Nonviolent Action*, pp. 357–8, 363.

The second coordinated hunger strike took place in 1976, and lasted for forty-five days.296 The third occurred in the summer of 1980, for a duration of thirty-three days. Two prisoners died in 1980, Rasem Halawah and 'Ali al-Jaafari.297 By this time, released prisoners had established prisoners' clubs throughout the West Bank and Gaza, made up of former detainees and inmates, and thus the actions inside the gaols were supported by demonstrations outside the prisons. A fourth hunger strike was coordinated across Israeli prisons in 1984, three years before the outbreak of the intifada.298 A prisoner's mother joined them in the summer of 1984:

> [M]y son was moved to a new prison, Jnaid. The prisoners went on a hunger strike, protesting their living conditions. A lot of women went to demonstrate in support of them. . . . There were about a hundred and fifty altogether, and other women joined us during the day. We were Muslims, Christians, and Jews all together. . . . I went without food for twelve days.299

Another hunger strike took place in March and April 1987, about which a participant in twenty such strikes stated: 'All the detainees, all the prisoners, used the hunger strike as a last resort when they reached a breaking point. Hunger strikes were to defend yourself, to defend

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296 According to one of the strikers, 'They [Israeli authorities] forced milk into strugglers through the nose. It caused many illnesses, one being ulcers. Tubes were inserted from the mouth into the stomach and were moved up and down, cutting the walls of the stomach. As a result of the Ashkelon struggle, my two-centimeter mattress was replaced with a five-centimeter sponge mattress'. I. Walid, in Lynd, Bahour, and Lynd, Homeland, p. 159.

297 For a firsthand account and case study of this hunger strike by one of its organizers, see Jabril Rajoub, 'Prison Hunger Strikes: The Case of Naffia Prison, 1980', We Will Be Free in Our Homeland (East Jerusalem and Chicago, Committee Confronting the Iron Fist and Palestine Human Rights Campaign, 1986), pp. 58–67.

298 In 1984, Palestinian jurists reported 60 imprisoned Palestinian political detainees in Tulkarem, 500 in Nablus, 200 in Ramallah, 250 in Hebron, 250 in al-Fara'a, and an unknown number in Jenin. A Report on the Treatment of Security Prisoners at the West Bank Prison of al-Fara'a (Ramallah, al-Haq, 1984). Such sources regard the incarceration of political prisoners, i.e., those 'convicted or detained on suspicion of committing offences against the “security” laws of the Israeli military government in the occupied West Bank', as 'strictly against Article 76 of the Fourth Geneva Convention'. Ibid., p. 1.

299 'Coping with the Loss of Palestine' (Umm Ibrahim Shawabkeh), in Najjar and Warnock, Portraits, p. 35.
your rights as a human being. Hunger strikes required preparation. One had to know the hows, the whats, even the alphabet of the hunger strike: what the person will feel when he begins, the movement of the stomach, the smell of the mouth, the taste, how we must go to the bathroom, how we must take water, how we must take salt, how to maintain the strike even if they were placed in isolation or transferred. We said that even if they were released they must continue the strike with their colleagues who were still imprisoned.

The ‘prisoners’ movement’ does not appear in the literature as such, yet it is important in explaining how the capacity for sustained mass action was developed by the Palestinians. In exploring this phenomenon, a brief chronicling of the involvement of Qaddourah Faris will be useful. Faris was elected yearly to the leadership of the prisoners’ movement starting in 1985, and through its pyramidal apparatus was repeatedly chosen as spokesperson for the entire population of politically active Palestinians who were imprisoned in Israeli gaols. Having begun his career in elective office, so to speak, two years before the eruption of the intifada, Faris was one decade later elected to the Palestinian Legislative Council. In 1992, while incarcerated in the Jnaid prison camp near Nablus, he led 15,000 prisoners on a hunger strike that was coordinated across major Israeli prisons. It began on 27 September:

Our demands were that we be allowed to kiss our children (touch and hold our children when they visited), that we be allowed to learn while in prison, that we have more time for family visits, better health care, better medicine,

300 Badran Bader Jaber, in Lynd, Bahour, and Lynd, Homeland, p. 161.

301 The willingness to fast until death was, for Gandhi, a sacrifice so powerful that nothing could better demonstrate to the onlooker one’s sincerity. It also worked within a movement to build morale. Gandhi called it an ‘infallible’ weapon. M. K. Gandhi, The Statesman (Calcutta), 2 September 1947, p. 10; idem, Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, 100 vols. (New Delhi, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 1958–94) 89: 132. When Gandhi employed fasting politically, or for Hindu-Muslim unity, he was adamant that it required preparation, mastery, and called for ‘infinite patience, firm resolve, single-mindedness of purpose, perfect calm, and no anger’. Harijan, 13 October 1940. So extremely potent was the technique, in Gandhi’s view, that, because of an emotionally coercive effect, one’s opponents were essentially forced to change; ‘to fast against them would amount to coercion’, he writes of the Ahmedabad textile mill strike of February and March 1918. Gandhi, Autobiography, p. 432. Gandhi believed the fast until death was acceptable if the repression by the opponent had closed all other avenues of protest and persuasion, or if all other methods had failed.

302 Badran Bader Jaber, in Lynd, Bahour, and Lynd, Homeland, p. 162.

303 An informal firsthand description of prisoners organizing an ‘internal apparatus’ in Ramle and ‘contacting’ other prisons is given by Ali Muhammad Jiddah, in Lynd, Bahour, and Lynd, Homeland, p. 165.
[medical] operations, and more time outside [in the open air] for sports, exercise, and to see the sun.\textsuperscript{304}

In response, according to Faris, family visits were instead suspended by prison officials and no time was permitted out of doors. Twelve days later, however, Faris claims, three of the prisoners' demands were accepted, amid threats from prison wardens that they would break up and transfer committee members to other prisons. The practice of shifting committee members from one institution to another had no impact, according to another activist, Mahmoud Jasser, because the second, third, and fourth tiers of the leadership were ready to take their place.\textsuperscript{305} By Faris's account, Israeli minister of police Moshe Shahal visited him in prison and asked him to end the action. Three days later, Faris requested that the guards connect him by telephone with the minister: 'I told him that we are supporting peace, we are interested in the peace process succeeding, and we want no violence outside. If you want the peace process to succeed, accept our humane laws, I told him'. Following a four-hour meeting with prison authorities, Faris felt obliged to confer with all the committees from the other prisons before the strike could be halted. On Tuesday, 13 October—the entire committee structure having been consulted, and every demand having been met, according to Faris—the strike ended. While speaking by telephone from gaol with the newspaper \textit{al-Sha‘b}, or \textit{The People},\textsuperscript{306} to alert the news media of the termination of the action, the reporter quietly transferred Faris's line to Tunis, thus allowing him to speak directly with Jabril Rajoub and Yasir Arafat.\textsuperscript{307}

As a result of the strike, an arrangement was set up whereby 150 of the 3,500 Palestinian political prisoners who remained in Israeli gaols by 1996 were enrolled in the

\textsuperscript{304}Qaddourah Faris, two-hour interview (Ramallah, 18 March 1997).

\textsuperscript{305}Mahmoud Jasser, two-hour interview (Ramallah, 18 March 1997).

\textsuperscript{306}Through Fateh's support in 1972, \textit{al-Sha‘b} became the third Palestinian daily to appear in East Jerusalem—a 'mouthpiece' for Fateh, although privately owned. Frisch, 'Transformation', p. 100.

\textsuperscript{307}Faris, interview (18 March 1997). Rajoub, as noted, a former prisoner and Fateh activist deported in 1988, would later be appointed head of security for the Palestinian Authority.
Open University at Tel Aviv University, at a fee of 129,500 NIS, or new Israeli shekels, equivalent to £30,000, allowing them to earn six hours of credit through correspondence courses.\textsuperscript{308} The prisoners also won the right to teach themselves Hebrew or English in classes led by prisoners who already spoke the languages.\textsuperscript{309} According to Faris—who was released in 1994 and elected to the Fateh Supreme Committee after fourteen years of incarceration, during half of which he led the prisoners' movement—the prisoners' clubs have no relationship with the Palestinian Authority, and he claims that they take no money from it. He and Jasser, while allied with Fateh, maintained that all the funds for the movement are raised from their 6,000 members, that is, former prisoners, who pay 10 NIS, or £2, in annual dues.\textsuperscript{310}

By governing themselves through elected representatives and committees, coordinating nonviolent actions, and learning Hebrew, Palestinians imprisoned in great numbers during the 1980s thus became experienced in techniques of struggle unlike those being primarily utilized by their counterparts in the diaspora commando cadres. Israeli prisons became hatcheries for ideas.\textsuperscript{311} Indeed, because the occupied territories had been


\textsuperscript{309}According to Ali Muhammad Jiddah, who was imprisoned for seventeen years, '[W]e had the ability to transform collective cemeteries [the prisons] into the most academic revolutionary schools. Our people who graduated from Israeli jails were well educated, politically and ideologically. . . . I began learning the Hebrew language which I now speak and write fluently'. Lynd, Bahour, and Lynd, \textit{Homeland}, p. 165.

\textsuperscript{310}Faris, interview (18 March 1997); Jasser, interview (18 March 1997). On 10 March 1997, I was in adjacent offices as Israeli officials entered the Nuzha Building in East Jerusalem and sealed the door to the headquarters of the 'Prisoners' Club'. Four similar entities also were closed that day by the Netanyahu government, which alleged that these were offices of the Palestinian Authority. Members of the prisoners' clubs, however, appear proud of their financial independence from the authority and persuaded of the value of nonmilitary political methods and democratic procedures.

\textsuperscript{311}Frisch says the former prisoners, once released and under surveillance, moved towards political organizations allied with their factional preferences, suggesting that their turn to political struggle was a function of eluding further incarceration. Frisch, 'Diffusion and Consolidation', pp. 47–8. This was doubtless true for some, although this research discloses a deeper political transformation taking place in prisons. 'Over the years, in full view of their Israeli jailers, Palestinian security prisoners (who are held separate from common criminals) built an independent network whose cohesion, intellectual verve, and rich store of experience would manifest themselves in all their power during the Palestinian uprising. . . . What even the PLO did not know was the degree to which the Palestinians' prison experience was the force transforming the spontaneous outburst of rage into a sustained, organized revolt'. Ehud Ya'ari, 'Israel's Prison Academies: The Palestinian Uprising Can Almost Be Called a Product of the Israeli Prison System', \textit{Atlantic}, October 1989, p.
'hermetically sealed', they were the one place where Palestinians from 'different geographical and political zones' met.\textsuperscript{312} The success of Faris as a candidate for office in Ramallah in 1996 came as a surprise to him since he stood as an independent, rather than on Fateh's list, and, according to his own account, spent little money on his campaign.\textsuperscript{313} Prison thus became a place where democratic procedures and the mechanisms of civil society were learned. 'There is no legitimacy without elections', Faris stated on behalf the prisoners' clubs, which, he said, had helped him to develop a different set of objectives from those that he had championed when leading a military cell in the early 1980s.\textsuperscript{314}

**Networks Disperse the Centres of Power**

Social mobilization such as that examined here diversifies a society's centres of power—what Gene Sharp calls the *loci* of power—thus laying the structural basis for civil society and broad resistance. As Sharp observes,

> Effective action requires *corporate* resistance and defiance. The structural condition of the society is therefore highly important in determining the general capacity of a society to control its rulers. This structural condition refers to the existence of various institutions (or *loci* of power), ... bodies or institutions in a society where power is located, converges, or is expressed. ... When power is effectively diffused throughout the society among such *loci*, the rulers' power is most likely subjected to controls and limits because such

\textsuperscript{22} '[The prisoners] had been steeled by the tough discipline of the special committees that ran their lives behind bars. ... Kept in overcrowded cells with only thin mattresses on the floor for beds, they turned these depressing conditions into the setting for political study groups and debating sessions, ... an independent network within the prisons'. Schiff and Ya’ari, *Intifada*, p. 214.

Powerful as these interpretations are, they minimize the political significance of this movement within a movement insofar as the adoption of nonviolent resistance is concerned. Moreover, when Schiff and Ya’ari say that these 'special committees' were 'copied' as the prototypes for the popular committees and the leadership structure of the uprising (discussed in Chapter Six), it represents a sharp severance from history. Ibid. As we have seen, such committees date to the general strike of 1936 and have numerous antecedents.

\textsuperscript{312} Barghuti, 'Institution Building', in Najjar and Warnock, *Portraits*, pp. 132, 131.

\textsuperscript{313} Later analysing his victory, Faris noted, '[T]he resistance background of the imprisoned leaders stayed very much in the minds of the voters, ... a decisive factor in my success'. Interviews with Marwan Barghouti, Qaddourah Faris, Jamal Shoubaki, et al, 'Intifada Generation', *al-Ayyam*, pp. 2–3.

\textsuperscript{314} Faris, interview (18 March 1997).
bodies provide the capacity for resistance to governmental control.315

Prior to 1967, Benvenisti had counted eighty-nine Palestinian charitable organizations on the West Bank that were among the loci of power; by 1983, he had tallied one hundred sixty-six. He also noted that Israeli policy sought "to reduce the establishment of new charities as much as possible, as some are viewed as fronts for subversive activities."316 According to officials of Catholic Relief Services in East Jerusalem, more than one thousand indigenous Palestinian private, voluntary, development agencies were in existence by 1994.317 The tabulation may have run much higher prior to the outbreak of the intifada. The head of the Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA) in East Jerusalem, Mahdi 'Abd al-Hadi, told a New York Times reporter that 45,000 committees were in existence by 1987 and able to act as the organizational base for the intifada, including student groups and trade unions.318 One among many of the groups that assumed bland names to evade military intrusion is the Arab Studies Society, set up in 1980 by Feisel Husseini.319 Located in Orient House, one of the Husseini family homes in East Jerusalem, the centre's original purpose was to translate into Arabic what was being published about the Palestinians in Israeli Hebrew-language newspapers, because, as Husseini noted, they often disclosed Israeli plans towards the Palestinians.320 In the society, 'representatives from various Palestinian associations—not political organizations, which are


317Nora Kort, director, Catholic Relief Services, one-hour interview (East Jerusalem, 4 November 1994).

318John Kifner, 'Israelis and Palestinians Change Their Tactics but Not Their Goals', New York Times, 15 May 1988, p. 1. The quality of services delivered by such agencies varied, and the calibre of leadership may have been uneven, but their existence in great numbers is indisputable. Costa Dabbagh, director, Middle East Council of Churches, one-hour interview (Gaza City, 8 November 1994).

319See 'Guide, Arab Studies Society', brochure (East Jerusalem, Arab Studies Society).

320Feisel Husseini, one-hour interview (East Jerusalem, 14 June 1995).
forbidden, but things like labour unions, teachers unions, physicians unions, universities, and so on—would meet to discuss and make decisions'. The society includes archives, a library, and documentation centre.

Muhammad Muslih has identified four types of organizations in Palestinian civil society during the period after 1967: political shops, voluntary cooperatives, voluntary mass organizations, and Islamist groups. His categories deserve brief summation, although he tends to view them as 'penetrated' by the PLO, rather than in the context presented here, in which broad nonmilitary organizing, much of it only nominally affiliated with the factions, shaped a civil society and prepared for massive nonmilitary resistance to occupation. Muslih’s first category, political shops, or dakakin siyasiyya, includes traditional patronage routes for the old Jordanian-supported élites, Fateh (to which he gives the credit for the post-1967 civilian nonmilitary mobilization, despite its instigation by the communists, as shown here), labour unions, and student associations (which he sees as 'political proxies' for mobilization by PLO commando groups). The second classification includes voluntary household cooperatives which emphasize the creation of employment, with farmers and consumer cooperatives to share risk and meet needs, and a sense of neighbourhood responsibility which he calls 'a new strand in Palestinian self-consciousness... self-reliance and independence from the Israeli economy'. Muslih’s third group is voluntary mass organizations. Assuming that Lisa Taraki’s research and the disclosures of ‘Abd al-Jawad Saleh are correct, Muslih erroneously traces these organizations to student voluntary work committees to clean up the Old City of Nablus in the mid-1970s, rather than to the more accurate pinpointing to 1972 in Ramallah and al-Bireh, as shown here and corroborated by


\[33\] Muslih says cooperatives developed as a result of the intifada. Yet I visited cooperatives for the breeding of chickens, bee-keeping, and raising of rabbits in the occupied territories in 1984.

Ghassan Khatib. In this category, Muslih places charitable, legal, and psychiatric associations, 'underground social work', and women's groups—agencies that remained outside the framework of what he calls the 'state surrogate', that is, the PLO. Fourth in Muslih's classifications are Islamist groups, about which he says little. Any consideration of the responsibility assumed by the mass organizations of civilian organizing in the territories after 1967 must, however, include the Islamist organizations.

**Islamist Blocs**

Antedating the Israeli military occupation by almost twenty years and the intifada by forty, Islamist associations have never stopped being a subject of controversy. It should not seem extraordinary that such a force would develop in the wake of political Zionism, itself a revolt against the traditional pacifistic values of Judaism, or that such blocs would arise in the shadow of Israel's theocracy, in which the functions of state may be determined by rabbinical authorities. Nor is it amazing that the 'almost completely disenfranchised' Palestinians would spawn religious movements, including some with radical solutions.\(^{326}\)

A process of building Islamic institutions had been underway in Gaza (and the West Bank) for half a century. The earliest branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, originally established in Egypt in 1928 to oppose British occupation, was set up in Jerusalem on 26 October 1945, and by 1947 there were twenty-five branches in Palestine.\(^{327}\) During the 'great revolt' of 1936–9, the Egyptian brotherhood organized committees to raise funds, carried out

\(^{325}\)Khatib, interview (15 December 1997).

\(^{326}\)Michael S. Serrill, 'In the Eye of a Revolt', *Time*, 25 January 1988, p. 32.

propaganda activities, and a few volunteers took part in armed raids on Jewish colonies in Palestine.\textsuperscript{328} By 1948, perhaps a million adherents in Egypt were members, although the number of combatants was small.\textsuperscript{329}

In the mid-1950s, the Muslim Brotherhood in Gaza and the West Bank was the first to express disillusionment with the notion of Palestine being liberated through pan-Arab unity, instead recommending self-reliance and military action by Palestinians in the West Bank.\textsuperscript{330} Under the Hashemite monarchy, the Muslim Brotherhood obtained legal recognition, functioned openly, and was favoured by the authorities, who hoped it could counteract the draw of other political parties that were forbidden by law.\textsuperscript{331} The perceived closeness between the Muslim Brotherhood and an unpopular Jordanian regime caused it to lose ground in the eyes of the Palestinian populace, and the relationship between the brotherhood and the Hashemites was often marked by mutual suspicion.\textsuperscript{332} Political violence that in Egypt had been associated with the Brotherhood's activities was, however, missing under the Jordanians.\textsuperscript{333}

Following an Egyptian ban on the Muslim Brotherhood in 1949, its Gaza branch reorganized itself into an educational and religious centre called the Society of the Oneness of God, or Jam'iyyat al-Tawhid. Between 1952 and 1954, during a period of rapprochement between the Free Officers regime and the Brotherhood, new recruits were enlisted. The Brotherhood became viewed as the 'party of the government', because of its good relations


\textsuperscript{329} Mayer, 'Military Force of Islam', pp. 109–110.

\textsuperscript{330}Ma'oz, Palestinian Leadership, p. 11.

\textsuperscript{331}Abu-Amr, Islamic Fundamentalism, p. 4.

\textsuperscript{332}Cohen, Political Parties, pp. 146, 149.

\textsuperscript{333}Ibid., p. 153.
with those who ended monarchical rule.\textsuperscript{334} After an attempt on Nasser's life, the Brotherhood was forced to adopt secret activities, leading to a disintegration of what had been one of the largest organizations in Egypt. In the aftermath of an attempted coup d'état in 1965, thousands were arrested, including Shaykh Ahmad Yasin, a 'handicapped schoolmaster' who would become a symbolic leader.\textsuperscript{335}

The 1967 defeat was particularly nettlesome for Palestinian Muslims. The Israeli presence changed from a specified Jewish national home to claims of divine sanction for newly conquered properties, with the Hebrew scriptures as justification for appropriating land, and a policy of the Judaization of Jerusalem was shortly thereafter evident.\textsuperscript{336} Despite its strong rhetoric, however, the Brotherhood was neither prepared nor willing to undertake organized military operations against the Israeli occupation.\textsuperscript{337} In 1973, the Islamic Association, or al-Mujama' al-Islami, was established in Gaza in association with the Brotherhood, and has worked with children and youth in educational and sports activities.\textsuperscript{338} By the late 1970s, Islamic revivalist organizations had quickened their educational and political activities and were focusing not only on mosques and places of learning and directing their efforts at religious education for youth, but they were also offering a political alternative for families that wanted a faith-based movement. The ideological or religious appeal of Islamic organizations may have been less important for the Palestinians than their ability to offer services and support for the local population.\textsuperscript{339} Indeed, after 1967, the social

\textsuperscript{334}Abu-Amr, \textit{Islamic Fundamentalism}, p. 7.


\textsuperscript{337}Abu-Amr, \textit{Islamic Fundamentalism}, p. 10. Palestinian political scientist Ziad Abu-Amr treats the ongoing disputes between the nationalists and the Islamic revivalists in ibid., pp. 23–52.

\textsuperscript{338}Mishal and Aharoni, \textit{Speaking Stones}, p. 5.

\textsuperscript{339}Dajani, \textit{Eyes without Country}, p. 55; Cobban, 'Gunless in Gaza', p. 213.
services run by Islamist groups may have been more effective than those of the leftist factions. The Muslim Brotherhood was especially successful in enlisting large numbers of students in 'Islamic blocs' at educational institutions in the West Bank and Gaza. Coinciding with the awakening of nationalist student movements, the relationships between these student organizations and the Brotherhood were often antagonistic:

"Around 1983–84, the Muslim Brothers and perhaps other less radical wings began to find accommodation with the national movement. In return, the price paid by the national movement was to begin to consider the Islamist currents as legitimate strands of opposition within Palestinian society. Until then relations between the two currents were quite tense and sometimes violent."

A series of violent confrontations occurred at Palestinian universities during the early 1980s, chiefly between Fateh and the Brotherhood. Much of the irritation derived from the Islamic groups' increasing tolerance for violent methods, or armed struggle, and the lack of clarity in their ideological programmes, which largely consisted of advocacy for an Islamic state.

Al-Jihad al-Islami, or Islamic Jihad, a wing of the Muslim Brotherhood, was founded in 1980. Principally inspired by Shaykh ‘Izz al-Din al-Qassam’s conjunction of jihad, or holy struggle, for God, with jihad for the sake of country, Islamic Jihad explicitly links nationalism and religion, rejects contact with Israel and the United States, and sponsors suicide missions which it defines as a path to martyrdom. Its origin within Palestine, on which it focuses as the central issue rather than a transcendent Islam, has given it notoriety. It is characterized, according to Ziad Abu-Amr, by its ‘good organization, strict discipline, and absolute secrecy’, particularly with regard to its armed operations. Hamas, a non-Qur'anic word meaning zeal, and an acronym for Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya, or the Islamic

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341 Tamari, 'What the Uprising Means', p. 137.


Resistance Movement, resulted from a decision by the Muslim Brotherhood to participate in the 1987 intifada.\textsuperscript{344} Hamas’s founding is most commonly dated to August 1988, when it published its covenant, or mithaq, differentiating itself from the leaflets that were guiding the intifada and which appealed for recognition from Israel while at the same time confronting the state. A more likely date of origin would be the end of 1987, just after the outbreak of the intifada, when, under the spiritual leadership of Shaykh Ahmad Yasin, the group’s patronage of kindergartens, clinics, and youth centres emerged.\textsuperscript{345} Hamas was, according to Abu-Amr, the idea of Shaykh Yasin, who sought a special offshoot from the Muslim Brotherhood to take responsibility for participation in the uprising.\textsuperscript{346}

Controversy has never subsided over the apparent willingness of the government of Israel to allow certain concessions to Hamas.\textsuperscript{347} The Islamists were able to bring funds of Saudi, other Gulf Arab, and Iranian origin into the territories.\textsuperscript{348} It is alleged that they were given access to caches of arms and munitions, and that their cross-border movements were expedited by Israeli authorities. Palestinian sociologist Salim Tamari claims that the Israeli security establishment had collaborated with other Muslim organizations as early as the

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Abu-Amr, Islamic Fundamentalism, pp. 102, 104, 95, 51, 63–7.
\item Abu-Amr, Islamic Fundamentalism, p. 67.
\item This was all but verified in a 1989 editorial leader in the \textit{Jerusalem Post}: ‘Before the outbreak of the intifada, Jerusalem may even have had reason to believe that the Islamic fundamentalists would usefully drain away Palestinian nationalist sentiment into less harmful channels. Divide the opponents and keep the territories was the rule. But for the past nearly two years there could be no doubt that, politically, Hamas represents the very extremity of violent Palestinian extremism. . . . The shaping of a sensible future policy on the territories will, however, benefit from a re-examination of the apparent old premise about the lesser culpability, indeed the acceptability, of the pious breed of extreme Palestinian nationalists’. ‘Violent Islam Outlawed’, \textit{Jerusalem Post}, 3 October 1989.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
The Israeli brigadier in charge of Gaza told journalist David Shipler that he had funded Islamic factions to strengthen them against the PLO. According to Susan Hattis Rolef, retired Brigadier General Binyamin Ben-Eliezer, coordinator of operations in the occupied territories from 1983 to 1984, implied in interviews that Israel had a policy of encouraging Muslim forces to weaken the PLO. The Israeli Foreign Ministry admitted in an interview that the welfare programmes of the Islamic groups were among the justifications for Israel’s support of Hamas in its early days.

‘Outadministering’ the Opposition

Whether Islamist, nationalist, or completely local and not affiliated with any other group, Palestinian agencies were offering services and opportunities not provided by the military authorities. In the West Bank, one observer notes, ‘only a high degree of social cohesion in villages and urban neighbourhoods . . . offset the almost complete absence of public authority’. Eqbal Ahmad calls this ‘outadministering’ the opponents—the aim being to ‘destroy the legitimacy of its government and establish a rival regime through the creation of “parallel hierarchies”’. Some groups stood in tacit opposition to occupation, while

349 Tamari, ‘What the Uprising Means’, p. 137. As examples from Gaza, Tamari notes that when the Muslim Brotherhood attacked the Red Crescent Society and the communists, they were allowed to do so with no interference from Israeli security forces, and when two liquor stores were burned, there was no intervention.


352 Yigal Caspi, Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesperson in 1994 when Shimon Peres was foreign minister, one-hour interview (Jerusalem, 10 November 1994). ‘Fifteen years ago, at a time when we should have been talking to the PLO, we were instead trying to destroy its power base’, Caspi said.


others, in another context, would simply have been called self-help.

Although Fateh was by 1982 giving attention to mass mobilization, many of those standing for office as Fateh in various unions and organizations were not Fateh in the cellular sense, that is, they did not belong to Fateh cells. As Nusseibeh explained, ‘They were generally Fateh’. Whole student movements developed that were loosely associated with Fateh, but had no direct connexion with the PLO. At Bir Zeit, the Fateh student movement developed ‘primarily by itself, independently; although there were students who were operatives in Fateh, on the whole, the student movement wasn’t’. As Hillel Frisch points out, ‘[N]one of these movements contained an overarching secretariat or central committee that was responsible for all the organs within the movements’, possibly with the exception of the PCP. While the underground military branches were tied to one faction of the PLO or another, each member carrying out commanders’ orders, the diverse popular entities considered here were offering services otherwise unavailable. From the latter grouping, the broad popular movement, came the institutional infrastructure and leadership at the local level for the intifada.

In Gaza, the young who sparked the intifada were less allied with the factions of the PLO than those on the West Bank and had grown up under the Israeli policy of what Sara

355 Nusseibeh clarified, ‘You might have three cell members in a faculty union who were Fateh, out of 150 who would define themselves as Fateh’. Nusseibeh, interview (5 November 1994). ‘The Ramallah [Fateh] election on November 4 [1994] was the first time that Fateh people who identified themselves as Fateh got together with people who were actually Fateh [italics added for emphasis]...’. Nusseibeh, interview (5 November 1994).

356 Nusseibeh, interview (5 November 1994).


358 Hiltermann, Behind the Intifada, pp. 5, 6.
Roy calls the 'de-development' of Gaza. The Israeli authorities were surprised to find that most of those incarcerated in the first months of the intifada in Gaza had no prior arrest record and no organizational past. One classified survey, made after Israelis arrested the first demonstrators in the Gaza Strip, showed that the vast majority of Palestinians who had participated in the protests considered themselves to be devout Muslims; this was their first arrest and their first physical contact with Israeli soldiers. Most of those sampled did not listen to the PLO radio broadcasts from Baghdad, nor were they familiar with PLO political platforms or slogans.

The 1967 war might theoretically have enhanced the role of the traditional local élites, but they were 'overcome by political torpor', Emile Sahliyeh writes. As newer local agencies, organizations, and clubs arose, older organizations led by accepted hierarchies were pushed to the side, resulting in the 'demise of élite politics'. Alternative institutions rising in their stead opened avenues for a Palestinian leadership that was neither groomed in how to cooperate with the Israeli military regime nor favourably disposed to viewing themselves in that light. With underground political organizations and the democratization brought about by widened access to higher education, notable families and old oligarchies had less to offer. The influence of the mukhtars and their urban counterparts waned as the networks of civil society organizations expanded after 1967, and it receded still further.

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360Frisch, 'Middle Command', p. 263.


362Sahliyeh, Leadership, p. 4.

363Frisch, 'Transformation', p. 109. For a review of Israeli co-optation of the notable classes through material incentives, favours, special permits, and manipulation of their self-interest, see Ian Lustick, Arabs in the Jewish State: Israel's Control of a National Minority (Austin, University of Texas Press, 1980), pp. 201–5. A condensed discussion of the 'politics of notables' pertaining to Palestinian society—a literature in and of itself—is found in Robinson, Building a Palestinian State, pp. 1–18. As the status of the mukhtar and others diminished, less rationale existed for a class of intercessionary figures to deal with the Israeli authorities.
around 1981 and 1982, with the student movements’ rebellion against Israel’s euphemistically named civilian administration. Not only was the legitimacy of the occupation questioned, but also the ‘legitimacy of an established hierarchy based on lineage’.\textsuperscript{364} The potency of youth in the stratified society increased as authority fragmented, accelerating the ascendence of students, women, youth, and those who had been arrested during the 1970s, to be released five to seven years later.\textsuperscript{365} Whether the emerging leadership was ‘new’ or not has been debated in the literature on the \textit{intifada}.\textsuperscript{366} Clearly it was local and was released by the post-1967 social mobilization.\textsuperscript{367} To become a ‘leader’, one had to serve the community and not flaunt privilege; leadership standing derived from service, rather than from inherited status or the privilege of class or clan.

Better educated than their parents, born under occupation in increasing numbers, and knowing no other existence, the young had derived tangible experience through the webs of committees in the provision of vital community services. They had gained hands-on experience in infant creches, home repair, reforestation, the harvesting of vegetables, retrofitting home plumbing, teaching literacy classes, road renovation, fixing cemeteries, the cleanup of refugee camps, and bringing isolated villages into the electricity grid of the East Jerusalem Electric Company, still the most sizeable Palestinian endeavour in the territories. In the process, their sense of self may have altered as much as anything they repaired or fixed; donors often reap more in the way of intangible benefits than do their supposed beneficiaries in tangible results. Once the \textit{intifada} erupted, the impact on leadership was

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{364}Tamari, ‘The Intifada’, pp. 18, 19.
  \item \textsuperscript{365}In the first Fateh elections in the occupied territories, on 4 November 1994 in Ramallah, the winners came from the ranks of the young underground leadership of the \textit{intifada}, individuals like Qaddourah Faris, who had spent long periods in Israeli prisons, and local \textit{intifada} activists from refugee camps and villages. Most of the candidates on Arafat’s list, who were from the cadres newly returning from Tunis, were not elected. Lamia Lahoud, ‘Younger Fatah Takes over in Ramallah’, \textit{Jerusalem Post}, 7 November 1994.
  \item \textsuperscript{366}See, for example, Frisch, ‘Middle Command’.
\end{itemize}
evident. A Gazan leader of the uprising told a reporter two weeks after its outbreak,

Of the 650,000 inhabitants of Gaza, the occupation forces have, as of now, arrested 47,000. Every one of them is already a leader in the place where he lives. The arrest creates the leader... No fool should think that outside forces are directing what is happening. People belong to all kinds of organizations, which are really the political parties of the state-in-the-making.\footnote{Machool, ‘This Isn’t Rebellion’, p. 14.}

Israeli authorities had been able to keep themselves apprised of political activity in the universities and could study the groups that they viewed as fronts for subversion through Palestinian informers in schools and universities.\footnote{Peretz, ‘Intifada and Middle East Peace’, p. 389.} Yet much of the activities of the emerging civil society after 1967—the voluntary work committees, women’s organizations, youth clubs, trade unions, cultural societies, and professional associations—remained uninterrupted and possibly undetected by the Israeli authorities.\footnote{Between September and December 1987, before the start of the intifada, Israeli authorities ‘cracked down hard’ on the Balata refugee camp, a stronghold of Fateh, and the Gaza Strip, a stronghold of Islamic Jihad, notes Daoud Kuttab, leading to his conclusion that ‘the Israeli government had begun to realize that a network of local organizations was taking root in the occupied territories’. Kuttab, ‘Stonethrowers’, p. 20.}

The term civilian mobilization used here encompasses both popular and nonmilitary organizing in which the loci of power became diffused, and emphasizes the rising use of strategies other than the paramilitary strikes of the fida ’iyyun, and the emergence of a leadership whose manufactured symbols differed from those of armed struggle. As participation in the post-1967 civil society widened in opposition to military occupation, the equally important capability developed to sustain resistance beyond the period of initial crisis. Edward Said calls the surge ‘national, independent, and the first step in the appearance of the Palestinian state’.\footnote{Said, ‘Intifada and Independence’, in Lockman and Beinin, Intifada, p. 20.}

Bir Zeit University political scientist ‘Ali Jarbawi believes that the plethora of unions, clubs, committees, and societies after 1967 disqualify themselves from civil society,
because of their frequent association with the political factions of the PLO. Yet even if the
civilian organizing was often factionalized—an undeniable feature of Palestinian life under
occupation—membership was voluntary. Recruits were neither conscripted nor gang
pressed, although social pressures towards conformance within extended families or clans
were strong. Persons pledged themselves. As Nusseibeh said, individuals were *generally*
loyal to factions. Men, women, girls, boys, university students, labour unionists, and
released prisoners could all prepare themselves for collective nonmilitary action. The
activation of a cross section of civilians into group action through small nonmilitary entities
provided both the leadership material and organizational structures that would underpin
massive participation in the *intifada*. 

**Conclusion**

The broad phalanx of organizational activity described here—the wedging open of
political space that does not belong to the state and the development of institutions that
are not governmental—represented the embryonic formations of an evolving Palestinian
'civil society'. Broad civilian mobilization helped to create for the Palestinians the capacity
for mass resistance later manifested by the *intifada*. Armed revolution held little attraction
for Palestinians under occupation, who suffered the retaliatory consequences of sorties by
the *fida'iyyun*. Stimulated by the political organizing of the communists, the number of
nonmilitary committees and movements increased logarithmically, both despite, and because
of military occupation. Diverse segments of previously inactive communities and sectors
activated themselves; many of these would not under any circumstances have been

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372. Ali Jarbawi, one-hour interview (Ramallah, 16 June 1995). In the words of Riad al-Malki, 'In
Palestinian society, you have the people, and you have the factions; that's it'. Riad al-Malki, two-hour
interview (Washington, D.C., 3 May 1995). Malki emerged as a PFLP spokesperson towards the end of the
first year of the uprising. An engineering professor at Bir Zeit, he also directs the PANORAMA Center for the
Dissemination of Alternative Information in East Jerusalem. He is described as a 'leading member of the
Unified National Command, ... a key PFLP leader in the territories who helped write the clandestine leaflets'.
candidates for military cadres. As authority fragmented and the base of the diverse popular movement broadened—ten thousand unemployed university graduates being among those who were available to participate—women, youths, students, and men assumed responsibility for opposing the military occupation. In the course of participating in scores of nonmilitary clubs, some of them since the age of twelve, members became familiar with the chairing of meetings, electing of officers, setting of priorities, making decisions as a group, and the nuts and bolts of civilian, nonmilitary methods of struggle. Local leadership diversified and became derived from service rather than privilege. Committees learned how to structure themselves so that they could continue functioning when elected leaders were arrested. ‘Outadministering’ the occupation, whether surreptitiously or openly, the committees not only precluded some facets of Israeli control, the members themselves were also affected by the experience. Concepts spread, facilitated by networks of committees, often questioning monopolistic assumptions of armed struggle. Democratic procedures and nonviolent techniques of protest were learned by thousands of Palestinians in Israeli prisons.

Civilian organizing to deter foreign military invasion or occupation is among the major applications of nonviolent resistance. Palestinians were actually learning the basics of civilian defence, and doing so within view of an omnipresent military force. For the better part of two decades, the capacity for a massive and deliberate confrontation with the military occupation was under construction; without this period of popular activation, the sustenance of a movement on the scale of the intifada may have been impossible. The simultaneity and girth of the intifada stunned the world, yet inside the occupied territories the only surprise was that such upheaval had not occurred sooner.
Chapter Four

TOWARDS A DOCTRINE OF POPULAR MASS PARTICIPATION: NEW IDEAS PREPARE THE WAY FOR THE INTIFADA

Palestinians in the occupied territories formally enjoyed no rights, entitlements, or representative institutions after 1967. Nonetheless, by the early 1980s, as large numbers of students entered Palestinian institutions of higher education and thousands of civilian nonmilitary committees were organized, among the newly rising voices being heard were those of a small number of activist intellectuals in Arab East Jerusalem. This chapter analyses the work of such individuals in revising Palestinian political presumptions throughout the decade of the 1980s, labours that were essential to certain ideas subsequently gaining the upper hand in the first years of the intifada. Two individuals were pivotally important in this process—Feisel Husseini and Sari Nusseibeh—but there were, in all, perhaps a dozen such activist intellectuals who were instrumental in challenging political presuppositions inside the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and Arab East Jerusalem. Husseini, Nusseibeh, and others appear in the public record, and were interviewed in English or Hebrew, yet peculiar conditions may explain the absence prior to this research of a full assessment of their contributions to the multidimensional process that would culminate in the uprising.

Although the historical narrative is excellent insofar as televised or reported news after the eruption of the intifada, it is exceptionally weak in analysing how, to the extent that sophisticated political and nonviolent techniques were used, this phenomenon came about. The forces leading to the restraint of arms have been poorly limned, in part because the development of autonomous leadership and alternative ideas inside the occupied territories has been denied by the PLO, and also because the Israeli misperception and

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misrepresentation of the uprising as war—or something that required military suppression—has skewed numerous investigations. An uprising that was already hard to fathom has thus been made even more difficult to understand. Circumstances of a belligerent occupation, moreover, limit researchers and severely compromise the willingness of sources to speak openly. Relevant documents and other papers have simply disappeared.

Misunderstanding of the considerable roles played by key intellectuals and activists also reflects over-reliance by some authors on information obtained through the forced interrogation of Palestinians who were interned by Israeli authorities. Incarcerated youths were generally far removed from the circles where the agents of change who are the subject of this chapter were working to revise political dogma. Large numbers of Palestinians consciously concealed their role in the uprising because it was potentially dangerous not to do so; many still remain anonymous, further obscuring accurate readings, and some will speak only if not quoted. Palestinian factions, including the PCP, were not only clandestine, but tended to guard their prerogatives jealously. This inevitably affects the response to interviews and researchers. Thus, in addition to there being multiple contingencies and more than one source of causality, in the competition for militancy, some jousted to be the first to promote one position or reject another. Few give commendatory credit to others.

Of the numerous deficiencies in the literature on the intifada that were noted in Chapter One, few have been remedied with the passage of years. Rigourous and combative reexamination of the history of Zionism is underway at the hands of Israel’s ‘new’ or ‘post-Zionist’ historians—abetted by the release of official documents for the period from 1947 onwards. Palestinian historiography has been circumscribed be a variety of factors, including the arrayal of powerful forces—the policies of the Great Powers, the news media, and an academy often directly allied with governments—which has delayed the study of

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popular reaction to colonization and occupation. This is beginning to change. Studies, monographs, and books on the Palestinian experience are becoming available, and a body of scholarship on the ‘great revolt of 1936–9’, one seriously addressing the Palestinian peasantry, is emerging. Centres of research and publishing in the Middle East, Europe, and North America are undertaking inquiry into neglected areas, and as Yezid Sayigh has pointed out, the Palestinians ‘have already started to write their own revisionist history... although they have yet to write their history’.5

The Israeli peace movements have in recent years been producing a literature of their own, one that sometimes mentions their interactions with Husseini and Nusseibeh as crucial contacts. Otherwise, there is little appraisal of the toil of such figures insofar as their impact on Palestinian nationalist political thought is concerned. To help correct this deficit, and because of its explanatory value, biographical information will be brought to bear where it helps to explain the ability of individuals to depart from dogma or assert themselves in its revision.

Social and political movements are among the most elusive phenomena to study; even the most accessible of upheavals where underground deliberations have played little or no part defy definitive historiographical treatment. In examining Husseini’s and others’ roles (here and in Chapter Five), we are not only venturing into the history of ideas, we are also probing the difficult question of whether individuals can have a formative effect on political movements, or whether such unrests are produced by deeper social, political, and economic forces that cumulatively have as one of their effects the emergence of individuals. In this context, Palestinians were constrained by the narrow, rigid parameters of the clandestine

3Israel’s ‘new’ historians accept Zionism’s beginning as a national awakening in Europe that ‘turned into a colonialist movement when it chose Palestine as its target territory’. Ilan Pappé, ‘Fifty Years Through the Eyes of “New Historians” in Israel’, Middle East Report 207 (Summer 1998): 14.


factions, formed to oppose what Atran calls the 'surrogate colonization' of Palestine.6

This chapter will show that Husseini, Nusseibeh, and other activist intellectuals had a generative effect on the thinking of Palestinians in the occupied territories, one which would not only come to be reflected in the uprising, but would also eventually influence the 'official' thinking of the PLO along several major avenues of thought:

- The idea of two states alongside each other, Israel and Palestine—an explicit acceptance of coexistence with Israel and implicit abandonment of the notion of the expulsion of the Israelis (as either impossible or impractical)—was subjected to debate in the occupied territories, particularly within Fateh. 'Statehood' was redefined as a cognitive manifestation, rather than as being represented on a map as cartographers might have drawn it in 1917, 1946, 1947, or 1948.

- The 'right of return' was redefined to mean that all Palestinians should be able to return to their homeland as citizens, even if not to their ancestral homes. The possible international acceptance of a Palestinian state, albeit of diminished territory, was directly linked to revising the concept of the right of return; 'return' needed to become emblematic so that a place and context of citizenship could substitute for lost land.

- The need for direct negotiations with the Israelis to accomplish statehood and the right of return was argued and fledgeling steps taken to break the barriers against direct talks.

- Nonviolent resistance was proffered as the best tool for affecting the outcome of negotiations with Israel, in which Palestinian political rights and entitlements would be defined under the norms of internationally accepted human rights treaties, a process

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6Similarly, for Israelis, during a National Unity government under the premiership of Shimon Peres in August 1986, Likud pushed through an amendment to Israel's Order for the Prevention of Terror making unauthorized meetings with members of the PLO an offence punishable by up to three years in prison. Rolef, 'Israel's Policy toward the PLO', p. 264. Israeli authorities clearly considered Husseini to be the chief operative in the occupied territories for Fateh; thus any Israeli who met with him on individual initiative was courting imprisonment. Charles P. Wallace, 'Israeli Security Officials Place Palestinian Activist under Detention', Los Angeles Times, 14 September 1987, p. 18. Given these circumstances where extreme coercions might be applied against action by individuals, this research is animated by a conclusion that when individuals did take risks, deviating despite such constraints, they were able to act as agents of change and to influence the course of events.
accompanied by the progressive elimination of references to armed struggle.

The cumulative building of new political thought—the subject here and on which Nusseibeh and Husseini were working hand-in-glove during the 1980s—is exemplified by three documents that substantiate this process and will be examined here. Although no pride of authorship was expressed then or now, due in part to the constraints already mentioned, these documents reveal a creative influence from their drafter, Nusseibeh, and present concrete evidence that some of the alternative ideas were contributing to a developmental process leading to the actions of the intifada.

*Imagining Shared Solidarity*

Feisel Husseini and the Committee Confronting the Iron Fist

In 1982, a group of Palestinians began the practical implementation of nonviolent resistance through the Palestinian-Israeli Committee Confronting the Iron Fist, or Lajnat Muwajhat al-Qabda al-Hadidiyya. Led by Feisel 'Abd al-Qadir Husseini—de facto national leader of the Palestinians under occupation during the 1980s and then forty-two years old—the committee consolidated preexisting groups that had grown out of an Israeli peace effort called the Committee of Solidarity with Bir Zeit University (CSBZ), initially formed to oppose the punitive closing of the university during the student unrest of late 1981. In 1982, when a member of the staff of the Arab Studies Society was arrested, Husseini sought out political journalist Gideon Spiro, an Israeli former paratrooper who had immigrated with

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7 During this period, Husseini came to be acknowledged as the highest-ranking member of Fateh in the West Bank. In 1995, he would be named minister for Jerusalem of the Palestinian Authority.

8 Irene Ertugrul, 'Working Together for Peace', *Middle East International*, 9 January 1987, p. 17. More than 200 supporters of CSBZ demonstrated in Ramallah on 28 November 1981 to protest the Israeli government's increasing use of the demolition of homes and the closure of Bir Zeit University during the rebellion against Military Order 947. Truncheon-wielding Israeli forces fired tear-gas grenades, injuring a number of Israeli protesters; six were detained for several days. The CSBZ—one of Israel's so-called radical peace groups—announced, 'For the first time, Israelis received a taste of the repression which Palestinian Arabs have experienced since 1967'. Aronson, *Israel, Palestinians and the Intifada*, p. 261. Also see Tamar Berger, 'The Committee of Solidarity with Bir Zeit and the Committee against the War in Lebanon', *Creative Resistance: Anecdotes of Nonviolent Action by Israeli-Based Groups*, ed. Maxine Kaufman Nunn (Jerusalem, Alternative Information Centre, 1993), pp. 45–6.
his family from Berlin to British-controlled Palestine in 1939, and who in 1967 had been among the soldiers to participate militarily in Israel's assumption of control over Arab East Jerusalem. In the intervening years, he had become the spokesperson for CSBZ and was a founding member of Yesh G'vul, or There Is a Limit, a movement of Israeli reserve soldiers who in 1982 refused to serve in the war in Lebanon and questioned the war's legality. Under Husseini's ægis, a number of Palestinians joined with a smaller group of Israeli activists enlisted by Spiro to protest the arrest of the staff person, Abu Anish. A succession of committees followed, each named for a person whose impending deportation was being protested or for whom a defence was being mobilized. The goal was to try to touch Israeli sentiments by placing before the public individual cases of imprisonment or deportation.

In 1985, the sundry committees were succeeded by the Committee Confronting the Iron Fist. As Husseini explained,

The Committee Defending the Rights of Abu Anish ... was the first direct action—that is, announcing a committee which had inside it Palestinians and Israelis. Before, it was committees that were created by Israelis ... [or] a music committee, but this was the first time that we had something [political] mixed together. After that, we created the Committee Defending the Rights of Jabril Rajoub. Then we decided, why should we change names all the time? So we went on with our work, calling it the Committee Confronting the Iron Fist.

Each of the committees had used the identical techniques of persuasion: simple

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9Martha Diase, 'Profiles of Israelis and Palestinians concerned with Peace', in Fernea and Hocking, Struggle for Peace, p. 206.


12The arts provided early openings to dialogue. For an account of contacts between Israeli and Palestinian poets and writers since 1960 and the signing of a 'peace treaty' between them on 13 June 1988, see Yoram Kaniuk, 'The Israeli and Palestinian Writers and Artists Committee', New Outlook, September–October 1988, pp. 23–6.

13Feisel Husseini, one-hour interview (East Jerusalem, 30 January 1996). Husseini's use of 'direct action' is not incidental; such committees were illegal. 'Iron fist', as noted, refers to Israeli policies. It was used by Ben-Gurion and favoured by Shamir. The Committee Confronting the Iron Fist (CCIF) also employed Committee to Confront the Iron Fist interchangeably.
documentation and news media coverage. The tools used by Husseini's committees were rudimentary and the most basic complements of persuasion and protest: public speeches, letters of opposition, declarations, signed public statements, slogans, banners, deputations, picketing, group lobbying, marches, vigils, and demonstrations.14 The techniques were the same as those used by some of the antecedent groups of Eastern Europe's nonviolent movements in the 1980s, such as the predecessors to Poland's Solidarnosc, or the Solidarity Union, and Charter 77, from which emerged what became known as the Czechs' and Slovaks' Velvet Revolution.15 The use of such methods by Husseini built on the employment of documentation tools by al-Haq, guided by Raja Shehadeh and started three years earlier, and al-Haq's materials are frequently cited in the committee's literature. Yet before Husseini's committees, there had been no models for measures that might appeal to the nobler instincts of Israelis.

When the successive committees were consolidated into the one overarching committee, Husseini and Spiro were chosen as spokespersons. Spiro, observing that the 'only form of cooperation' with the Palestinian Arabs had been their cheap employment in Israeli factories, said, 'I started to think of ways to create real cooperation since we, as Israelis, have to pay the price for our occupation of another nation'.16 The Committee Confronting the Iron Fist sought to persuade Israelis of the validity of the Palestinian perspective—perhaps the first such coherent effort since the five Palestinian political parties


16 Arab-Israeli Cooperation against the "Iron Fist": Husseini and Spiro Speak Out, al-Awdah, 9 February 1986, pp. 16. Al-Awdah, a Palestinian English language weekly close to Fatah, was closed by Israel in 1988.
unified themselves to present a memorandum to the British high commissioner in November 1935, just before the start of the 'great revolt'. The approach was not secret; rather, embedded in the committee's persuasive efforts was a conviction of mutuality between occupier and occupied. There was no hint of retaliatory action, no allusion to a mystique of military prowess, no coercive language, no language of revolution. The group was described as follows:

Composed of Arabs, Israelis, Armenians, a sprinkling of Jewish and Arab-Americans and anyone else who cares to join, this organization of 'peaceniks' engages in consciousness-raising politics. Its tactics embrace protest tunes, poetry, scathing speeches and hand-scrawled posters. Its members embrace vast enthusiasm and much idealism.17

The stated intention of the committee's protests was 'to call Israeli and world attention to . . . intolerable conditions' of forced deportation, 'prolonged holding of prisoners without charges', and 'brutality during interrogation'.18 It declared itself as committed to ending administrative detention,19 cessation of torture, and the elimination of collective punishments.20 The group’s members protested prison conditions, condemned the demolition of houses, and denounced the closure of schools, unions, newspapers, and other institutions.

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18 Demonstration Announced to Protest Deportations and Administrative Detentions', press release announcing 1 February 1986 protest before the Israeli military commander, Beit Hanina, to protest practices allegedly violating the Fourth Geneva Convention (East Jerusalem, Committee to Confront the Iron Fist, 29 January 1986). The committee earlier protested plans by Israeli authorities to deport Ali Abu Hilal, allegedly because he had given a V-for-victory sign to television cameras; arrested 28 October 1985, it was claimed that he had been 'severely beaten'. 'Fact Sheet on Ali Abu Hilal' (East Jerusalem, Committee Confronting the Iron Fist, n.d., ca. December 1985). Also see 'Stop Shu'aib'i's Deportation', flyer announcing demonstration protesting deportation of Dr. Azmi Shu'aib'i, a dentist and member of al-Bireh Municipal Council (East Jerusalem, Committee Confronting the Iron Fist, December 1985); 'Fact Sheet on Azmi Shu'aib'i', arrested 28 October 1985 (East Jerusalem, Committee Confronting the Iron Fist, ca. December 1985).


20 'News Conference: Mass Arrests and House Searches in Balata Refugee Camp' (East Jerusalem, Committee to Confront the Iron Fist, 20 February 1986).
by the military occupiers. They staged demonstrations, hosted seminars, leafleted, picketed, and held vigils and news conferences. Fact sheets were distributed along with news releases concerning deportations and administrative detentions. Saving the lives of political prisoners who were believed to be maltreated or tortured became a priority, and the committee also tried to mitigate the harassment of the families of the imprisoned. In one example, it protested nocturnal raids on the home of Muhammad Abu Wardeh, a twelve-year-old boy from the Balata refugee camp, after he had spoken at a 24 February 1986 press conference organized by the committee.

The minutes of a 19 January 1986 meeting of the steering committee for the Committee Confronting the Iron Fist indicate that ten persons were present. Following discussion of Jabril Rajoub’s case, plans were reviewed for a demonstration to be held at

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21 Marjorie Hope and James Young, ‘Christians and Nonviolent Resistance in the Occupied Territories’, Christian Century, 27 April 1988, p. 431. In addition to its Israeli members, non-member Israelis took up the committee’s issues, including Ran Cohen of the Citizens Rights (Ratz) faction of the dovish Zionist Meretz parliamentary bloc and political scientist Edy Kaufman of Hebrew University. Dajani, Eyes without Count?, p. 200 en89.

22 See ‘Announcement of News Conference’, flyer alleging Israeli military and police attacks ‘with clubs’ on ‘mothers of Palestinians held in Israeli prisons after the women staged a silent protest at the Damascus Gate’, Red Cross Building, Sheikh Jarrah (East Jerusalem, Committee to Confront the Iron Fist, 9 October 1986).

23 ‘Administrative Detainees 1985’, list of thirty-nine students and trade unionists detained in 1985 whose cases were taken up by the committee (East Jerusalem, Committee to Confront the Iron Fist, n.d., ca. 28 January 1986).

24 See ‘Committee to Free Jabril Rajoub’, flyer on Jabril Rajoub’s detention (East Jerusalem, Committee to Free Jabril Rajoub, n.d., ca. 1985); Faisal Husseini, letter to Prime Minister Shimon Peres, re administrative detention of Jabril Rajoub in Hebron prison (East Jerusalem, Committee to Free Jabril Rajoub, 19 December 1985).


26 Jabril Rajoub had been sentenced to life imprisonment in 1970 for supporting Fateh. In 1980, a thirty-three-day hunger strike, described by Rajoub in ‘Prison Hunger Strikes’ and cited in Chapter Three, had been accompanied by protests from the committee, after which Rajoub was moved to a regular prison cell, where the beatings and psychological harassment of which the committee had accused the authorities came to a stop. See ‘We Can Confront the Iron Fist; Jabril Rajoub’s Demands Met! Ends Hunger Strike after 34 Days’, flyer on administrative detention, torture, house demolitions of families of detainees, and the Prisoner Exchange Agreement of 20 May (East Jerusalem, Committee to Confront the Iron Fist, 1985).

Former deputy editor for ‘Abir, or Fragrance, a magazine for women, Rajoub wrote a book in prison about how inmates maintained their loyalties to the various PLO factions while under lock and key. He and his cellmate, Sameh Kanan, also translated into Arabic The Revolt, Menahem Begin’s account of working for the
the military command in Beit Hanina thirteen days later, at which, it was suggested, placards
should carry the names of deportees and detainees in Arabic, Hebrew, and English. Plans for
a Day of Fast, Study and Solidarity with Palestinian Prisoners, to be held on 17 April, were
also reported, as was the case of a prisoner named Adnan Mansour Ghannem, who, it was
written, had been ‘subjected to extreme torture’ in Gaza. In Beit Hanina on 1 February
1986, Israelis and Palestinians numbering one hundred fifty turned out for the demonstration
at the Central Regional Headquarters of the Israeli authority to protest the expulsion of three
Palestinians from the West Bank. A newspaper account said that, at the ‘well organized, but
relatively poorly attended’ protest, each person carried a placard with the name of an
individual held in administrative detention, in Arabic, Hebrew, and English. The ‘iron fist’
policy of the Labour party government was the subject of speeches criticizing the expulsion
of twenty-nine Palestinians and the imprisonment of more than one hundred twenty others
under administrative detention. ‘The names of all detainees and deportees were chanted by
the demonstration organizers’, with the crowd answering samud, or steadfast, if the person
was under administrative detention, and ‘aid, or returning, if expelled.

On 21 March 1986, newspapers reported that a demonstration had been organized by

underground Irgun Zvai Leumi. Jeffrey Goldberg, ‘From Peace Process to Police Process: Jabril Rajoub,
Anthology, ed. Walter Laqueur (London, Wildwood House, 1979), pp. 140–5. Rajoub returned home to Dura,
near Hebron, in a controversial May 1985 exchange of prisoners with Ahmad Jabril’s PFLP-General
Command before going to work with Feisel Husseini at his Arab Studies Society. Goldstein, Journalism under
Occupation, p. 151; Black and Morris, Israel’s Secret Wars, pp. 465–6.

On 3 January 1988, having been considered by the Israeli government a dangerous Fateh operative in
the intifada, Rajoub was deported. ‘Four Expelled Secretly; UN Security Council to Meet on Deportations’,
Laments Expulsion of Activists Accused of Violence to Lebanon’, Christian Science Monitor, 14 January
1988. After seventeen years in Israeli gaols, Rajoub was in 1993 appointed by Yasir Arafat as chief of 2,000
mostly Fateh activists in the Preventive Security Service (PSS) for the West Bank. Graham Usher, ‘The

Minutes of Steering Committee Meeting’ (East Jerusalem, Committee to Confront the Iron Fist, 19
January 1986).

the Committee Confronting the Iron Fist, at the Damascus Gate of Jerusalem’s Old City. A statement read aloud in three languages highlighted the ‘intolerable conditions’ in which Palestinians were being held at Israeli gaols, which ‘lack sanitary conditions, lack healthy food and drinkable water, and lack fresh air, which causes the spread of skin and other diseases among the prisoners’. A member of the committee told hundreds of spectators that the protest was intended to show political prisoners that they were not forgotten. A huge placard read, ‘Down with the iron fist, down with occupation’. On 5 June 1986, wire services reported the committee’s demonstration protesting the nineteenth year of occupation:

About 100 Palestinians, leftist Jews and foreigners demonstrated for one hour outside the Damascus Gate leading into the walled Old City. The demonstrators, from a variety of groups organized into a coalition called the Committee Confronting the Iron Fist, carried Arabic, Hebrew and English signs protesting the continued Israeli occupation of Arab territory.

The basic platform of Husseini’s original serial committees reflected a number of conceptual alterations, one of which was acknowledgement of Israel’s permanence and clear-cut acceptance of coexistence: ‘On the basis of our belief that occupation is an enemy to both occupied and occupier, we address our call to the democratic and progressive forces in Israel to stand in solidarity with Palestinians in the struggle to end the occupation and to bring

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29. The numerically smaller Israeli members of the committee could apply for and obtain police permits for demonstrations, even if comprised of ‘several hundred Palestinians and a few dozen Israelis’. ‘If the Palestinians have a problem reaching consensus regarding their applying for a permit, let them utilize us Israelis, and we will request permission’. Eventually realizing that the protagonists were primarily Palestinian, the police would deny permission for a large march planned for the fifth anniversary of the Sabra and Shatila massacre, in September 1987, even though the three applicants were Israeli. Michel Warschawski, ‘The Committee against the Iron Fist: Prototype for Israeli-Palestinian Cooperation, 1985–1987’, in Kaufman Nunn, Creative Resistance, pp. 82, 83.


31. Steve Hagey, ‘Violence, protests mark Jerusalem Day’, United Press International (UPI), 5 June 1986. To protest the occupation, Spiro advocated ‘Gandhi-style passive resistance’, had suggested that a human wall of 200,000 Palestinians encircle Kiryat Arba—an Israeli settlement in Hebron—and that curfews be greeted by an outpouring of Palestinians into the streets rather than their acquiescing by staying at home. ‘Arab-Israeli Cooperation against the “Iron Fist”’, p. 17. Spiro said he hoped the committee could dramatize the idea of coexistence, which he defined as the Palestinians being granted either independence or equal rights. Ibid., p. 17.
about a just peace in the region'.\textsuperscript{32} Despite the illegality of the committees, the subtext of their issuances recognizes not only the State of Israel but the humanity of the Israelis. Yet, as Reuven Gal notes, apart from the small number of Israelis who were involved behind the scenes, 'very little of this came across into the Israeli awareness',\textsuperscript{33} and this acceptance of a much smaller Palestinian state than that envisioned in the 1947 UN partition plan appears to have been denied or ignored in Israel.

The Committee Confronting the Iron Fist was curiously described by the seasoned journalist Glenn Frankel as 'quasi-Marxist', its sins presumably shown in his next sentence: 'The group comprises Palestinians and Israelis who engage in demonstrations, hold press conferences and provide a steady stream of information to journalists on alleged "atrocities of the occupation"'.\textsuperscript{34} Yet no evidence is found in the archives plumbed for this research to show any such ideological bent. A far more significant conceptual development was occurring at the hands of the committee during the 1980s, one that the anthropologist Benedict Anderson has elucidated. The committees represented the creation of an imagined political community in which what is forgotten is as important as what is remembered. Nations, Anderson writes, are but imagined political communities. The citizens of the smallest nation will never know each other, yet the 'image of their communion' exists in the mind of each, and nations distinguish themselves from each other by 'the style by which they are imagined'.\textsuperscript{35} Such imagining involves memory, yet, as Anderson's work shows, it also requires forgetfulness. Husseini and the Israelis and Palestinians who were involved with him were setting aside the 'us vs. them' mentality, and creating an outlook of shared

\textsuperscript{32}Let Today's March Be a Step in the "March of the Millions" against Occupation', flyer in English with Arabic and Hebrew heading (East Jerusalem, Committee Confronting the Iron Fist, 14 June 1987). See Appendix 2 for the text of the announcement.

\textsuperscript{33}Gal, interview (16 March 1997).


reciprocity in which military occupation was harmful to both peoples, who, they argued, must share the land. Creating a fabrication in which both sides had an interest in dislodging something mutually hurtful, rather than remembering animosities—a crucial variant in seeking vengeance—they were attempting to forget them.36 The representation of an overarching communality in which each side represents a larger community aggrieved by the violence of military occupation, of course, did not exist. A shared experience was being summoned by imagination, in an attempt to start the process of becoming a community:

We decided that the main enemy is the occupation . . . the main enemy for the two communities—for the Palestinian community and for the Israeli community. . . . [T]he occupation can hurt the morale of the people who are controlling the occupation, no less than the people who are under it—maybe more. We reached an agreement that we must, as Palestinians and Israelis working together, end this occupation . . . [and] that it was in the interest of the Israelis to end this occupation as well as the Palestinians.37

Despite the significant departure these techniques represented from the 'culture' of the covert, cellular approaches favoured by guerrilla cadres, the adoption of forthright, public, non-clandestine and nonviolent forms of struggle were considered by the Israeli government to jeopardize the public order and threaten the security of the state. Instead of seizing on the openings created by Husseini and the others, the Israelis gaoled Husseini for fifteen out of twenty-one months between April 1987 and January 1989, under administrative arrest—the provisions for detention renewable for six-month periods without charge or trial provided by the Defence (Emergency) Regulations introduced by the British

36A professor of Jewish literature notes, 'The desire to forget will always be pitted against the desire to remember. The reorganization of a collective memory, the symbols adopted by societies, are all part of imagined communities creating a national self. In the Middle East, two people [sic] are in a double grip—pitting the formation of their own structure of symbols at odds with the symbols and desires of the “other”. Ironically and tragically, the other, the Palestinians to the Israelis and vice versa, is part of the formation of the national self. The curse and blessing of personal and national memory are a constant presence in the personal and national psyche. . . . The suppression of the “other’s” identity . . . lends identity to the other. . . . [P]eace is the only way out of the entangled myths, stories and tension between the two “others”’. Gila Ramras-Rauch, 'Israelis vs. Palestinians: A Clash of “Others”', letter to the editor, New York Times, 2 October 1996.

37Husseini, interview (30 January 1996).
in 1945.\textsuperscript{38} Israeli authorities prefer administrative detention rather than criminal charges because they do not need to reveal their intelligence sources in court.\textsuperscript{39} When Husseini was imprisoned in the summer of 1988, the broad spectrum of the Israeli peace groups condemned his arrest. Members of Peace Now held a vigil against the government’s action and sent protest telegrams to Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin, despite the group’s modus operandi of avoiding confrontation with the IDF or security services. It called for a demonstration at Rabin’s home in Tel Aviv, in which it was emphasized that Husseini had spoken out for a two-state solution and that the government should be meeting with Husseini instead of locking him up.\textsuperscript{40}

In gaol, whether consciously adopted or integral to his personality, Husseini’s faultlessly polite behaviour towards his prison guards was Gandhian in its principle through its acceptance of punishment as an opportunity to influence the adversary. In gaol or out, he adhered to verbally nonviolent expressions. He reversed the ‘cold shoulder’ technique in prison. Upon release, Husseini described his adoption of the practice of smiling every time a guard passed. He told the guard, ‘I am in a cell whose walls don’t smile, the ground is cold and frowning, your guards don’t smile and even the sun you allow doesn’t smile. I can’t force any of them to smile, but I have full ability to keep my own smile’.\textsuperscript{41}

In 1987, as the twenty-year anniversary of the occupation approached, reminding the residents of the West Bank and Gaza Strip of the futility of their station, at a time when official PLO utterances were often bombastic and inflammatory, Husseini reached across


constituencies and developed a reputation for tactful, plain-spoken truthfulness. Husseini’s heritage gave him legitimacy and strengthened his ability to assert nonviolent struggle as the preferable form of Palestinian resistance. He had derived his stature from a number of sources, including the traditional autonomy that had been enjoyed by Jerusalem’s patrician classes since the second half of the nineteenth century. Of special weight was the fact that his father was ‘Abd al-Qadir al-Husseini, leader in the 1930s of al-Jihad al-Muqaddas, or Holy War, and the legendary Arab hero of the 1948 Arab-Israeli war who was killed in action at al-Qastel on 8 April 1948. Editor and activist Hanna Siniora observed:

Feisel has a special place as the son of one of the leaders of the 1948 war, a military leader who died in battle. People always remember that he comes from a family that fought for the country, and that his father paid with his life to defend the country. He had a good heritage and the sympathy of the public.

Related to the grand mufti of Jerusalem Haj Amin al-Husseini, his lineage also includes

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Porath, ‘Political Organization of the Palestinian Arabs’, p. 4.


Part of Husseini’s ability to touch the imagination of both Palestinians and Israelis is related to his father’s death at the mountain village of al-Qastel. Located on the main road from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, six miles to the west of the Holy City, the town had been an important outpost for the British military forces that were proceeding to capture Jerusalem in December 1917. Rowlands Coldicott, London Men in Palestine, and How They Marched to Jerusalem (New York, Longmans, Green and Co., 1919), pp. 157–89. The town again became a watershed when the Israelis captured it in 1948. Despite a peace agreement between al-Qastel and Jewish Jerusalem in the spring of 1948, Operation Nahshon was implemented by the Haganah, in which villages along certain routes were cleared out and the inhabitants killed or expelled. The first such village to be so occupied and destroyed, from 8–10 April, according to the Israeli historian Benny Morris, was al-Qastel. Morris, Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, pp. 64, 111, 112, 163. For a condensed account of the death of Husseini’s father, see Wallach and Wallach, ‘Faisal Husseini’, in New Palestinians, pp. 45–8. Forty-one years later, an Israeli soldier who had shot at Husseini’s father at al-Qastel writes of the continuing resonance from his death. Yoram Kaniuk, ‘Arabs and Israelis Must Forget a Little’, New York Times, 25 April 1989. For an account of Feisel, see Wallach, ‘Battles Lines’.

Siniora, interview (16 December 1997).

Among Palestinians, Feisel was not hurt by the widespread supposition that Haj Amin had ordered the assassination of King ‘Abdullah, which took place while he was en route to al-Aqsa Mosque on 20 July 1951, and the fact that three members of the Husseini clan were among the defendants. ‘[E]ven if Haj Amin was not directly involved in the murder itself, there is no doubt that he influenced those who planned and perpetrated it’. Elpeleg, Grand Mufti, p. 126.
two former mayors of Jerusalem, a seventeenth-century mufti of Jerusalem, and historic kinships claiming descendancy from the Prophet. As Mahdi ‘Abd al-Hadi contends, he possesses all the accoutrements for leadership in his milieu: the ‘imperatives’ of wealth, credibility, Muslim credentials, ‘clean hands’, and connexions. 47

When Husseini argued that there was a better, wholly political approach to struggling for political rights, it was heard with peculiar credibility. As early as 1968, he had started making public statements to the effect that peace could be brought about only through nonviolent approaches. 48 His authority has come to exemplify the Palestinian moral order, much as Dale F. Eickelman and James Piscatori suggest: ‘Through the manipulation of the symbols of society and the invocation of tradition [those bearing authority] make claims of obedience and obligation on others’. Feisel possesses what Eickelman and Piscatori call ‘justifiable control over . . . society’s symbolic production’. 49 Journalist Sarah Helm writes that this ‘quiet, honest, ascetic man has none of the zeal of the extremist’. 50 She adds,

Not a charismatic leader, his solid somewhat dour countenance is that of a determined pragmatist . . . In the 1960s Mr Husseini took up the PLO banner, training in military camps in Syria. When he returned to live in Jerusalem after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war his first arrest was for storing weapons for the PLO.

47 Mahdi ‘Abd al-Hadi, two-hour interview (East Jerusalem, 13 December 1997). Family contacts from Iraq to the Arabian peninsula to North Africa helped Husseini to tread his own path without suffering the consequences that others might have faced for independently pursuing options outside the mainstream.

Only five years before the organization of Husseini’s first committee, in 1977, the PLO’s Isam Sartawi had been assassinated for suggesting to Austrian chancellor Bruno Kreisky that the return of the West Bank and Gaza could translate into a state of nonbelligerency between a future Palestinian state and Israel so long as settlement could be reached on the ‘right of Palestinian refugees to return to their original homes, if they wished to do so, or to be compensated if they freely elected not to return’. Isam A. Sartawi, letter to Austrian chancellor Bruno Kreisky (Hotel Imperial, Vienna, 27 January 1977), archives of Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs [hereafter PASSIA], p. 2. Another pioneer of dialogue with Israel was Sa‘id Hamammi, Fateh member and PLO representative in London, who was also assassinated by Palestinians, in London on 4 January 1978. He had suggested in The Times in 1973 that Palestinian Arabs believed in a binational state in which they could live together with Israeli Jews, he called for mutual recognition between the two parties, and he sought a peace conference. Sa‘id Hamammi, ‘Making the First Move towards Peace in Palestine’, The Times, 17 December 1973. Avnery devotes 169 pages to Sartawi and Hamammi in Avnery, My Friend, the Enemy, p. 166.


By the mid 1970s, however, Faisal Husseini was developing his own ideas about the way forward for the Palestinians, talking about non-violence and passive resistance and compromise, accepting a two-state solution early on.\textsuperscript{51}

The youth who had once read aloud a song written by his father to commemorate the anniversary of his death, 'Give me my sword, Mother, and I will go and fight for our land',\textsuperscript{52} in adulthood was instead organizing committees that relied on the news media for their impact. Yet, in the same way that the British had failed to respond to the eighteen years of largely nonviolent Palestinian Arab protest and persuasion that had followed the Balfour Declaration, Israelis in the 1980s offered no reinforcement for nonviolent as opposed to violent opposition. They viewed nonviolent sanctions as part of the same battle with the Palestinians that the government was fighting through military measures.\textsuperscript{53} 'To Israelis it really doesn't make any difference if the intifada is violent or nonviolent', Israeli journalist Daniel Rubinstein later said; 'the problem is the goal of the Palestinians and not the means'.\textsuperscript{54} Barton Gellman notes that Israeli commentators tended to brand as 'terrorists' all of the 120,000 Palestinians out of the population of 2 million estimated by the Israeli government to have been incarcerated during the intifada years from 1987 to 1993, even though only a few hundred were ever implicated in serious violence.\textsuperscript{55} The Israeli refusal to discern between nonviolent and violent means of contention can also be seen in a decision of Israel's High Court of Justice upholding one of Husseini's administrative detentions:

There is no actual physical violence in the activities of the appellant. He is not the one who places explosives, nor the one who sends those who place them, but ... his coordinative activities between the organizations are highly

\textsuperscript{51}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{52}Wallach and Wallach, 'Faisal Husseini', in New Palestinians, p. 49.

\textsuperscript{53}Eric Goldstein, Journalism under Occupation: Israel's Regulation of the Palestinian Press (New York, Committee to Protect Journalists and ARTICLE 19, 1988), p. 2.


important for the organization[al] structure which leads to the execution of the terrorist actions of the various organizations. . . . The counter-war of Israel must, therefore, focus on each unit of this wide range and hurt or weaken it.\textsuperscript{56}

The person that the court sought to 'hurt or weaken' may have been the first Palestinian, or among the first, to speak and give lectures to Israeli audiences in Hebrew, having learned the language during a year spent in Dahoun gaol in Haifa, from November 1967 to October 1968.\textsuperscript{57} Immediately after his release during the second year of military occupation, Husseini began having conversations with Israeli political parties on the left and offering interviews in Hebrew to the Israeli press.\textsuperscript{58} In the words of an Israeli journalist,

The English and Hebrew in which he addresses Israeli and foreign audiences is not particularly good. But even with his limited vocabulary, Husseini comes across with intellectual clarity, strength, and precision. . . . While other West Bank leaders acted in a factional manner, Husseini stood out as a national personality.\textsuperscript{59}

When Husseini is noted in the literature, it is usually as a Fateh representative.\textsuperscript{60} This may be attributable to the Israeli policies that were explicitly designed to prevent contact with anyone remotely associated with the PLO. As Reuven Gal noted, throughout the 1980s and even in the early years of the intifada, 'we didn't hear any of these names: Sari Nussiebeh, Feisel Husseini, Hanan Ashrawi'.

The Israeli leadership, especially the leadership of the Mossad or the security services (who were activated by the Israeli political leaders) considered those leaders behind the scenes as the troublemakers who create rock throwings and

\textsuperscript{56}\textit{Faisal Abdal Husseini v. State of Israel}, unofficial translation from Hebrew, Israel's High Court of Justice decision upholding Husseini's detention and the government's refusal to draw a distinction between PLO 'terrorism' and political activity (Tel Aviv, 6 December 1987). During the 1980s, Husseini would often be gaol for his advocacy of nonviolence. When he was under house arrest after sunset, and under city arrest by day between 1982 and 1987, the committees continued to meet, at his home. Susan Sachs, 'The PLO's "Consensus Maker" ', \textit{Newsday}, 4 May 1993, p. 17; Husseini, interview (30 January 1996); Glenn Frankel, 'Historic Mansion Becomes Jerusalem Issue, Israel Demands Palestinians Limit Use of Orient House', \textit{Washington Post}, 14 July 1996.

\textsuperscript{57}Husayni, Interview, p. 8.

\textsuperscript{58}Husseini, interview (30 January 1996).


\textsuperscript{60}For example, Robinson, \textit{Building a Palestinian State}, pp. 99, 166; Hunter, \textit{Palestinian Uprising}, p. 156.
ocktail bombs. They didn't consider them as partners for negotiation. Not at all... I see a lot of responsibility on the Israeli side for not being sensitive enough or insightful enough to see that. But I also put a lot of responsibility on the Palestinian side... for not being to put across that this was a political struggle—not to go back to Jaffa, or Haifa, or so on, but to sit down at the negotiation table and negotiate a future for the Palestinian people.  

Analysts of the Israeli peace constituencies, writing subsequently, have tended to place more importance than was previously accorded on Husseini's role, his support for Israeli-Palestinian dialogue, and his repudiation of violence. On a comparative basis, they have given him more credence than do most European or North American commentators. Reuven Kaminer notes that Husseini's committees received little attention and that his work was regarded by Israeli officials as 'hostile' and 'subversive', yet he concludes that Husseini's committees were an 'important link in the chain of Israeli-Palestinian joint action'. Colin Shindler describes Husseini as falling within a pragmatic tendency of the PLO in the territories and acknowledges his part in the situation that would come about by the late 1980s when 'all major Palestinian groups in the PLO were willing to conduct a dialogue with Israelis' (with the exception of the PFLP). Mordechai Bar-On considers the unique feature of the proto-Iron Fist committees to have been the 'joint venture' of the Israelis with Husseini, Nusseibeh, and Mubarak Awad, whose work will be analysed in Chapter Five. The most accurate appraisal of Husseini's committees is by David Hall-Cathala. In none of these well-researched books, however, does the interpretation of Husseini's role address the realignments that he was striving to make within his own camp.


62 Police announcement in Ha'aretz, 1 August 1988, as cited in Kaminer, Politics of Protest, p. 107.

63 Kaminer, Politics of Protest, p. 106. Kaminer mistakenly cites the starting date for Husseini's committees as 1986, rather than 1982, and does not explain their derivation. Kaminer was one of the 'Rumanian Four', the steering committee of an Israeli delegation that met with PLO emissaries in Rumania in November 1986. Adam Keller, 'Talking to the PLO', in Kaufman Nunn, Creative Resistance, pp. 58–60.


65 Hall-Cathala, Peace Movement in Israel, p. 62.
Yet his committees were the first consistent, articulated expressions of the coherent adoption of nonviolent methods after the 1967 occupation and one of the earliest harbingers of the political evolution underway in the territories that would result in the 1987 uprising.

The skeptic might ask if there was not an historical inevitability to the necessity for a figure to arise at some moment in time and begin the difficult task of coaxing the Palestinians to accept their defeat, or the cynic may charge that singling out Husseini represents a personalization of history. Husseini’s positions went against the stock revolutionary ideologies of the armed factions, virtually all of his activities were illegal under occupation, and he spoke with the enemy in the enemy’s tongue, rather than employing linguistic trickery or the opaque euphemisms of the commando groups. One observer reported that the Palestinians involved in Husseini’s committees believed that the future offered space ‘to erode Israel’s grip, to entangle Israel’s government and people in multiple moral and political contradictions... [with] a faith grounded in calculation and experimental political activity’. Husseini was able to ignore or suspend the demeaning culture of the occupier, and by asking that the Israelis imagine themselves in a shared predicament created by the occupation, he widened the dichotomy and dilemma for those Israelis who prized a moral raison d’être for the Jewish state but feared the societal costs of oppression. In speaking of shared solidarity, and in what the public record shows as a refusal to assess blame—at least in his public gestures and modes of speech—he sought to open a road for compromise without rancour. During the early 1980s, Feisel Husseini, as much as anyone, both prized open the political space for and created the symbols of acceptance in Palestinian political thought that reflect a view that both Israelis and Palestinians have rights over the land they contest.

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66 Tschirgi, ‘High Hope, Bad News’. 
Action as Substantiation of an Idea: The First Authorized March

One lesson from the 'great revolt' absorbed by Palestinian intellectuals and activists in the occupied territories in the years leading up to 1987 was that noncooperation measures without a political programme of achievable goals and a diplomatic strategy would come to naught. A view of action as the substantiation of ideas developed among the activist intellectuals. In other words, if one proposed a sovereign independent state, one had to act in such a way as to demonstrate that statehood was viable. Intrinsically to this perspective were modifications of language—which had previously been disconnected from action—and among the modifications being made by Husseini, Nusseibeh, and others were changes in nomenclature. Within the territories, the conjuring up of the building of a nation state would come to mean the development of institutions and freedoms, instead of thawra, or revolution, the dominant political rubric from the pan-Arab era. Gone, too, would be emotive phraseology, noms de guerres, grandiosity of phraseology, and Marxist slogans. The view that ideas and action required integrated strategies was evolving at approximately the same time that the term intifada was coming into use during the student struggles of the 1980s, discussed in Chapters One and Three, with its connotation of shaking off occupation, or the shedding of passivity, instead of the combative phraseology of the 1950s and 1960s, with its implications of demolishing, destroying, or defeating. Instead, the choice of the word intifada implied ‘motion’ and ‘change’, Hanan Mikhail Ashrawi writes, a ‘conscious and active expression of will’.67

In June 1987, the Committee Confronting the Iron Fist organized a march to protest the occupation and to call for an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital. It was the first political procession in Arab East Jerusalem to express opposition to Israeli

policies for which the Israeli authorities granted permission.\(^6\) Peaceful protesters proceeded past the U.S. consulate on 14 June carrying sixty-seven black flags, representing the first year of the military occupation. Perhaps five hundred Palestinians and Israelis carried placards from a joint Israeli-Palestinian exhibit entitled *Down with Occupation*. Speeches referenced the right of Palestinians to an independent state and proclaimed the PLO their representative. Gideon Spiro told reporters that the march’s significance came from Jews and Arabs joining against the occupation.

Sari Nusseibeh, a member of the Committee Confronting the Iron Fist, was criticized for obtaining the permit to march, because it admitted Israeli authority.\(^6\) To this he replied,

> There is no difference in kind between obtaining a building permit and a march permit if both permits aim at helping the continued existence of Palestinians on their soil . . . We will not physically push out the military authorities through a demonstration or a march, what we gain through these activities is to publicize our opposition to occupation.\(^7\)

This first authorized march is revealing, coming as it did six months in advance of the Palestinian uprising. In a newspaper account in which he defended having obtained the march permit, Nusseibeh also declared his hope that the march ‘would be the first of many acts of passive resistance by Palestinians against 20 years of Israeli occupation’. His comments predict an *intifada*. In using the phrase *passive resistance*, he apparently assumed it would be understood by both protagonists and antagonists.\(^7\) The efforts of a handful of East Jerusalemites had come fully into view. From the public record, we can discern that they were seeking to channel growing popular discontent away from the mere expression of anger or fury and towards political goals that could affect an ultimate settlement, that they

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\(^6\) The question of seeking government authorization for holding demonstrations rather than asserting a right to protest had been, similarly, an issue in the 1930s. See Lesch, *Arab Politics in Palestine*, p. 214.

\(^7\) Hamad, ‘Palestinians, Israelis March’.

\(^7\) 'Palestinians Stage Anti-Israel March through Jerusalem'. Although Nusseibeh used a quaint term that even Gandhi rejected because of its incorrect implications of passivity, it probably reflected a judgement that the term had sufficient resonance for it to be attributed to him.
were trying to organize action productively so as to prevent unstructured outbreaks of rage, and that they were trying to connect these actions to political results. A division of labour is evident, one later formalized in the intifada, in which those in the territories would get permits, demonstrate, and stand up to all critics, while the PLO abroad would translate their actions in the realm of international relations. Goals of independence and statehood were laid out. At the same time, Palestinians and Israelis walking together had the effect of physically communicating a willingness to compromise.

Although the June march was aimed against the occupation, its larger purpose was to prepare the way for a Palestinian state, something for which the organizers assumed there was no logical prospect through armed struggle. Since the activities of the Committee Confronting the Iron Fist were not secret and invited public participation, a presumption is revealed that the populace in the territories through their own words and deeds could have some influence over a political outcome. In viewing action as a manifestation of ideas, the techniques of nonviolent resistance were coming to the fore, because they could affect the outcome of a settlement. Nusseibeh would later encapsulate the transition he was helping to guide: ‘[P]eople have come to realise that ideas and aspirations must be embodied in manifest acts if reality is to be changed’. 72

The loci of power within the broad PLO apparatus was also in motion. During this time, Husseini, Nusseibeh, and others were also seeking to influence the thinking of the PLO based in Tunisia, with which many of them were associated, by urging a more utilitarian and consensual view of struggle. They did so through telecopier facsimile messages, messengers, and meetings outside the territories. By the end of 1985, Husseini was talking to Abu Rhad about the use of what Abu Jihad termed passive resistance: ‘Our first talk was about “passive resistance”, but we didn’t like the name [with its connotations of passivity], so we

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started talking about another title and we reached aggressive nonviolence’. 73

Although the PLO had financially supported civilian organizing in the territories, and accepted the odd idea from those in the territories, partly with backing from Abu Jihad, it remained locked in the contradictions of insisting on ‘all available means’ of struggle. 74 Sporadically encouraging the use of nonviolent strategies failed to recognize that such approaches needed to be exclusive of violent operations, or else no desired mechanisms of change would result, and it left its basic doctrine on armed struggle intact. Perhaps it was thought that this would foster inclusivity and pluralism; such straddling may also have appeased competing factions, without which key blocs in the PLO’s constituencies might have been estranged. 75 Such peregrination was personified by Arafat’s appearance at the UN General Assembly in 1974, when he stated that he came ‘bearing an olive branch and a freedom fighter’s gun’ and declared political struggle to be an adjunct to armed struggle:

> We are ... expressing our faith in political and diplomatic struggle as complements, as enhancements of armed struggle. ... Through our militant Palestine national liberation movement, our people’s struggle matured and grew enough to accommodate political and social struggle in addition to armed struggle. 76

Viewing civilian resistance as the precursor to armed struggle, however, overlooks one of the former’s most potent properties: the potential for exploiting disparities between the unarmed and the militarily dominant. Instead of countering the superiority of the opponent’s troops and police with comparable or provocative violence, the inequities inherent in the situation can be employed in favour of the naked protagonist. With careful preparation, sound strategic analysis, and in skilful hands, the more severe the imbalance, the

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73 Husseini, interview (30 January 1996).

74 Arafat, 1985 Cairo Declaration on Terrorism, in Lukacs, Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, pp. 370–71.


more quickly the sympathy of observers may flow to the side of the unarmed. An asymmetry between the Palestinians and Israel was deeply embedded in the historical circumstances, yet the Palestinian failure to exploit fully the incommensurate relationship between Israeli military preeminence and their own lack thereof would make the road to political gains ultimately achieved by the intifada more circuitous.

**Shifting towards Negotiations**

The need for direct contacts with Israel had begun to be advanced by Husseini and Nusseibeh in the early 1980s. Aziz Shehadeh had urged such channels whenever Husseini evaded house arrest and travelled to the Shehadeh home in Ramallah in the mid-1980s to discuss such issues. Negotiations, of course, implied the recognition of Israel, a position officially still regarded as treachery by many Palestinians, creating a predicament for its exponents. As Nusseibeh pointed out, it was difficult to broach the subject: ‘Those arguing in favour of recognising Israel (real peace) in exchange for the establishment of a Palestinian state were treading on such virginal political ground that, in order to maintain their credibility in their own constituency, they often resorted to what was necessarily a language that didn’t make much of an impression on Israel or on the world community’. In 1968, Yehoshafat Harkabi notes in Fateh’s diasporan writings ‘lack of serious consideration of the relationship between the objective and the means to attain it’; in the absence of bridging the gap between its actions and aims, ‘its violence becomes a goal for its own sake—violence for the purpose of satisfying psychological motivation and the urge for vengeance’. Inside the occupied territories among the activist intellectuals whom we are considering, this was not true, even in the late 1960s. Yet this does not mean that they were

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77Jonathan Kuttab, interview (10 March 1997); Shehadeh, interview (18 March 1977).
79Harkabi, *Fadayeen Action and Arab Strategy*, pp. 34, 35.
free to engage in public discourse on the matter. A debate on means and ends is a customary and predictable element of preparation for civil resistance, and it began to echo among Palestinians in the occupied territories, as ideas on direct negotiations with the Israelis—apart from their intrinsic value—became instrumental in the reevaluation of the worth of violent struggle. To speak of negotiations meant focusing on what might be achieved through talks and, thus, the benefits of nonviolent struggle stood out.80

Yet the gap between the East Jerusalemites and the diasporan armed factions was immense. As noted, a trend towards accepting the irreversibility of the State of Israel had been underway since 1974, but any continuation of ‘bombings or dramatic raids (both basically indiscriminate) hardly reassured the Israelis’.81 Nusseibeh would later write during the intifada, ‘Palestinians essentially believe that any bargaining with Israel over Palestinian territory is like bargaining over stolen property with the very thief who stole it by force’.82 An earlier generation of Palestinians in exile believed that ‘the road to Tel Aviv lies through Amman and Beirut’—that is, the vanquishment of Israel through Palestinian military operations from camps based in Jordan and Lebanon.83 By 1991, Nusseibeh would state, ‘Our own road to statehood is through Israel, through Israeli public opinion. . . . It is still our

80 These East Jerusalem intellectuals and activists were not without recusants in Israel. In 1981, the Ratz faction adopted a position, heavily influenced by its Peace Now members, which called for negotiations to be rooted in the right to self-determination for the Palestinians. In an unusual example of such an extraparliamentary group’s impact on the political process, the platform specified that Palestinian participation be included, ‘specifically any group that accepts negotiations as the only way to settle the dispute’. Dedi Zucker, Jerusalem Post, 25 March 1981, as cited in Hall-Cathala, Peace Movement in Israel, 1967–87, pp. 145–6. By mid-1986, Citizens’ Rights MK Yossi Sarid (later one of Israel’s secret negotiators for the Oslo accords and Labour environment minister through the mid-1990s) had formulated his own programme of nonviolent resistance for the occupied territories. See ‘Gandhi on the West Bank?’ Peace Now Newsletter, Summer 1986. In the same year, Meron Benvenisti (a Ratz MK) conjectured, ‘Eventually the Palestinians will learn that their real power lies in civil disobedience, not senseless terrorism’; he predicted, ‘It’s inevitable’. Thomas Smerling, ‘Gandhi’s Spirit on the West Bank?’ Christian Science Monitor, 15 April 1986, p. 15.

81 Sayigh, ‘Palestinian Armed Struggle’, p. 104. [T]he form and logic of Palestinian military action in the 1974–82 period simply did not relate to the active political aims that the PLO strove to achieve, such as gaining American political recognition and bringing international pressure to bear on Israel to withdraw from the territories. The nature of Palestinian action (especially terrorism) tended to undermine, rather than reinforce, the PLO’s political and moral message to Israel and the West’. Ibid., pp. 104–5.


83 Cooley, Green March, Black September, p. 139.
responsibility as Palestinians to emphasize to the Israelis that it is peace that we seek and coexistence, not the destruction of Israel. . . Not for Israel’s sake but for our sake. A comparable approach was articulated by Husseini in 1989: ‘We struggle for the liberation of our people, not to dominate any other people; we struggle in order to establish our own state, not to destroy any other state; we struggle in order to guarantee and secure a safe future for our coming generations and not to threaten the coming generations of any other people in the area’. Reassurance was needed for the Israelis, rather than a mixture of messages:

We must convince Israelis that we are not going to destroy them or throw them in the sea, that they can live with the Arab world. . . The only solution is to go on making it clear to the Israelis that the intifada is not using weapons. We have the means, but we are not using it, because we don’t want to kill.

As the Palestinians’ increasingly pragmatic political thought necessitated changes in phraseology, and as language presaged more complex reforms in thinking or behaviour, foremost among these alterations in terminology was the adoption of independence in lieu of the old term liberation. Whereas ‘independence’ meant not subordinated or subjected, self-governing and free, open-ended, standing upright, unlimited in potential, with unhindered horizons, and statehood, ‘liberation’ was insurrectionary. It connoted overthrowing, armed revolt, or, as the Oxford English Dictionary suggests, freeing an occupied territory of its enemy. By the time of the intifada, the concept of independence would replace the idea of liberation, along with its narrow objectives. Indeed, the word liberation would all but disappear, Naseer Aruri observes, releasing the Palestinians in the territories from the albatross of armed struggle which had left them ‘struggling in diplomatic councils while being judged in the courts of terrorism’. In the diaspora, the notion of liberation similarly

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Feisel Husseini, as quoted in Ashmore, ‘Nonviolence as an Intifada Strategy’, p. 97.

slipped from sight except as a gesture; 'most Palestinians were not from the territories occupied by Israel in 1967 and their loss had to find a commemorative place somewhere in the concrete actualities of Palestinian life'.

‘Pens, Pictures, Images, and Dreams’

During the mid-1980s, a premium began to be placed on Palestinians who could express themselves not only to their fellow Palestinians but to Israelis and the international community as well. Moving from regarding terrorism as a 'political propaganda weapon' that could 'gain publicity for the movement and prevent it slipping into oblivion', and regarding world opinion as insignificant because 'liberation' could be won through their own masses, the activist intellectuals instead deduced that international opinion could be their ally. Palestinians who might ordinarily have written solely for the Arabic press chose to publish in Hebrew or English. Their publishers and editors also hoped to reach the global community. Others who might normally have written for international periodicals took up the local Arabic outlets, in hopes that their writing would be picked up by organs in Cairo, Amman, and Kuwait. Hanna Siniora would later comment about these developments:

We in the local media did our best to carry the sentiments, the aspirations of our people to the international community, and that's why we published in English. . . . I encouraged my journalists and editors to become closely tied with the international press that was based in Jerusalem; many of my colleagues today work with Reuters, Agence France-Presse, AP, UPI, the BBC and other outlets. I discovered Daoud Kuttab as a journalist. My publisher sent him to be a business manager for al-Fajr, but he failed in that job. . . . In English, however, we discovered he had talent as a journalist.

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89Chaliand, Terrorism, p. 82; Rubin, Revolution until Victory? p. 25.
90Siniora, interview (16 December 1997). Siniora, a former editor of al-Fajr, or The Dawn, the English-language Palestinian weekly, reported assiduously about the various committees and developments and was involved in planning a number of campaigns in the period leading up to the intifada. Elaine Ruth Fletcher and Yehuda Litani, ‘Palestinians Weigh Their Disobedience Measures’, Jerusalem Post, 6 January 1988. Filmed for an Israeli television interview in November 1986, he was later questioned by Israeli
Multi-dimensional in purpose, such efforts may be clarified by explaining what they were not. The publishing by the Palestinian activist intellectuals was not what French essayist Julien Benda attacked when he writes, prior to World War II, that European intellectuals had abandoned disinterested inquiry and were fomenting 'political passions' of hatred and narrow national self-interest in their philosophy and metaphysics, becoming partisans for war. Nor were they arguing in the 'hidden transcript' discerned by James C. Scott, in which clandestinely written words prove the vitality of an opposition mentality. These players had moved on stage rather than working in sequestered 'offstage social sites'. And the writings of the East Jerusalemites were not directed at the occupied Palestinians to the exclusion of the occupying forces, in the sense elucidated by Barbara Harlow in which discourse is aimed at the subjugated. Palestinian academicians who were crucially involved in this body of writing obviously saw themselves as agents of change. Certainly not Benda's purveyors of animosity, throughout the early and mid-1980s, their published pieces in Arabic, English, and Hebrew were arguing the necessity for compromise and direct negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians. To establish credibility with the Israeli and foreign news media, these writers and their editors habitually understated authorities because he had been seated beneath a photograph of Yasir Arafat. Goldstein, Journalism under Occupation, p. 98. Siniora now publishes the Jerusalem Times, an English-language weekly, and the monthly Palestine Business Report.


Helena Cobban acknowledges the 'special role' played by Palestinian intellectuals in East Jerusalem during the first year of the intifada, although she does so to build the case for a division of labour between the mass uprising and the intellectuals. The result is that she minimizes the generative role played by these East Jerusalemites in altering the political thinking of Palestinian nationalists inside the territories in the years preceding the uprising. Since Cobban does not focus on how changes in thinking paved the way for the intifada, nor investigate its synthesis with other forces leading to a preponderantly nonviolent revolt, she does not address how these cognitive developments would later be reflected in the various calls and leaflets from the leadership command. Cobban, ‘The PLO and the Intifada’, pp. 84–91.
estimates of numbers or projections of persons in attendance at rallies rather than balloon them. Such reporting allowed these activist intellectuals to differentiate themselves from the proclivity for wild exaggeration so characteristic of the armed factions from the late 1950s onwards. Often openly calling upon the occupier, essay after essay offered evidence of a rational discourse upon which negotiations might be built. At the same time, the activist intellectuals were seeking to transform Palestinian rejectionist ideologies and to pose alternative strategies for pursuit of their rights and entitlements among the élites that read the Arabic dailies and weeklies. Four audiences existed for these writings: Palestinians in the occupied territories, the diasporan exiles, the Israelis, and the international community.

Ziad Abu Zayyad

Along with Feisal Husseini, Ziad Abu Zayyad, a lawyer in East Jerusalem, was among the first Palestinians to speak to Israeli audiences in Hebrew. A former editor of al-Fajr, following his graduation from Damascus University in 1965, Abu Zayyad discovered that he had the ability—or talent, some would call it—to think and talk like an Israeli. He was the first Palestinian to matriculate in an intensive Hebrew-language class created for recent Jewish immigrants, and to put his newly learned Hebrew to use as a translator for the Arabic newspaper al-Quds, or Jerusalem. By 1977, he was editing a Hebrew edition of al-Fajr, and in 1986 he started publishing a journal in Hebrew, Gesher, or Bridge.95 'I am after coexistence on the basis of mutual recognition and mutual respect... Force cannot solve the problem', he said after Gesher first appeared.96 'It was through Ziad that Palestinian and Israeli journalists made their first contacts'—relationships that endure to this day.97 A

95Ziad Abu Zayyad, one-hour interviews (East Jerusalem, 8 June 1988; 28 January 1996).
One Palestinian, Radwan Abu Ayyash, arrived at the judgment that the Palestinian predicament was partially of their own making. Born in a tent in the Askar refugee camp near Nablus sometime after 1950, to parents from the village of Jamasin in what is today Tel Aviv, Abu Ayyash underwent a 'psychological shift' following the 1967 Israeli occupation and began to conclude, 'All that I had learned seemed to me to be lies, not true'.

Considering that a cycle of mutual elimination of Palestinians by Israelis or Israelis by Palestinians was 'not a humane solution', he became a political columnist in 1975 for the daily al-Shab. In 1979, he joined Raymonda Tawil in her local news agency, the Palestine Press Service (PPS), where he became editor in chief. Thus exposed to cooperation with the...
foreign news media—the BBC, ITV, Agence France-Presse, and U.S. television networks—he learned to deal with Israeli journalists in the exchange of news; his experience also included fights with Israeli censors from time to time. PPS, an avowedly pro-PLO service, functioned as a daily newspaper and is still published in East Jerusalem.

While still at PPS, Abu Ayyash helped to found the Palestinian Journalists' Association (PJA) and was responsible for running its public relations department for five years. In 1985, he was elected the second president of the PJA, but relinquished the office because of other obligations and, instead, accepted a public relations role. In 1982, he had begun working for a weekly political magazine called al-'Awda, or The Return, until it was shut down by Israel in 1984. In 1987, he created a local news agency, the Arab Media Centre (AMC), and from that office began to work on the creation of the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation. Abu Ayyash was gaoloed on the eve of the intifada, locked up for the third or fourth time on 8 December 1987, for precautionary reasons, for a period of six months. He, like Ziad Abu Zayyad, would be arrested for involvement in the intifada in November 1990. Abu Ayyash would later be placed at the helm of Palestinian television broadcasting, in Ramallah. He is among the activist intellectuals who worked to change Palestinian nationalist thought:

We were slaves of our own slogans, that we had ourselves created. We said Palestine goes from the Mediterranean to the Dead Sea. We decided that a few dunums or acres of land is much more important than the lives of teenagers who were going to be slaughtered in wars. . . . We, the Palestinians, were not using the language of the world; it was a totally different language which we had created for ourselves, as if we had closed the door and were singing inside a closed room [with] no audience, no one hearing you, and you think that you

101Ibid.

102Abu Ayyash, interview (29 January 1996).

103Israeli officials claimed that the arrests were based on evidence that they had 'fomented violence' and that they had played 'a key role in terror and incitement'. Sami Aboudi, 'Angry Palestinians Criticize Israel's Arrest of Leaders', Reuters, 14 November 1990; Miriam Jordan, 'One Million Arabs under Israeli Curfew', Reuters, 14 November 1990. The arrests were immediately denounced. Steve Weizman, 'Palestinian Arrests Expected to Do Little but Harm', Reuters, 15 November 1990; Carol Giacomo, 'U.S. Faults Israel's Imprisonment of Palestinians', Reuters, 15 November 1990.
are the best singer on earth. . . . So the best way would be to find reconciliation. . . . I began to work on this concept. Many Palestinians said, 'How come you believe in coexistence between Israelis and Palestinians? They are not going to be faithful'. I said, 'Yes, enemies can be friends. They need time'. . . . I took the Israeli journalists, my colleagues, to the refugee camps. . . . in the late 1970s and early 1980s. 104

Abu Ayyash claims that in 1990, he met alone, secretly, with Labour leader Shimon Peres, who was not then in power, at Peres’s behest in West Jerusalem, having first informed Arafat. By his own account, Abu Ayyash told Peres,

'We are soldiers for our people—not by weapons. We are soldiers of pens, pictures, images, and dreams. . . . Before you built something called Israel, you were the Palmach, Irgun Zvai Leumi, and the Stern Gang—you were all terrorist organizations. If you are defining the word terrorist, you will not reach any solution. Enemies can make peace, friends don’t need to make peace because they are friends. Only enemies can make it'. 105

The 1987 uprising would bring ‘new questions, new ideas, new cadres . . . new forms of struggle. . . . a new ethos . . . a new language’. 106 This would be the language of the intifada, which has overhauled and reshaped the discourse on the Palestine-Israel conflict.

The Right of Return: Underpinning of a Palestinian State

The expectation of the British and Zionists that the Palestinian Arabs would somehow absorb the enormity of their loss has never been realized. Starting in 1920 if not before, Arab poets penned in rhyme their alarm at the Balfour Declaration. One of them, Wadi al-Bustani, led a demonstration while he chanted verse that he had composed. By the 1930s, Ibrahim Tuqan, Abu Salma (‘Abd al-Karmi), ‘Abd al-Rahim Mahmud, the priest George Bitar, and numerous others were writing of their apprehensions. Among their laments was the sale of Palestinian land to Zionist brokers or enterprises, because property once under Jewish ownership could never, under Zionist policies, be sold back to

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104 Abu Ayyash, interview (29 January 1996).
105 Ibid.

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Palestinians. A poet writes, 'If only one of our leaders would fast like Gandhi—perhaps his fast would do some good. There is no need for him to abstain from food—in Palestine a leader would die without food. Let him abstain from selling land, and keep a plot in which to lay his bones'. Ibrahim Tuqan writes in 1929, 'They have sold the country to their enemies because of their greed for money; but it is their homes they have sold. They could have been forgiven if they had been forced to do so by hunger, but God knows that they have never felt hunger or thirst'. After the war of 1948; poets, writers, and essayists intoned the trauma of being uprooted and banished, consigned to the status of refugees yearning for return. In the late 1960s, among Israeli Arabs living in the State of Israel, poetry often concerned the return of refugees and the restoration of Palestine.

The truce lines at the close of the 1948 hostilities were not those of the UN partition plan, and the fighting ended with an armistice rather than a peace. On 27 June 1948, the UN mediator Count Folke Bernadotte formally suggested at the Rhodes armistice negotiations that ‘recognition be accorded to the right of residents of Palestine, who because of conditions created by the conflict there have left their normal places of abode, to return to their homes without restriction and to regain possession of their property’. This was rejected by the Israelis. On 26 July, after the armistice talks ended, Bernadotte met with

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Israel's foreign minister Moshe Shertok (later Sharett), and was told, 'the Jewish Government could under present conditions in no circumstances permit the return of Arabs who had fled or been driven from their homes during the war'. Shertok put this in writing on 1 August 1948, with the comment that 'reintegration of the returning Arabs into normal life, and even their mere sustenance, would present an insuperable problem'. Stuck at the core of the conflict, the hard knot of the Palestinian refugee problem has remained insuperable, and apart from enlarging, particularly after a new class of refugees was created in 1967, largely unchanged. Article 11 of the 11 December 1948 UN General Assembly Resolution 194, establishing a Conciliation Commission, provides for the Palestinian refugees something that the United Nations has promised to no other group: a right of repatriation and return to their homes or compensation. Although it was through powers vested in the United Nations that Israel had been brought into being, Israel never accepted

113 Ibid., p. 190.

114 UN Security Council, Official Records, Suppl. 108 (S/949), August 1948, pp. 106–9, as cited in Erskine B. Childers, 'The Wordless Wish: From Citizens to Refugees', in Abu-Lughod, Transformation of Palestine, p. 195 fn 115. Childers's research antedates the release of the Israeli archives with which Israel's 'new' historians are working and was among the first to dispute the reliability of official Israeli explanations for the Palestinian refugee problem. Childers points out that Shertok's letter was drafted within a fortnight of the expulsion at bayonet point of between 75,000 and 100,000 Palestinian Arabs in the Lydda-Ramleh area by Moshe Dayan and his commando unit. Ibid., pp. 195–6. Also see 'The Lydda Death March', in Palumbo, Palestinian Catastrophe, pp. 126–38. Refer to Benny Morris, 'Operation Dani and the Palestinian Exodus from Lydda and Ramle', Middle East Journal 40:1 (Winter 1986). Morris devotes a chapter to the decision against allowing a return of refugees, in his Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, pp. 132–54. Bernadotte writes of his encounter with the Lydda-Ramleh refugees at Ramallah, 'I have made the acquaintance of a great many refugee camps; but never have I seen a more ghastly sight than that which met my eyes here at Ramallah'. Bernadotte, To Jerusalem, p. 200.

It may be recalled that some 700,000 Palestinians became refugees in 1948. Between June and September 1967, approximately 235,000 were expelled from the territories that were newly occupied, and as many as 33,000 per year were expelled between 1967 and 1986, after which perhaps 21,000 per annum were expelled through 1995. These numbers include deportees as well as those outside who were denied the right to return. By 1995, 47 per cent of the worldwide population of just under seven million Palestinians lived in historic Palestine—22 per cent in the West Bank, 13 per cent in Gaza, and 12 per cent in Israel, with another 41 per cent in Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria. The total number of Palestinian refugees in the West Bank, Gaza, and outside the Palestinian territories is noted as 4,667,000, in 1994, in Palestinian Refugees: Their Problem and Future (Washington, D.C., Center for Policy Analysis on Palestine, 1994), p. 27. Nearly four million Palestinians were classified as refugees or displaced persons as of 1996, in Zareik, Palestinian Refugees, p. 25. An alternative figure for the number of refugees after the June 1967 war is 500,000 who crossed the Jordan River, approximately 175,000 of whom were fleeing from Israeli troops for the second time. Milton Viorst, Reaching for the Olive Branch: UNRWA and Peace in the Middle East, monograph (Washington, D.C., Middle East Institute, 1989), p. 40.

Viorst, UNRWA, p. 33.
Resolution 194 from that body. The General Assembly resolution is regarded as highly significant by Palestinians, because the Arab refugees of the 1948 war still seek repatriation. According to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)—temporarily set up in late 1949 to address the situation in which Palestinian refugees found themselves and indirectly reflecting an admission of the failure of the United Nations to enforce General Assembly Resolution 181—such refugees and their descendants ‘shall mean any person whose normal place of residence was Palestine during the period 1 June 1946 to 15 May 1948 and who lost both his home and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 conflict’.

Arab leaders in general refused to rehabilitate the refugees, undertake development projects, or allow much integration, their aim being to maintain an irredenta as a political weapon against Israel. The Arab governments sometimes seemed gleeful in their repudiation of responsibility for the refugees, and the issue became central to the pan-Arab ideologies of the 1960s.

Palestinian views have varied from rejection of anything short of Resolution 194 to a more accommodating position towards Israel. The Palestinian right of return, or haqq al-

117 Nor has Israel accepted other germane international conventions such as the 1948 Universal Declaration on Human Rights or Security Council Resolution 237, passed on 14 June 1967, which affirms the right of persons displaced in 1967 to return to their homes or abodes. Israeli proclamations often say that refugee problems must, instead, be solved where the refugees now live. Attempts to raise Resolution 194 at meetings of the multilateral Refugee Working Group, set up after the 1991 Madrid international conference, faltered on objections from Israel. In December 1993, the United States abstained when Resolution 194 was presented to the General Assembly for reaffirmation, thus supporting Israel’s position. Ghada Karmi, ‘The Palestinian Diaspora and the Final Status Negotiations’, in Beyond Rhetoric, vol. 1, p. 28. As multilateral talks have proceeded, under Canada’s gavel, an Israeli refusal to discuss the Palestinian refugees’ ‘right of return’ has been encountered. A former journalist for the Jordan Times writes in an Israeli daily that the refusal to confer belies a ‘fascinating, implicit recognition that Israel thrives on lands once inhabited by Palestinians whose legal and moral claims remain not only unresolved but unaddressed’, although, he contends, the right of return does not necessarily mean the end or the negation of Israel. Rami G. Khouri, ‘Map of the Mind: How to Address the Refugee Repatriation Issue’, Ha’aretz (English edn), 17 December 1997, p. 6.

118 Consolidated Eligibility Instructions, UN document Rev. 7/83, January 1984, in Elia Zureik, Palestinian Refugees and the Peace Process (Washington, D.C., Institute for Palestine Studies, 1996), p. 9. As Zureik notes, the ‘diplomatic jargon’ now considers the 1967 refugees to be displaced. Ibid., p. 91. In the world of multilateral diplomacy, displaced persons are those who do not seek to return to their place of original abode, and are therefore not eligible for UN protective custody, as are refugees.

119 Laqueur, Road to War: Origin and Aftermath, p. 65.
‘awda, had been established by Haj Amin al-Husseini as an almost sacred principle,"ug but a
turning point towards accommodation was reached, Elia Zuriek notes, at the nineteenth PNC
in Algiers, in 1988, at the so-called ‘intifada PNC’." Zuiek credits a number of ‘confidence
building’ dialogues between Palestinians and Israelis in the late 1980s as playing a
‘significant role in pushing the Palestinian position further along the road of concessions and
mutual recognition’." Held in Europe and North America under nongovernmental
sponsorship or the patronage of practitioners in the field of conflict resolution, these sessions
became training grounds for future encounters between some of the actors in later
negotiations. One of the unnamed players in this regard was Sari Nusseibeh, whose
formulations have until now not been explicated. In fact, such dialogues under third-party
auspices had begun to make their mark earlier, as Nusseibeh noted:

I had stayed involved in the faculty union and student movement until 1982 or
1983. I was invited to a conference at Harvard with Herbert Kellman.
Immediately after that there was another meeting here, in Jerusalem, with the
Meretz people. At that point I made a decision that if I wanted to go on with
politics, the student movement, Bir Zeit, and the small uprisings against the
occupation... were not enough, and I had to start being engaged in dialogue.

... My constituency was dead against talking with Zionists, and I couldn’t do it
as the head of a union. So I severed my relationship with my constituency and
union, and started on this long journey of open dialogue with the Israelis—
whether in Israel or abroad... I had become convinced that, on the one hand,
we were powerful as a people, but, on the other hand, we needed to find out
what the other side was prepared to give us. Negotiations were, therefore,
necessary."

Much as the State of Israel was built on a doctrinal pillar of the right of return for
Jews from anywhere in the world, Sari Nusseibeh took a vision of Palestinians returning to
mandatory Palestine but reconceptualized it in light of hundreds of villages that no longer

120Elpeleg. Grand Mufti, p. 175.

121Zureik, Palestinian Refugees, p. 89.

122Ibid., p. 90.

existed and the new realities resulting from decades of displacement. According to Nusseibeh, 'The idea of return should be in our minds—not return to the past . . . to the pre-1948 olive groves—but that we, the Palestinians, should return'. An examination of Nusseibeh's background and writings, illuminated by appropriate biographical information, helps to explain the transition that would come formally into view in 1988.

Sari Nusseibeh

Sari Nusseibeh is a member of one of Jerusalem's oldest established families. He studied at St. George's preparatory school in East Jerusalem, and at Rugby and other preparatory schools in Britain when his father, Anwar, was ambassador from the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to the Court of St. James. His mother, Nuzha, was from Ramleh, in the central plains of what is now the heartland of Israel, where her father had seen his property confiscated by the British, against whom he was resisting. In the centuries since Saladin's recapture of Jerusalem on 2 October 1187 and its return to Muslim control, the Nusseibeh family has been the traditional custodian of the keys to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre; members of the family open the massive doors to the church the night before Easter.

Nusseibeh read politics, philosophy, and economics at Christ Church College,

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124 As many as 436 Palestinian villages have been depopulated, as differentiated from physically destroyed. All That Remains: The Palestinian Villages Occupied and Depopulated by Israel in 1948, ed. Walid Khalidi (Washington, D.C., Institute for Palestine Studies, 1992), p. xviii.

125 Nusseibeh, interview (5 July 1994).

126 The Nusseibehs were viewed as 'neutral' in the 1930s and 1940s alignments of the Husseinis and Nashashibis. Morris, Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, p. 303.

127 Anwar had been named government secretary in the All-Palestine Government of 1948 and to the Arab Higher Committee, was a member of the Trans-Jordanian parliament, and served as Jordan's minister of defence.

128 'Their country house, where she grew up as a child, had been demolished beyond a visible trace'. Sari Nusseibeh, 'The Intifada: A Personal Perspective', American-Arab Affairs 27 (Winter 1988–9): 24.
During his last year at Oxford, Sari began studying with A. I. Sabra, then of the Warburg Institute at the University of London, having met him through Fritz Zimmerman, then a fellow at Queens College and associated with Oxford’s Oriental Institute. An historian of science, Sabra was at the time working on medieval Mu'tazilite texts that had been unearthed in a mosque in Yemen in the 1950s, particularly an encyclopaedic compendium by Judge 'Abd al-Jabar. Intrigued by the discovery that the ‘Abbasid period had been filled with robust debates, including contending schools of thought about the role of leadership, Sari decided on further studies:

The Mu’tazilites were from a school of theology representing rationalism, human responsibility, and freedom. They were described as the school of unity and justice because they believed in justice and that God was just; therefore, God being just, God also treats human beings with justice, which leads to the adoption of a theory of human responsibility. This is a rationalist theory. Dominant and popular to begin with, this school of theology was eventually outcast from Islamic society and was marginalized as mainstream theological schools came to replace them. 130

Sabra, a student of the philosopher of natural and social science Karl Popper, was particularly concerned with perception and theories of light, issues straddling physics and philosophy. Having moved to Harvard’s history of science department, Sabra invited Nusseibeh to Harvard. He was joined in this effort by Muhsin Mahdi of the Center for Middle East Studies, a student of political philosophy under Leo Strauss at the University of Chicago.

Strauss thought that what was not written was as significant as what was written, and Mahdi was interested in textual analysis of medieval political writers like al-Farabi. He, too, was guided by the understanding that you not only read the word or the line, but you also have to think of what might have been written and then decide why it was not. ... Strauss and Mahdi had a different attitude toward texts, philosophy, and language from that of the

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129Nusseibeh reflects on his friendship formed in 1968 at Christ Church with Avishal Margalit, a founder of Peace Now and professor at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, in Sarah Helm, 'Bruised Friendship Wins Chance to Heal', Independent, 13 September 1993.

130Nusseibeh, interview (13 December 1997).
Oxford School.

Al-Farabi was a Shiite, travelled a good deal, and was a philosopher who believed in God and the Prophet, but, as he was influenced by neoplatonism, he had to reconcile these two traditions, being careful how he stated things for people to read, because he didn't want to be decapitated. He had to write very carefully about the role of the philosopher and the role of the Prophet, and, you see, an entire literature of political theory is based on analysis relating to the comparison between the role of the Prophet and the role of the philosopher. 131

Sari was also influenced by W. V. O. Quine, under whom he took one of his general examinations in the philosophy of logic. Sari's doctoral dissertation focused on the philosophical system of the Islamic scholar Avicenna (Ibn Sina), and his reconciliation of possibility and actuality. 'I kept up my interest and pursuit of the modern development of philosophy as I went into detailed research on Islamic philosophy.... I was attracted by Avicenna and studied his works on physics, logic, and language, and I tried, if you like, to unravel his system, in which he tried to reconcile on the one hand the universe of possibilities and, on the other hand, the actuality'. 132

In 1978, Sari received a Ph.D. in philosophy from Harvard University. Upon returning to Jerusalem and reluctant reinvolve...
The strengthening of academically based individuals in the broadening debate in East Jerusalem was linked to the standing of the faculty and student unions discussed in Chapter Three as centres of power in the occupied territories after the Lebanon war in 1982, and throughout the student struggles of the 1980s. Israel’s 1982 suppression of publicly pro-PLO Palestinian leadership had also produced a political void which enhanced the youth and student groups in becoming the dominant political force in the territories. Nusseibeh recalled:

Faculty unions were dependent on the system of the university, an extension of the organism. Al-Najah University had gone one step further and put together the employees and the faculty into one organization and had called it the Union of the Faculty and Employees. Instrumental in doing that at al-Najah was the mathematician Adnan Idris. I was at Bir Zeit and, through my connexions with him, we helped to transform our own associations. We dismantled them, liberated them from their dependence on the administration of the university, and created a union—now a chapter of a faculty and staff union throughout Palestinian universities. Very quickly we had a major organization throughout the higher-learning institutes, but we didn’t stop at that.

We created a coordinating committee with the teacher associations in the various schools in the West Bank and Gaza. So the private schools, the honour-roll schools, and the government schools were all linked to a coordinating committee of the faculty and staff of the universities and to the schoolteachers. The heart of political activity for the majority of the active Palestinian political population was in the student system, the school system, the university system. The National Guidance Committee had been, I think, simply an outside veneer, and its members were proxies. When they were suddenly put aside, so to speak, the power came back to the grass roots.

Such was the potency of these movements that while arguing that the PLO embodied the national movement in 1985, Nusseibeh could also have the effrontery to write that the

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134 Nusseibeh, interview (13 December 1997).


136 As noted in Chapter Three, the National Guidance Committee coordinated opposition to the ‘autonomy’ provisions in the Camp David accords, and was comprised of nine of the mayors who had been elected in 1976 and representatives of some women’s and students’ organizations.

137 Nusseibeh, interview (13 December 1997).
organization should exist for the people and 'not for itself', and insist that it was 'far worthier to risk the PLO for the chance of a just political settlement than to risk the chance of a just political settlement for the PLO'.

The Israeli public was initially exposed to Nusseibeh's propositions when he was thirty-six years of age and allowed himself to be interviewed for the first time by an Israeli periodical. During questions and answers, which appeared on 13 November 1985 in Koteret Rashit, the Israeli interviewer, Michal Sela, asked what the Palestinians would do if they did not get a state. Nusseibeh's response was that Israel should annex the Palestinians and give them rights, which would mean their obtaining between twelve and sixteen seats in the Knesset. If they were not a majority at that time, he claimed, within ten years, the Palestinians would have a plurality. Asked whether he would prefer being an Israeli or a Palestinian in a democratic state, Nusseibeh answered, 'the ideal for me would be a state which is Palestinian, democratic, and secular'. The interview closed with the declaration, 'If you ask me unequivocally to choose between autonomy and annexation, I say annex'. In the interview, Nusseibeh repeated points already argued under his own byline on 19 October 1985 in the East Jerusalem daily al-Mawqif, or The Opinion, of which he had been editor, working with Hanna Siniora, Ziad Abu Zayyad, and Hebron mayor Mustafa Natsheh. Despite the redundancy of the remarks, an uproar was created by the interview, so much so that a newspaper with a Jordanian slant, al-Nahar, or The Day, claimed that 'Sari Nusseibeh wants to become an Israeli soldier!'

In Nusseibeh's writings, literal claims to land or homes granted titles under Ottoman

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141 Nusseibeh, interview (5 July 1994).
rule, British Mandate, or Jordanian laws were modified from justiciable claims into metaphorical entitlements. Instead of exclusionary contentions regarding the right of individuals to return to their familial place of abode, he sought an historical corrective that did not imply doing to the Israelis what had been done to the Palestinians, that is, he advocated a means of 'return' which was neither destructive nor triumphalist. Writing in numerous local Arabic newspapers during the mid-1980s, Nusseibeh proposed an inversion:

Arab strategy since '48 has been based on the concept of 'regaining' or 'recapturing' land. This has been especially true since 1967. Since the mid-70s, Palestinian Arab strategy has also been based... on such a concept... What if Arab strategy were to be reversed? Instead of returning land as a tactical aim, what if Arab strategy were to be based on the concept of returning to the land?

Nusseibeh was not denying the need for negotiating the refugee problem that went back to 1947, nor was he overlooking the provisions of UN General Assembly Resolution 194, or UN General Assembly Resolution 3236, passed in 1974 and affirming the 'inalienable right' of the Palestinians to return to their homes and property. A reading of his essays shows a search for a recontextualization of this issue that could empower rather than weaken the Palestinians.

According to Nusseibeh, 'Palestinians should distinguish between the past and the future in thinking about their right 'to return'; if they, as a whole people, could not return, the individual could. As Nusseibeh's idea sank in—that persons return but not necessarily to their grandparents' house—by implication it meant acceptance that the 'liberation' of all of Palestine was impossible. The significance of such a position could be grasped by any

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142The journalist Robert Fisk recounts a meeting with Israel's custodian of absentee property, Jacob Manor, in which he asked Manor how much land in Israel has two claimants—an Arab and a Jew holding a British Mandate or Israeli deed to the same property. Fisk claims that the custodian responded perhaps 70 per cent. Fisk, _Pity the Nation_, p. 45. 'If the areas of Israel proper and those in the occupied territories already colonized, requisitioned or annexed are subtracted from the total area of Mandatory Palestine, the Palestinians in occupied territories today [1988] stand on no more than 15 percent of the soil of the country'. Walid Khalidi, 'Toward Peace in the Holy Land', _Foreign Affairs_ 66:4 (Spring 1988): 771.


144Nusseibeh, interview (5 July 1994).
schoolchild; it meant dropping the claim to the 77 or 78 per cent of the land that had been lost of what had been Palestine prior to 1948.\textsuperscript{145} No literal counterpart to the Israeli-claimed ‘right of return’ was espoused; rather, symbolic redress was asked for the Palestinians’ alienation from their land.\textsuperscript{146} Nusseibeh envisioned a three-part system of rights in the ‘struggle for achieving Palestinian national aspirations’, which he defined as existence or survival, repatriation or return, and equality (meaning Palestinian political rights identical to those of their Jewish counterparts). He surmised that the obtaining of these three categories of entitlements would require three stages of transition over an extended period of time: at the first plateau, human and political rights would be denied; at the second stage, a binational Israeli state would grant some rights; and, in the third, a democratic and secular state could be achieved as Arabs became a numerical majority. Such a strategy, he thought, would evolve naturally because of the demographic trend.\textsuperscript{147} If it were not possible to have a contiguous Palestinian state, a strategy for a democratic binational state should be developed. On the basis of the right to exist, right to return, and right to be equal within such


\textsuperscript{146}These ideas have gained currency, and a small literature is developing, complemented by the work of Israel’s ‘new’ historians. See for example, Rashid Khalidi, ‘Toward a Solution’, in Palestinian Refugees: Their Problem and Future; Ziad Abu Zayyad, ‘The Palestinian Right of Return: A Realistic Approach’, Palestine-Israel Journal 2 (Spring 1994).

\textsuperscript{147}Nusseibeh, interview (5 July 1994).
a binational state, Palestinians could call for alterations of the Israeli electoral system. Revised views on the right of return became a signpost on the road to the intifada.

The South African Model and International Human Rights

On 9 August 1987, Sari Nusseibeh writes that the demographic threat of the Palestinians to Israel would be a ‘deterrent to continued occupation’ only if combined with the threat of an anti-apartheid strategy. The Palestinian dilemma, Nusseibeh found, was ‘objectively reminiscent’ of South Africa with two groups, ‘one a master group, and another a servant group, entwined together in one political system, which is effectively under the total control of the master group’. Success would come when the Palestinians in the territories decided to ‘challenge the Israeli system in a totally new, and potentially far more destructive way; only when they threaten to base their national struggle on the South African model as opposed to the Algerian model’. ‘The Algerian model is one of colonialists: you go against them and get rid of them . . . “kick the Israelis out”. . . . It’s a pre-1948 mentality. . . . The other model is the South Africa model: do not shake off [the Israeli] people, but be

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148Sari Nusseibah, ‘In a Different Time Zone’, interview by Hillel Schenker, New Outlook, January 1988, p. 29.


150Sari Nusseibeh, ‘The Continuation of the Status Quo’, reprinted from al-Fajr, 9 August 1987, in Safieh, Palestine, p. 10. Algeria was Fateh’s ‘first patron and model’. Rubin, Revolution until Victory? p. 10. Algerian guerrilla methods had been key to Fateh’s mid-1960s raids. Laqueur, Road to War, 1967, p. 58; Ma’oz, Palestinian Leadership, p. 7. In addition to adulation of the war in Algeria, Nusseibeh recalls his students as being enthralled by Franz Fanon, enamoured of the Cuban revolution, and drawing inspiration from the French and American perdition in Indochina. ‘Our students were in love with that [Fanon] business of the cleansing power of violence’. Nusseibeh, interview (28 January 1996). He considered that such other struggles shed little light on the dilemma faced by the Palestinians, in part because the Palestinians had been disarmed after 1967. In addition to serialization of Fanon, guerrilla treatises of Mao Tse-tung, Che Guevara, and Régis Debray had been translated into Arabic and serialized throughout the late 1960s and 1970s. The Cuban model, with its twelve revolutionaries hidden in the Sierra Maestra, had the most appeal because it was not perceived to be a popular movement. Harkabi, Fadayeen Action, p. 17.
yourself, integrate into the system'. He called for an awareness that the Palestinians were living under an apartheid system, but one which could be changed:

To declare this to be a state of apartheid, and to address the Israeli political structure and the Palestinian problem as such is, in effect, to recast the continuing reality of the integrative process into a winning strategy for the Palestinians, a strategy which replaces the existing transitional two-states program with a transitional program of one binational state on the way to democratic secularism.

Were it not possible to have the right of return, Nusseibeh suggested, the Palestinians could demand their rights within the Israeli polity, which would ultimately be more dislocating than a state alongside Israel—which would eventually have to conform to them.

A few months before the eruption of the intifada, Nusseibeh notes a disconnexion between the psychological and nationalist consciousness of the Palestinians and their economic integration into the Israeli system, because their incorporation was happening without their being granted accompanying rights. Either Palestinian behaviour should conform to a nationalist strategy or the nationalist strategy should coincide with reality, he argues. If Palestinian nationalism were to be expressed in behaviour, 'What we should be finding is a reality of civil disobedience, of burnt ID cards, of abstention from the payment of taxes'. In addition to the pen, he adopted the calculator as his weapon: you return

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151 Nusseibeh, interview (5 July 1994). In other words, while the Algerian model was based on the expulsion of colonists, in the South African model indigenous peoples fought for their rights within established institutions and economies.

152 Nusseibeh, 'Continuation of the Status Quo', p. 9.

153 Ziad Abu Zayyad encapsulated the viewpoint that Nusseibeh was addressing: 'Palestinians have been living with the dream of turning the clock back to the pre-1948 situation, in other words, returning to the land and homes which were taken from them during the 1948 war and from which they were uprooted and driven away. They were not ready to accept the new reality. . . . For them, Israel as a state did not exist, and Palestinian literature from 1948 onward referred to it as the "Zionist enemy", or the "invading enemy", and Palestine was the "robbed" or "raped" homeland'. Abu Zayyad, 'Palestinian Right of Return', p. 75.

yourself, participate politically in fighting for equal rights, and reveal to the outside world a system in which people of Arab descent are denied rights, despite their economic attractiveness in the Israeli system.155

To note one outcome of such thinking, before the start of the intifada, in June 1987, Hanna Siniora proposed to head a Palestinian list in the November municipal elections in Jerusalem—an idea attributed to Nusseibeh—stating: 'This does not mean we relinquish sovereignty over East Jerusalem. I believe Jerusalem should be an undivided city with dual sovereignty, the capital of both a Palestinian state and of Israel'.156 Siniora’s statement was received in Israel as 'revolutionary'.157 According to Yehuda Litani:

For the past 20 years Palestinians in the territories and East Jerusalem have called for either an armed struggle against Israel or a peace process involving the superpowers, the Arab states and the PLO. For the first time since June 1967 a resident of East Jerusalem, a Palestinian leader belonging to the PLO, is calling on his people to participate in the political process within the Israeli establishment.158

Although Siniora eventually withdrew because of local Palestinian opposition to his bid, he would later say of his original purpose,

I tried, as a nonviolent approach, to have a say-so in the affairs of Jerusalem and called for participation in the municipal elections. I told the Palestinian public that local elections were different from national elections and, by taking action on the local level, we could prevent the expansion of Israeli settlements in the heart of Jerusalem. The perception—I believe it is a wrong perception—was that participation in local elections would mean endangering our political

November 1994).

155Sari Nusseibeh, 'Occupied Territories 20 Years Hence: Need to Struggle against Israeli Extremists', al-Fajr, 14 November 1986. Ten years later, Nusseibeh was still pressing his brand of binationalism as the only logical outcome if Likud persisted in not ending the military occupation. See Sari Nusseibeh, 'The Eyes of Palestine: How Arabs See Likud's Victory', Washington Post, 9 June 1996, p. Cl.


157Yehuda Litani, 'Major Change', Jerusalem Post, 5 June 1987, p. 1. Litani said Siniora's step had showed the willingness in East Jerusalem 'to give up the armed struggle', but was also a warning that since Israel had annexed East Jerusalem, Palestinians could start using electoral powers against annexation. Ibid., p. 1. Also see Aryeh Green, 'Local Peace Could Find the Way; Aryeh Green Deplores the Attacks on Hanna Siniora's Proposals for Jerusalem', Jerusalem Post, 13 November 1987, p. 9.

rights in East Jerusalem. . . . Some still believe that participation in local elections will weaken our position and claim over Jerusalem.\textsuperscript{159}

By the mid-1980s, Palestinian receptivity for application of the broad principles of human rights\textsuperscript{160}—including the freedom to organize nongovernmental and human rights organizations—may have been more fertile than was the case in the mid-1970s in the Soviet-bloc countries of Eastern Europe when the Helsinki Final Act was signed.\textsuperscript{161} After the signing of the Helsinki accords in 1975, human rights became viewed as integral to diplomacy, rather than as an afterthought, and recognized as a central element in international relations. Among cognoscente Palestinians, post-1967 nationalism became entwined with a growing sense of universalist entitlements. In Nusseibeh’s writings, a hunt for a realistic system of thought for fulfilling Palestinian aspirations for human rights is discernible. On 12 September 1986, he writes of the Palestinians as aborigines:

We, the aborigines of this one country, Palestine, have to rid ourselves of the sinister perception we have been made to acquire of Israel as an occupying power. I say ‘sinister perception’ because it legitimizes the subject, Israel, in our eyes, fixing our grievances only to the predicate—being an occupying power.

We should not think of Israel as an occupying power. Instead, we should think of Palestine as one occupied country. And occupied via the agency of a system of laws that we should struggle to replace by a progressive set of legislations enfranchising all Palestinians and giving them all the right of return to their homeland, in a new, truly democratic, and truly humane, free Palestine.\textsuperscript{162}

\textsuperscript{159}Siniora, interview (16 December 1997). Siniora serves on a ministerial committee for Jerusalem headed by Yasir Arafat.

\textsuperscript{160}In Helsinki, Finland, on 1 August 1975, thirty-three European countries (except Albania), the United States, and Canada signed the Helsinki Final Act of what became the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). Of the four original ‘baskets’ of concern—security affairs; economic, scientific, and environmental issues; humanitarian and human rights concerns; and follow up—the human rights basket soon superseded the others, and the Helsinki accords became synonymous with ‘human rights’. While not part of a binding treaty, the human rights principles outlined in the agreement are supposed to commit the signatory nations to follow its terms.

\textsuperscript{161}Helena Cobban, ‘Human Rights and NGOs in the Middle East, and the Failure of the Present Arab-Israeli Peace Process to Include a Human-Rights Dimension’, remarks prepared for the Helsinki Commission Seminar, ‘OSCE at 20: Relevance to Other Regions?’ (U. S. Senate, Dirksen Office Building, 14 November 1995).

Accompanying the ferment in political thought in East Jerusalem was an upsurge of international Palestinian debate, as intellectuals such as Edward W. Said, Ibrahim Abu-Lughod, Fouad Moughrabi, and Rashid Khalidi added collateral thinking. A revolution in communications technologies was also underway, as television and global newspaper reportage were becoming a vehicle for placing the Palestinian problem on the world agenda. Telexes and later telexcopier facsimile machines sped the flow of information.163

A willingness to compromise on legal configurations for Jerusalem was also suggestive of new thinking in the city’s eastern, Arab section. Looking forward one year into the intifada, this would become evident when Feisel Husseini was released from prison on 29 January 1989. He reported to callers in his home that while in gaol he had conversations with Shmuel Goren, Israeli coordinator for the territories, in which he had discussed the Palestinians’ right of return and the protection of Jerusalem as the capital of a future Palestinian state. Jerusalem could be solved by ‘either the return or arbitration’, Husseini said, as long as it remained ‘one city and the capital of both countries’. Some losses are so painful, he apparently told Goren, such as the April 1948 Israeli massacre at Deir Yassin, that the ‘hurt can only be healed if it is rebuilt and its people allowed to live there’. 164

The right of return and a two-state solution, in which Israel would be accepted, were linked. Husseini said, ‘the very idea behind creating the state is the establishment of a homeland where the Palestinian people can feel secure. . . . Any Palestinian who lives in

163Although James C. Scott’s work on ‘hidden transcripts’ does not address the issue directly, we may infer that the Palestinian activist intellectuals—no longer operating as fugitives and relying on commercially available information technologies—had less need for the tactical ploys, ambiguity, and disguised discourse of the 1960–70s and the PLO. See Scott, Domination and the Arts of Resistance.

164Kuttab, ‘Atmosphere in the Husseini Home’. After the Oslo accords, Husseini would remark, ‘Without a state, the Palestinian problem will not be solved, and if it’s not solved, there will be no regional cooperation’. He said in informal discussions with American Jewish supporters of Israeli peace groups that he believed the twenty-first century would be more difficult than the last, with greater problems for the economies of small states; regional cooperation would thus become essential, and the peace process was the gate to regional cooperation. Feisel Husseini, American Friends of Peace Now, residence of Linda Heller Kamm, Washington, D.C., 11 October 1993.
exile who wants to come to the Palestinian state... must be able to do so. Husseini later
addressed Jewish sympathizers of the Israeli peace camp in the United States,

We are a people without a land, a people without a state. Any status which
resolves only the problems of the inhabitants of the occupied territories, is not
a solution of the Palestinian issue; the Palestinians abroad would remain
refugees, whatever their social or financial status... The importance of the
Palestinian state is that it would be clear that each and every Palestinian has
the right to return to live in that state and to fulfill his national aspirations
within that state. Any other situation will engender more wars.

By revising the right of return, citizenship in a Palestinian state could substitute for lost land.

Thought into Action

Although the activities of the epistemic community around East Jerusalem, generally sought to avoid the concealment favoured by the commando organizations, not all of their endeavours were visible. In 1976, MK Uri Avnery, editor of Ha'olam Hazeh, or This World, helped found the Israeli Council for

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165 Husayni, Interview, p. 11.

166 Husseini, 'New Face in the Middle East', p. 18. In this speech, Husseini usurped the Zionist slogan coined by Israel Zangwill Moshe—give the 'country without a people [to] the people without a country'. On 23 August 1903, Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain had proposed Uganda—actually parts of Kenya then included in a larger area called Uganda—for Zionist settlement, but the reaction of white settlers in Uganda was so hostile that the notion was dropped. Chamberlain's idea had the effect of splitting the Zionist movement, and those who favoured acceptance of a place other than Palestine formed the Jewish Territorial Organization—led by Israel Zangwill, who thought current circumstances rather than historic attachments should determine the location of the Jewish homeland. Stevens, 'Zionism as a Phase of Western Imperialism', in Abu-Lughod, Transformation of Palestine, pp. 38-9.

167 On the role of epistemic communities, see Emanuel Adler, Cognitive Evolution: A Dynamic Approach for the Study of International Relations and Their Progress (Cambridge, Massachusetts, Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard University, 1989). Loosely defined as a group of intellectuals who share a common causal understanding on a particular subject and who organize to apply this comprehension through strategies for action, epistemic communities 'can play an important role in the process of intellectual innovation and political selection of ideas and understandings'. They can offer 'new answers to old questions' and 'introduce values into the political process'. Adler, Cognitive Evolution, p. 25. See also Peter M. Haas, 'Do Regimes Matter? Epistemic Communities and Mediterranean Pollution Control', International Organization 43 (Summer 1989): 377-403; idem, 'Banning Chlorofluorocarbons: Epistemic Community Efforts to Protect Stratospheric Ozone', International Organization 46 (Winter 1992): 187–224. The epistemic communities described by Haas share beliefs in causes and effects, values, and policy goals. They work through issuing reports, circulating documents, gathering data, and organizing conferences.
Israeli-Palestinian Peace and began efforts at dialogue with PLO figures. As noted, by the early 1980s, Husseini and Nusseibeh were having periodic discussions with Israeli intellectuals and some government officials, but these did not surface publicly until 1987. In April of that year, Nusseibeh was physically attacked by Bir Zeit students following the revelation of his contacts with Moshe Amirav, a member of the Likud Central Committee:

The beating provoked a big debate: ‘Everybody knows Sari is pro-Arafat’... The people who were involved in the beating were all actually Fateh people. Most of them afterwards came and apologized to me. In the pro-Fateh group, there were internal schisms between the Gaza and West Bank groups, and within the West Bank, there were different schisms. A lot of them were brought up to believe in the ideology of armed struggle in Fateh, so they were not happy about people like me talking about reconciliation, dialogue, and negotiations in the name of Fateh... just as a lot of people weren’t happy with Arafat when he spoke like this. Some said, ‘they didn’t really beat Sari up, they beat Arafat up’—a radical message to Arafat that he shouldn’t go too far... Within the organization you work on instructions. These guys got an instruction.

After the attack, the Bir Zeit University employees’ union asked that Nusseibeh be dismissed from his academic post because he had also met with Israeli prime minister Shimon Peres.

By July 1987, ‘back channel’ talks had actually begun between Amirav and Nusseibeh, Husseini, and Salah Zuhaika, an editor of al-Shab, to discuss interim arrangements for broad self-rule for the Palestinians. They were preparing the groundwork

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169 Husseini, interview (30 January 1996). These contacts coincided with the European Community’s passage of the Venice Declaration, on 13 June 1980, in which nine member states called for recognition of the Palestinian right to self-determination and for PLO participation in Middle East negotiations for peace.


172 Joel Greenberg and Menshem Shalev, ‘Herut Talks with PLO Backers’, Jerusalem Post, 20 September 1987. Amirav, born in what is now Russia in 1945, served in the elite paratrooper corps, and was considered one of Yitzhak Shamir’s closest aides. Of his meetings with Husseini, he says, ‘Through our talks I
for discussions between Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, then heading a National Unity
government, and Chairman Arafat. According to Nusseibeh’s account, Shamir probably
surmised that the Palestinians would reject talks, but Amirav took the position that
negotiations were not possible without the PLO. The first of more than a dozen meetings that
summer between Amirav, a seasoned member of Likud’s Herut wing, and Husseini and
Nusseibeh, took place at Nusseibeh’s home. Amirav also persuaded Knesset members Dan
Meridor and Ehud Olmert, who would become future ministers in a Shamir government, to
join some sessions. On 26 August 1987, a memorandum was drafted, but not signed, in
which Likud agreed to recognize the PLO and negotiate the establishment of a ‘Palestinian
entity’ whose ‘administrative’ capital would be in Arab East Jerusalem. A planned meeting
in Geneva between Amirav and Arafat, however, never occurred:

It was too complicated, with Labour in charge of security, and Likud in charge of politics—a dual government with Labour trying to upset Likud, and Likud trying to upset Labour. Amirav, Feisel, and I were supposed to meet with Arafat in Geneva, in order for him to endorse the plan openly. There was also supposed to be an endorsement from the Israeli side. But Feisel was arrested, and I didn’t want to go to Geneva by myself. They told me, ‘You must go’. [but then] Amirav phoned and said, ‘I’m sorry, it’s off’. I said, ‘Why is it off?’ He told me, ‘I am sorry I cannot tell you. Something terrible has happened. I can’t go.’ Shamir had pulled back.

found out not only about Palestinian political positions, but that people can change. I saw that Faisal al-
Husseini and other Palestinians I now consider my friends were ready to give up ideas about Jaffa and Galilee, places that, for them, was [sic] Palestine. So I said, “OK, if you’re ready to do that, I’m ready to give up Bethlehem, the Judea mountains and Samaria that, for me, was [sic] Israel” . Diase, ‘Profiles of Israelis and Palestinians’, p. 172. Sarah Helm quotes Amirav’s recollection of a secret meeting with Feisel Husseini in 1985: ‘I was struck by the fact that he had no anger or hatred. He told me there was a time when he could not say the word Israel. “Now I am saying it. It is not easy. But I realise we both have to live here”, he said’. Helm, ‘Pragmatist Will Speak for Palestinians’, p. 12.

171 Peace Talks between Israel and Palestine Shall Proceed on the Basis of Mutual Recognition of the Independence and Self-Determination of Each . . . ’, pre-negotiations proposal for talks in Geneva, 8 July 1987, signed by Abba Eban, Hanna Siniora, Wael Fouad Muhammad Ayesh al-Helekaway, and ‘Abd al-
Hamid al-Sayegh. Files of Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence, East Jerusalem.

172 Wallach and Wallach, ‘Faisal Husseini’, in New Palestinians, p. 65. Ze’ev Schiff and Ehud Ya’ari devote more than six pages to this episode in Intifada and include a transcript from one of the secret sessions. Schiff and Ya’ari, Intifada, pp. 273–81.

173 Ibid., p. 67; Rolef, ‘Israel’s Policy toward the PLO’, pp. 265, 272 en55 and 56.

Everything fell apart, as Husseini was once again arrested, and Amirav was expelled from the Likud party in 1988 by Shamir for his reformist views.\textsuperscript{177} Ze’ev Schiff and Ehud Ya’ari call the episode a ‘failure’ and ‘naive effort’ to bridge the gap between Likud and the PLO; they write that Husseini and Nusseibeh learned that they were better off making unilateral moves.\textsuperscript{178} In fact, the lasting significance of the aborted effort for Husseini and Nusseibeh was a deepened conviction about the necessity for direct negotiations: ‘It was as if these people were hearing our positions for the first time; they were surprised at what we said, which was the opposite of what they had been told by their leaders’.\textsuperscript{179}

The genesis for these particular Israeli contacts resulted from relationships established by Husseini, while in prison, with leftist political parties such as Ratz and Mapam. Through them, he had learned that Israeli politicians wanted to meet with him, including Amirav, the drafter of the initial proposal that was to have led to talks between Arafat and Shamir.\textsuperscript{180} Nusseibeh and Husseini worked together closely, with concurrence from the PLO in Tunis. Nusseibeh recalled, 

\begin{quote}
I wanted to make sure that not only Abu Jihad was in favour, or Abu Ammar [\textit{nom de guerre} of Yasir Arafat, or 'Father of Us All'] wanted it, but that people here [in the territories] were on my side. In the years before, I had learned the terrain quite well. I knew exactly where everybody was and how everything had to happen. So I made sure that I did not do anything with Amirav without coordination at every level.\textsuperscript{181}
\end{quote}

The elaborate synchronization and numerous sessions that occurred were not the result of

\begin{enumerate}
\item\textsuperscript{177}In 1988, Amirav told me of his meetings with Husseini and Nusseibeh, of the ‘package’ that had been prepared, and how Likud had rejected him as a result. Moshe Amirav, one-hour interview (Jerusalem, 8 June 1988). Also see Schiff and Ya’ari, \textit{Intifada}, pp. 274–77; Diase, ‘Profiles of Israelis and Palestinians’, p. 172.
\item\textsuperscript{178}Ibid., p. 277.
\item\textsuperscript{179}Husayni, Interview, p. 13. Husseini believes that Shamir cynically exploited the initiative to ward off pressures from the Labour party for an international conference and to preempt external influences on Israel to talk directly with the PLO. Wallach and Wallach, ‘Faisal Husseini’, in \textit{New Palestinians}, p. 68.
\item\textsuperscript{180}Husayni, Interview, p. 13. Husseini mentions subsequently conferring with Amirav, then a member of Shinui, during three days of meetings that covered the Israeli political spectrum from left to right. Ibid.
\item\textsuperscript{181}Nusseibeh, interview (28 January 1996).
\end{enumerate}
personal interest, according to Husseini; they represented 'a Palestinian decision to explain our political positions to all Israeli political elements', and some meetings, for example one with Labour party official Yossi Beilin, occurred with representatives from eight separate Palestinian tendencies present.\textsuperscript{182}

Contact with Israelis—from the Ratz and Mapam parties on the left to Shinui on the right—affect the Palestinians' thinking, if only to give them a sense of what might be accomplished through a negotiated settlement. Even if one does not choose Gideon Gera's term of \textit{Israelization} to identify the changing outlook by Palestinians inside the occupied territories, factors such as increased access to education, the study of Hebrew, and contacts with a more democratic (if illiberal) and assertive society led to an alteration in perspectives. Jordanian rule, for example, became unthinkable.\textsuperscript{183} According to Abu Ayyash, 'There was a change on the Palestinian side, more than on the Israeli side'.\textsuperscript{184}

The 'Fourteen Points'

The cumulative effect of the new political thinking is corroborated by a document released at a press conference held in East Jerusalem on 14 January 1988, almost five weeks after the initial outpouring of the intifada. A list of demands was released, grouped

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{182} Husayni, Interview, p. 13. Beilin was deputy foreign minister in the Labour government that negotiated the Oslo accords and one of its negotiators in Norway; he would later write that 'Israel's sensational victory of 1967 became a curse'. Patrick Cockburn, 'Israel Is Gripped by the Curse of '67', \textit{Independent}, 6 June 1997, p.21.

\item \textsuperscript{183} Gideon Gera, 'Israel and the June 1967 War: 25 Years Later', \textit{Middle East Journal} 46:2 (Spring 1992): 237. In late 1985, the admonition for direct negotiations may have borne fruit, as Israel accepted in principle the appeal of Jordan's King Hussein for an international umbrella under which negotiations could occur. Recognizing that Jordan could not, for reasons of its own political constituencies, risk direct public talks with Israel after the assassination of Anwar Sadat, Shimon Peres accepted the principle of an international conference as a context for direct negotiations. The PLO had privately accepted the concept of negotiations with Israel under such sponsorship, but did not admit so publicly. From the autumn of 1984 onwards, I acted as an intermediary for President Jimmy Carter and had numerous discussions on this issue with Yassar Arafat and some of his associates. Carter regularly encouraged the PLO to endorse the idea, reporting to Presidents Ronald Reagan and George Bush on his efforts, but it was only in private in the late 1980s that Arafat could make this commitment.

\item \textsuperscript{184} Abu Ayyash, interview (29 January 1996).
\end{itemize}

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into fourteen clauses, and presented by ‘Palestinian nationalist institutions and personalities from the West Bank and Gaza’. The document has come to be known as the ‘Fourteen Points by Palestinian Personalities’. Among those stepping forward to release it were Hanna Siniora, Hebron mayor Mustafa Natsheh, acting president of Bir Zeit University Gabi Baramki, Mubarak Awad, Jonathan Kuttab, and Sari Nusseibeh, the actual drafter of this and other documents.

The Fourteen Points call for the convening of an international peace conference with the PLO acting as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people at the convocation. The document lists fourteen demands for Israeli compliance prior to the commencement of the conference, in order to create an atmosphere of equality and also implying recognition of the national rights of the Palestinian people, including self-determination and the ‘establishment of an independent Palestinian state on Palestinian national soil’. Mentioning a renewed spirit, the document concludes that the occupation under which Palestinians lived was unnatural and would come to an end. Among the fourteen demands are the following:

- Israel should abide by world conventions on human rights, including those concerning deportations, prisoners, imprisonment, actions by Israeli settlers and soldiers, and the right of political freedom.

- The ‘siege’ of refugee camps should be lifted, and the Israeli army should withdraw from all Palestinian population centres. At the same time, settlement activity and the confiscation of Palestinian land should be stopped; Muslim and Christian holy sites should be respected.


No allusion whatsoever was intended to Woodrow Wilson’s 8 January 1918 Fourteen Points, the twelfth of which states that nationalities other than the Turkish in the Ottoman Empire ‘should be assured an undoubted security of life and unmolested opportunity of autonomous development’. Nusseibeh, interview (28 January 1996). For a concise analysis of this document, whose authorship by Nusseibeh was not generally known, see Khalidi, ‘Toward Peace in the Holy Land’. 

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• All direct taxes levied on Palestinian residents should end. All deducted wages should be returned to those who had worked inside the Green Line, including interest. Restrictions on building permits, agriculture, and industrial programmes should be lifted. The free movement of products from the occupied territories should be allowed.

• Political contact should be permitted between the residents of the occupied territories and the PLO. 188

In Washington, on 27 January 1988, Hanna Siniora and Gaza lawyer Fayez Abu Rahme delivered the Fourteen Points to Secretary of State George P. Shultz. 189 The Palestinians who signed the Fourteen Points were a few months later denounced by political scientist Ziad Abu-Amr. They were condemned as not speaking for constituencies, for not being representative of the broad Palestinian spectrum, for supporting Fateh to the exclusion of other factions, and for being ‘generally available to meet with whomever will meet with them’. Citing a ‘score of men’ that fell into this category, Abu-Amr specifically singled out for disapproval Nusseibeh, Siniora, Abu Rahme, and Natsheh. Castigating them as self-appointed, opportunistic, pro-PLO and pro-Jordanian mouthpieces who had raised the ‘art of political accommodation to new heights’, he said that ‘their assigned contacts with parties perceived as enemies actually undercut any popular nationalist support they might nurture’. 191 Notwithstanding such criticism—of which doubtless more was voiced than published—one of the most distinctive features of the period leading up to the intifada was the creative

188 ‘Palestinians’ Fourteen Demands’.

189 Palestinian nationalist institutions and personalities, ‘27 January 1988 Letter to Secretary of State George Shultz’, in Lukacs, Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, pp. 435-7. Recalls Siniora, ‘They put me in prison for twelve hours to [try to] prevent the press conference here from taking place. . . . The whole world was able to follow the statement. . . . A few months later, I was invited with Fayez Abu Rahme to [Washington], the first time that a Palestinian from the territories was invited to the State Department. We carried as our demands, reflecting the demands of the intifada, the Fourteen Points’. Siniora, interview (16 December 1997). Helena Cobban interprets this move as nothing more than élites doing what élites normally do. Cobban, ‘The PLO and the Intifada’, p. 85.


exercise of political initiative by a group of educated or well-connected individuals in and around East Jerusalem who had abandoned sectarian slogans, and openly based their actions on ideas that did not adhere to the dogma of the past.

The 'Husseini Document'

The Israeli Knesset on 27 June 1967 had unilaterally extended 'Israeli law, jurisdiction, and public administration over the entire area of the Land of Israel' creating a pretext for any subsequent Israeli determinations in the eastern portions of Jerusalem. Israeli civil law, rather than military order, was applied to the 70-square-kilometre area east of the 1948 armistice line, so Palestinians resident in East Jerusalem were technically not under military occupation. This form of de facto annexation has not been recognized by any of the world's sovereign states, all of which view this section of East Jerusalem as under occupation—part of the West Bank—and insist that Israel must abide by international law governing occupying powers. The legal status of Palestinians living under annexation in

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193 On 28 June 1967, 71,000 dunums of land, 6,000 of which had been included in the Jordanian-controlled portions of the city, were lodged under the jurisdiction of the Israeli Jerusalem municipality. (A dunum is one thousand square metres, roughly equivalent to one-fourth of an acre.) The portions brought into what Israel considered 'unified Jerusalem' extended north to Ramallah and south to Bethlehem. Geoffrey Aronson, Settlements and the Israeli-Palestinian Negotiations: An Overview (Washington, D.C., Institute for Palestine Studies, 1996), p. 17. B'Tselem concurs with the claims of the international community that East Jerusalem is occupied territory whose status should be determined by negotiations, while ensuring protection of the human rights of all involved. A Policy of Discrimination: Land Expropriation, Planning and Building in East Jerusalem (Jerusalem, B'Tselem, 1995), pp. 3, 1. See also John V. Whitbeck, 'Now, Drop the Veil: The Palestinian State Exists', Middle East International, 21 March 1997, p. 18. For an argument that Israel's partial de jure annexation holds the potential for sharing Jerusalem by disaggregating legal, administrative, and jurisdictional issues, even while keeping the city whole, see Terry Rempel, 'The Significance of Israel's Partial Annexation of East Jerusalem', Middle East Journal 51:4 (Autumn 1997): 520–34.

194 When East Jerusalem and nearby villages were annexed in 1967, notes B'Tselem, Israeli law was imposed in contravention of international law which holds that an occupying country is not allowed to annex conquered territories, except as a result of a peace treaty, because 'the question of annexation of a certain place is not contingent ... on the arbitrary will of each state'. Since then, 'the Israeli government has adopted a policy of systematic and deliberate discrimination against the Palestinian population ... in all matters relating to expropriation of land, planning, and building'. Policy of Discrimination, pp. 3, 1. Between 1967 and 1996, 24,000 of the 71,000 annexed dunums were expropriated for construction of Israeli settlements, and a quota on construction for Palestinians has since held the Arab quotient of the city's inhabitants at 26 per cent. Aronson, Settlements, pp. 17, 18. A Palestinian economist claims that East Jerusalem has been enlarged by expropriated land since 1967 to the extent that it is today three times the size it was when brought under Israeli authority. Ibrahim Matar, The Transformation of Jerusalem, 1948–1997, monograph (London, n.p., 1997), p. 10.
East Jerusalem and its environs mimicked that of Israeli Palestinians in Israel proper, who possess more freedoms than those under military occupation or annexation, except that their citizenship and passports remained Jordanian. Emergency laws were instituted to deny Palestinians freedom of the press, however, and onerous Israeli censorship, administrative detention, the closing of newspapers, and deportation of Palestinian journalists accompanied annexation.¹⁹⁵

The Palestinian news media in East Jerusalem initially thought they would be able to operate with freedoms virtually unknown in the rest of the Arab world, and Hanna Siniora, Radwan Abu Ayyash, Ziad Abu Zayyad, Daoud Kuttab, and innumerable other reporters, publishers, and writers became active in disseminating ideas that were circulating in the ancient city’s eastern, Arab section. Some Israeli laws did bring benefits to journalists and publishers in Arab East Jerusalem which, while not exaggerating their scope, were both timely and helpful for those redefining what it meant to be a Palestinian, and a few journalists initially desired the status of possessing a Jerusalem identity card, because they thought East Jerusalemites would gain special treatment in any subsequent peace treaty under UN supervision, as envisioned in the 1947 partition plan. Subsequently, however, they came to view annexation as a liability when emergency measures such as six-month administrative detentions supplanted the original forty-eight-hour administrative detentions; even their Israeli number plates on their automobiles became a problem for them when travelling in the West Bank and Gaza.¹⁹⁶

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¹⁹⁵ See Goldstein, Journalism under Occupation, pp. 18, 19.

¹⁹⁶ Daoud Kuttab, 'Jerusalem', dispatch filed with news media (East Jerusalem, May 1988), Kuttab private papers.

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Between 1 January 1969 and 1 March 1972, some 365 Arab families were evicted outright from their homes inside the walls of the Old City of Jerusalem. Mehdi, Palestine Chronicle, pp. 21–34, list by Ruhi al-Khatib, former mayor of Jerusalem under the Jordanians. Ibrahim Matar claims that more than 135 homes in the Moroccan, i.e., Maghrebi, Muslim quarter of the Old City were destroyed after the 1967 war to make room for a plaza. Matar also reports that five thousand Palestinians have been evicted from other Muslim quarters, leading to a Jewish quarter in the Old City that is four times the size it was in 1948. Matar, Transformation of Jerusalem, p. 10. Also see Ibrahim Matar, ‘From Palestinian to Israeli: Jerusalem, 1948–1982’, Journal of Palestine Studies 48 (Summer 1983): 57–63.
Husseini made a self-deprecating claim that his status as a Palestinian living in East Jerusalem meant that he had less to fear from being politically outspoken: 'I carry a Jerusalem identity card, they can’t deport me, which has enabled me to speak out more forcefully and to work more actively in the field than others; the price of my positions cannot be more than administrative detention or prison'. Orders for Husseini’s house arrest by day and town arrest by night stood without change for five years, until the Israelis began to imprison him under administrative detention procedures. Beginning in 1982, when the first of his Israeli-Palestinian committees came into being, Husseini was often held under Israeli emergency provisions that allow detention without charges or trial proceedings. When Husseini was arrested in April 1987, nine months prior to the outbreak of the intifada, numerous documents were confiscated from his office and lodgings at Orient House, home to the Arab Studies Society. On 31 August 1987, Husseini was arrested again. More papers were taken. One year later, eight months into the intifada, at 2:00 A.M. on 31 July 1988—the same day that King Hussein announced the severing of ties between Jordan and the West Bank, the demise of the so-called Jordanian option a fait accompli—Husseini was rearrested. Among the papers confiscated this time from Orient House was one referred to as the ‘Husseini Document’.

The Husseini Document is an outline providing for the declaration of independence of a Palestinian state, which takes for granted that the state of Palestine has already been formed through the momentum of the popular uprising of the intifada. At the core of the document is

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197 Husayni, Interview, p. 3.

198 Under town arrest orders, a modified form of house arrest, Husseini could not leave East Jerusalem’s city limits, was obliged to remain inside his house from dusk to dawn, and had to report twice weekly to police. Frankel, ‘Israelis Detain Arab Activist’, p. A21. According to Frankel, Husseini was subjected to town arrest from 1982 until April 1987, when he was gaol ed without charge during a security crackdown following protests throughout the occupied territories over the prison conditions of Palestinian prisoners. The authorities said Husseini was the coordinator and strategist for the protests and boycotts. Ibid.

the stated objective of moving the conflict from one of stones to one of diplomatic
negotiations held on an equal footing with the Israelis. Leadership and administrative bodies
are addressed along with steps to be taken towards each. Basic to the declaration is the
understanding that it is creating ‘a Palestinian state in the homeland’, not a government in
exile. An essential precept is that the Palestinian people would create this state rather than
waiting for outside assistance: ‘our people will ... hold the reins of the initiative’; neither
Israel, the Arab nations, nor the world community would have a ‘way out of dealing with this
reality created by the uprising’. Basic points include guidelines for geographic boundaries;
executives of the state, legislative, and administrative bodies; and for negotiations on such
issues as water, Israeli settlements, and the right of return for refugees.200

On 6 August 1988, Israeli authorities leaked to the news media what they said
appeared to be a secret draft declaration of Palestinian independence.201 Nusseibeh was
quoted the following day:

The Palestinians should now use the King’s [Hussein] speech to push one step
further. The PLO can turn its offices around the world into embassies, and we
can turn the underground committees here into ministries for health, education
and municipal services. Having declared a state in the West Bank, we should
then offer to negotiate with our neighbors—Israel and Jordan—the exact
nature of relations.202

An Israeli journalist pointed out that what Nusseibeh had said was ‘strikingly similar’ to the
draft declaration, and that the ideas in the seized working paper had been circulating in
Palestinian circles there for some time:

The idea of declaring an independent state is part of a broader effort by
Palestinian nationalist intellectuals to give new meaning to the uprising in the
territories, to translate it into a political language which will win both

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200 Document alleged to have been among Feisal Husseini’s papers, reprinted from Jerusalem Post, 12

201 Jonathan Karp, ‘Shamir Calls Plan for Palestinian State Insane and Dangerous’, Reuters, 8 August

202 Thomas L. Friedman, ‘The King’s Move: Hussein Cuts Off the West Bank, Spites Arafat; Stay
Jerusalem Post, 17 November 1989.
international gains and sympathy in Israel. The idea is to confound Israel diplomatically, divide its public opinion. . . . The declaration, like the uprising, is a creation of the Palestinians in the territories.\(^\text{203}\)

The document that had been appropriated from Husseini’s house was the first draft of a declaration of Palestinian independence, written not by Husseini but by Nusseibeh.\(^\text{204}\) ‘Sari came to my house and gave it to me to review, but before I could read it or respond, the Israelis arrested me and seized it. I did not learn what had been in it until I was in gaol, and was surprised to hear about a paper named after me while watching television’.\(^\text{205}\) Why did the Israeli authorities name the seized document after him? Husseini’s supposition:

Many Israelis had started viewing me as a moderate. The authorities knew that the Israelis would start to demonstrate against my arrest. So they were trying to pull the rug out from under Israeli demonstrators by reading the document on TV and calling it the Husseini Document.\(^\text{206}\)

Regarding Husseini’s crediting him with the drafting of the document, Nusseibeh responds,

The Fourteen Points were an outward manifestation of what was being discussed and formed internally and would come out as the Jerusalem Paper, both drafted by the same person—me. They were not so much my writing as an articulation of what was going on. The Husseini Document was at the end of the same process as the Fourteen Points and the Jerusalem Paper. . . . My contribution was the articulation of what was going on inside [Fateh].\(^\text{207}\)

Nusseibeh’s re-imagining of a coexisting Palestine would also be reflected in an article written during a later phase of the intifada: ‘The Palestinians and Israelis, living side

\(^\text{203}\)Greenberg, ‘New Direction’.

\(^\text{204}\)Although the generic concept was not new, Nusseibeh considers that the specific idea for a declaration of independence for a Palestinian state was first ‘floated’ in modern times in 1979 or 1980, in the paper on civil disobedience by Adnan Idris noted earlier. Maher Abukhater, ‘Towards the Proclamation of the State’, interview of Sari Nusseibeh, al-Fajr, 14 August 1988; Nusseibeh, interview (13 December 1997). The impact of Aziz Shehadeh in the late 1960s and 1970s on Feisel Husseini and Jonathan Kuttab in this regard is considered in Chapter Three. By May 1988, the Palestinian debate would be heightened by publication of a similar suggestion of bringing a state into being without negotiations, when Jerome M. Segal, an American Jewish academician, made an analogy to Israel’s proclamation of a state without approval from the Arabs. Jerome M. Segal, ‘A Radical Plan for Mideast Peace; If Palestinians Really Want a State, They Should Declare One’, Washington Post, 22 May 1988, p. C5; Shindler, Ploughshares into Swords? pp. 105–106. Segal’s piece also appeared in al-Quds.

\(^\text{205}\)Husseini, interview (14 June 1995).

\(^\text{206}\)Ibid.

\(^\text{207}\)Nusseibeh, communication (17 June 1995).
by side as equals, not as occupier and occupied, each in their own state, can contribute far more to themselves and to the world at large than either of them can ever do as long as the sense of injustice prevails'.

The ideas put forward by these intellectuals and activists—their vulnerability to detention no less because they lived in a world of ideas, the written word, and symbols—included the expectation of popular mass participation in determining the political direction of the Palestinian people and the notion that through their own actions they could create a necessary compromise with Israel. As they redefined the meaning of the Palestinian 'nation', they were also building the postulate that the Palestinian people living in the fraction of what remained of Palestine would be the ones to bring about change, rather than those leading from the diaspora. This was 'part and parcel of the intifada strategy'.

The 'Jerusalem Paper'

Once the intifada began, a document circulated that helps to explain how the Palestinian question was diverted from its course of armed struggle to political struggle, emerging directly from the process discussed in this chapter. Any account of the transition away from armed struggle represented by the intifada should reference the 'Jerusalem Paper', also called the 'Jerusalem Document', or 'al-Quds Paper'. Its initial working draft is dated 8 February 1988, two months after the rebellion broke. The preamble declares,

208 Sari Nusseibeh, 'A Palestinian Moderate’s Plea from a Cell in Ramleh Jail', Guardian, 4 March 1991. When I first met Nusseibeh, in West Jerusalem at the King David Hotel in June 1988, he had been arrested by the Israelis en route to the meeting and questioned for several hours.

209 Nusseibeh, interview (5 July 1994).

It is necessary to move the state of the intifada from the stage of strikes, demonstrations, and confrontations with the occupation authority to a new phase of quasi-separation from the system of occupation, in preparation for the proclamation of independence of the Palestinian people living on Palestinian lands in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. . . . The phase we have in mind is the one which the masses of the occupied land had created with their own will: the appropriate objective background for the proclamation of independence and the building of the state.\textsuperscript{211}

The document represents shared viewpoints across a spectrum of Palestinian political parties and factions—although with reservations from some tendencies, Nusseibeh noted.\textsuperscript{212}

Produced as a working paper from discussions within Fateh in East Jerusalem and the territories,\textsuperscript{213} consultations then took place with the other factions. Once agreement was secured, particularly from the PCP and the DFLP, Nusseibeh sent the paper by telecopier facsimile\textsuperscript{214} to Abu Jihad in Tunis, via the East Jerusalemites' prearranged intermediary in Paris, Muhammad Raba'ia, whose \textit{nom de guerre} was Abu Tariq.\textsuperscript{215} Having been first circulated among official Fateh circles in Ramallah and East Jerusalem, it was subsequently promulgated as a Fateh directive by Abu Jihad, who ‘fine-tuned’ it.\textsuperscript{216} In an analysis of what

\textsuperscript{211}References to the paper are from Abu-Amr, \textit{Intifada}, where it is attached as the first appendix, pp. 46–52, and translated in Appendix 7, here, unless otherwise stated.

\textsuperscript{212}Some in official Fateh circles may not have been committed, while others probably did not know of the paper. The PFLP was opposed to the full programme, including its proposed negotiations with Israel, while the DFLP and communists showed flexibility. Nusseibeh, interview (5 July 1994). A PFLP leaflet was issued in December 1988, which called for rejection of UN Resolutions 242 and 338 and urged the acceleration of armed struggle. Again, in February 1990, the PFLP would issue a statement in Damascus, urging the use of arms against Israeli troops, even though, as Colin Shindler writes, ‘the very fact that firearms were not used during the Intifada had made a considerable impression in the West’. Atran, ‘Stones against the Iron Fist’, p. 512 en36; Shindler, \textit{Ploughshares into Swords?} p. 230.

\textsuperscript{213}The al-Quds Working Paper was written by a group of people here, more than one person. I think I actually penned it by hand. It can’t be claimed to be written by anybody else. I have it on disk. . . . Ziad Abu Zayyad was involved [and] various people. Then to give it absolute form and coherence, if you like, I think it was I who actually wrote it down’. Nusseibeh, interview (28 January 1996).

\textsuperscript{214}Write journalist Ian Black and historian Benny Morris, ‘The facsimile machine became a symbol of the intifada, . . . rarely clandestine activities in the traditional clandestine sense. It involved ideas, money and public relations, not guns and bombs’. Black and Morris, \textit{Israel’s Secret Wars}, p. 467.

\textsuperscript{215}Nusseibeh, interviews (28 January 1996, 13 December 1997). This arrangement, which persisted during the intifada, is confirmed without specific details in Paul Taylor, ‘Palestinian Leaders Rely on Fax and Olive Branch’, Reuters, 8 May 1989.

\textsuperscript{216}Nusseibeh, interview (5 November 1994); Sari Nusseibeh, ‘Assessing Two Years of Intifada’, reprint of a February 1990 speech at Oxford University, in Safieh, \textit{Palestine}, p. 50. ‘We were told, “Fine. This is excellent as a programme. You can carry on with it”’. We, therefore, felt that we had backing. A bit later,
he considers two major 'landmarks' of the intifada—the Jerusalem Paper and the Husseini Document—Nusseibeh describes this paper as 'the backbone of the strategy of the intifada'. Elsewhere, he calls it the 'strategic and tactical framework of the uprising'.

The key idea the paper expresses is that the population of the occupied territories could disengage itself from the occupying authorities through a number of steps preparatory to declaring independence. In ascending order, linked to the seriousness of the penalties to be exacted in return, the document calls for a progression of actions moving from methods of protest or persuasion, such as conferences, marches, sit-ins, and demonstrations, to more severely punishable methods of social and economic noncooperation, such as strikes and boycotts, and finally proceeding to nonviolent interventions, such as refusal to submit to Israeli bureaucracy—in the form of disobeying orders, resigning from jobs, withholding taxes and payments for water and electricity—establishing underground printing presses, and most serious, burning identity cards. The document seeks to strip the Israeli occupation of its 'benevolent' face and arouse the international community to 'carry out its responsibilities in compelling Israel to recognize the rights of Palestinians to live in freedom in their own independent state'.

Calling for the intifada, then two months old, to move to a new stage of civilian resistance, the paper suggests that the uprising must move into a political process with stipulated targets. It argues that the mass movement can not remain effective if it stays within the realm of strikes and demonstrations. At the same time, the people of the occupied territories would not gain anything by terminating the intifada, therefore, escalation offers the most promising path for independence. The document highlights responsibilities the

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there was an internal instruction from the Fateh leadership outside, in which, more or less, the same ideas were introduced'. Nusseibeh, interview (28 January 1996).

Nusseibeh, ‘Assessing Two Years of Intifada’, p. 50.

Palestinians should be ready to assume in order to proclaim themselves an independent state. In its most significant clause, it contends that the military occupation functions with the implied consent of the Palestinians. Through refusal to cooperate, Palestinians in the occupied territories could withdraw their assumed concurrence with the occupation, and once disengaged, the 'only relationships left are those based on Israeli coercion, subjugation, and force'. The document says that Palestinians should be prepared for hardships arising from such a severing of relations with the military authorities, including economic deprivation. Citizens could lose jobs, have their electricity cut off, or experience shortages of goods. Those living in the territories would need to understand and prepare for tribulations, and once such a path was embarked upon, there would be no turning back—because the situation would forever be altered.

The text specifies that there must be a balance between protesting occupation and harming the Palestinian community; thus, provision should be made for the people of the West Bank and Gaza Strip to support themselves and provide for their families. Acts of civil disobedience should be planned and coordinated by a committee of leaders to monitor the effects of the resistance on the community, and it would be vital for popular committees to be organized to inform the community about civil disobedience as well as to help in the creation and functioning of a Palestinian state. Most important for the intifada and the stepped-up phase advocated by the document would be the Palestinians themselves, as it would be only through their determination and fortitude that the uprising could continue until independence:

The Jerusalem Paper is a programme—a civil-disobedience programme. If you read it today, it is elliptical, cryptic, but it has in it the seeds of both a beginning and an end—the initiation of a civil disobedience programme leading eventually to a declaration of independence and, thereafter, negotiations with Israel. It was an attempt to politicize a mass movement.  

In Nusseibeh's words, 'Much of the strategy of the intifada leadership, the gradual step-by-

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219 Nusseibeh, interview (6 November 1994).
step evolution, was actually an implementation, or partial implementation, of that paper'.

'From the point of view of Fateh, we have clear evidence that there was a coherent, purposeful, holistic strategy, reaching out to the day of independence'.

Thus, in one of the seminal documents in the primary literature of the intifada, the term armed struggle does not appear. Each method enumerated is historically recognizable from a world body of nonviolent strategic action that might have been used in almost any country or any century. The paper shows a grasp of the properties of nonmilitary resistance and its force when applied to change an opponent's means of operation and outlook. In gestation was the idea that military occupation was a web of contact points between occupier and occupied, the great majority of which were sustained by the implied submission of the occupied, and only a small proportion of which were based on force. To end the occupation, one had to change the state of submission, largely by cutting off the contact points maintained by the occupied, thereby revealing to the international community in clear form the force used by the occupier. This had been the strategy used against Military Order 854.

Nusseibeh, interview (5 July 1994). 'It so happened also that people involved in the drawing up of the programme were involved directly and indirectly in the representation of Fateh in the Unified National Leadership Command'. Nusseibeh, interview (6 November 1994).

Nusseibeh calls this 'background literature', in contrast to the 'surface literature' that was publicly disseminated. Nusseibeh, 'Time for Palestinian Offensives', p. 17. In view of the large gaps in what has been published about the intifada, this study views the Jerusalem Paper as primary literature.

A text from the Danish resistance against Nazi occupation, 'Ten Commandments from a Dane', is markedly different in tone. Not only did it give instructions, it called for terse interaction with the occupier. '1. You must not go to work in Germany or Norway. 2. You must do bad work for the Germans. 3. You must practice working in slow motion for the Germans. 4. You must destroy all the tools and machines that could be useful to the Germans. 5. You must try to destroy anything that can be profitable to the Germans. 6. You must delay all transports to Germany. 7. You must boycott German and Italian newspapers and films. 8. You must buy nothing from German shops. 9. You must behave with traitors according to what they deserve. 10. You must protect whoever is pursued by the Germans'. Quoted by Lennart Bergfeldt, 'The Danish Case, Program on Nonviolent Sanctions' (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1988), unpublished, as cited in Semelin, Unarmed against Hitler, pp. 44-5.
As noted, the certitude of Fateh's East Jerusalem centrists was not necessarily shared among all in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Some held tightly to the old ideology of armed struggle and liberation while others, such as resurgent Islamic parties, adamantly opposed new concepts of struggle taking hold, regardless of the content. Moreover, as the activist intellectuals were developing new exclusively political prototypes for fighting occupation in the mid-1980s, official diasporan Fateh ideology continued to aggregate all approaches in a contradictory manner, as espoused in 1980: 'The PLO is the real framework of national Palestinian unity, on the level of the revolutionary [military] cells, the popular organizations, trade unions and all sectors of our people'. 223 Although activist intellectuals who were officially or unofficially affiliated with Fateh around East Jerusalem were attempting to influence Tunis and would coordinate first with Abu Jihad, and later Arafat, through their Paris intermediary, the continuing reliance of the PLO on the mystique of military cadres and the fusion of incompatible approaches into an ideological hodge-podge—'all means of struggle'—prevented systematic applications of political methods from bearing ripe fruit, even after the Jerusalem Paper. 224

By mid-1989, during the intifada, Fateh's political programme still called for 'continuing to intensify and escalate armed action and all forms of struggle to liquidate the Israeli-Zionist occupation of our occupied Palestinian land'. 225 Armed struggle remained the

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224 Indicative of the prevalence of such ambiguity was the statement of a Fateh representative on the Unified National Leadership Command in the intifada who had spent seventeen years in Israeli prisons, where he became persuaded of the superiority of nonviolent struggle. He declared, 'We, in Fateh ... believe that the kind of struggle is of our choice'. 'Abd al-Fatth Hamayl, two-hour interview (Ramallah, 25 January 1996).

225 Fatah Political Platform, Fifth General Congress, Tunis, 8 August 1989, in Lukacs, Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, p. 441.
PLO’s overarching logo, potentially threatening the unarmed political strategies that Husseini, Nusseibeh, Zayyad, Abu Ayyash and others associated with Fateh had developed inside the territories, and a high tolerance for unmethodical agglomerations of conflicting strategies remained. In this sense, the twenty-year period prior to the intifada bore a resemblance to the time prior to the ‘great revolt’ of 1936–9, when reactive violent resistance was gratuitously mixed with carefully orchestrated nonviolent campaigns. Nusseibeh said,

[In] Fateh doctrine, the classical doctrine, there was never any inconsistency between unarmed and armed forms of struggle because it was always assumed in the classical doctrine that you have to use a little armed struggle in order to mobilize the masses into an unarmed struggle, as the second stage, that can then develop into a third stage of a popular armed revolution. This was the classical three-stage theory of the revolutionary ideologues.226

Fateh’s objective had been in 1970 described as being ‘to politicize the military struggle and militarize the political struggle’.227 In 1974, PLO chairman Arafat had stated that political struggle was the handmaiden to armed struggle, but in 1989 Husseini inverted Arafat’s articulation and instead subsumed military resistance under political striving:

When there is an occupation, people have the right to fight it by any means they can, including the armed struggle. But it is not a must. If it is necessary, it can be used at a certain period, but it is not an end in itself. I believe that at this stage, other means will work better. I am not saying that we should renounce the armed struggle, but now we are not using it. The armed struggle is only part of the political struggle.228

Among exiles, the view persisted that it was only after the Palestinians opted for armed struggle that their ‘national identity and aspirations were recognized’, their need for satisfaction endorsed by the international community, and the Palestinian people rescued


228 Husayni, Interview, p. 8.
from 'political oblivion'. Although armed struggle may have been in a generalized sense en route to becoming subservient to diplomacy in the 1980s and during the years of intifada, it was never completely eliminated as an option or allowed to die. More than one activist had come to regret the diasporan overemphasis on military means in the early years after occupation. Average Palestinians were often confused, not knowing whether such dreams were still the goal and, if so, whether they were to be accomplished 'through protracted warfare or by stages in which peaceful and violent means would be used alternately'.

Some impact from the debate and advocacy of nonviolent resistance inside the territories could be discerned on the periphery of the PLO by 1986. On 12–13 June, the Palestine National Fund let it be known that the fund's thirty-person board of directors, meeting in Casablanca, had urged Arafat to take inspiration from the South Africa anti-apartheid movement. The fund suggested that the PLO undertake the boycotting of Israeli products, abandonment of jobs inside Israel, and civil disobedience. Jaweed al-Ghussein, spokesperson for the PLO's fund-raising arm, told Patrick Seale that 'a new strategy was being forced on the PLO'. The fund insisted on a 'radical change of direction' and pressed the

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232 Sayigh, 'Palestinian Armed Struggle', p. 103.

233 The Palestine National Fund was established by the same 28 May 1964 Palestine National Congress that set up the PLO. Its purpose is to finance the organization through annual subscriptions paid by each Palestinian over eighteen years of age, loans, contributions, and bonds. Kadi, 'Armed Resistance', p. 132.
PLO leadership to accept civil disobedience.²³⁴ Seale’s story in London’s *Observer* was picked up by *al-Fajr* in East Jerusalem, although it may be noted that an interpretation was added by the Palestinian weekly to the effect that measures such as civil disobedience reflected PLO weakness and crisis.²³⁵ Even if the diasporan ‘paymasters’ grasped the value of nonviolent strategies, there is little evidence of clarity in the Tunis-based PLO concerning the required preparation, discipline, or strength inherent in such measures.

Indeed, the PLO’s military actions, particularly after 1974 and before 1982, were unrelated to and detached from its political goals of obtaining recognition from the United States and mobilizing international pressure on Israel to lift the occupation.²³⁶ Bombings, shellings, cross-border raids from Lebanon, the taking of hostages, suicide missions, and other operations detracted from Palestinian political objectives.²³⁷ The pattern persisted into the first year of the *intifada* when, on 7 March 1988, Palestinian guerrillas hijacked a bus carrying unarmed employees to the Dimona nuclear research centre in the Negev desert. Three Israelis—a man and two women—and three Palestinians were killed when the bus was attacked, all of them civilians. Inside the territories, Palestinians averred that it was planned, executed, and celebrated by the diasporan PLO exiles and were dismayed: ‘When the Fateh

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²³⁵ ‘PLO to Advocate Civil Disobedience in Occupied Territories’, *al-Fajr*, 23 June 1986.

²³⁶ Although published self-criticism was uncommon, a rare instance was the admission by Abu Iyad that ‘the main cause of our failure has been our ignorance of western society and of the complex democratic mechanisms that operate there’. Abu Iyad [Salah Khalaf], ‘Al-Fatah’s Autocriticism’, reprinted from Abu Iyad, *Palestien sans Patrie* (Paris, Editions Fayolle, 1979), *Guerrilla Strategies: An Historical Anthology from the Long March to Afghanistan*, ed. Gérard Chaliand (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1982), p. 326.

²³⁷ Sayigh, ‘Palestinian Armed Struggle’, pp. 104–5. Other goals were being served, writes Sayigh. ‘Clandestine operations . . . enabled the PLO to “spoil” diplomatic initiatives that excluded it’. Yezid Sayigh, ‘Armed Struggle and Palestinian Nationalism’, in Sela and Ma’oz, *PLO and Israel*, p. 31.
people came from outside, they brought the violence. They had no discipline'. Nusseibeh deplored this first guerrilla action against civilians since the start of the uprising, done without the knowledge of Fateh’s local leaders, ‘It’s very worrying, because the whole point of the [intifada] is to have a so-called white revolution in which people don’t use any arms’; he called the cold-blooded shooting of passengers a ‘deplorable act’ in which the only purpose served was to ‘de-legitimize the Palestinian people’s struggle against occupation’. Prime Minister Shamir, however, insisted that those who had carried out the attack ‘were the same people who are igniting the disturbances in the territories’. 

Shamir’s utterance to the contrary, by the mid-1980s, persons such as Husseini, Nusseibeh, Abu Zayyad, and Abu Ayyash were working almost full time to politicize the military struggle. Eqbal Ahmad observes in 1983 that ‘the Palestinian left’s rhetoric had isolated itself rather than the enemy’. As the East Jerusalem activists and intellectuals saw

241 Eqbal Ahmad observes in 1983 that ‘the Palestinian left’s rhetoric had isolated itself rather than the enemy’.

242 As the East Jerusalem activists and intellectuals saw


242 Ahmad, ‘Arafat’s Nightmare’, p. 22.
it, the issue had changed to 'a struggle between pure justice and possible justice', as Husseini later phrased it.\textsuperscript{243} Persuasion was required. For Israel to end the occupation would require reassurance, Nusseibeh argued:

We should address ourselves to the Israeli man in the street and tell him that we do not want to throw him into the sea, but that we don’t want to be expelled into the desert either. That we do not seek to destroy his state, but that we want to establish our own, alongside Israel. That we don’t want him to die, but that we, too, want to live. It is a legitimate message which must be delivered in clear, unambiguous language.\textsuperscript{244}

Although confusion regarding the mixing of political aims with military methods would remain a drawback, a growing number of intellectuals, academicians, activists, journalists, and publishers were coming to understand that the asymmetry between Israel and the Palestinians could throw international sympathies in their favour, potentially causing Israeli citizenry to identify with their dilemma, and that nonmilitary strategies could work best to press their case.

\textit{Conclusion}

As nationalist thinking changed, it was leading to a Palestinian uprising that would be distinguishable from the resistance of the 1920s and 1930s in part by a unanimity of ideas and action and compatibility between the intellectuals and the dwellers of refugee camps or villages. Actions taken by Palestinian intellectuals in the realm of theory, or the leadership of wellborn activists working with their Israeli sympathizers, cannot be artificially

\textsuperscript{243}Kathy Bergen, David Neuhaus, and Ghassan Rubeiz, \textit{Justice and the Intifada: Palestinians and Israelis Speak Out} (New York, Friendship Press, 1991), p. 73. In an earlier era, Abdullah Schleifer notes, ‘The Palestinian insistence on justice was undeniable. But without any apparent program or alternative beyond “revenge” (a neotribal Arab affectation as repugnant to the classic Islamic sensibility of the region as to Western humanism), the non-Arab understood the cause as an intolerable proposal to solve one refugee problem (the Palestinian) with . . . the creation of a new one’. Schleifer, \textit{Fall of Jerusalem}, p. 84.

separated from the mass organizing of committees in the refugee camps or rural villages insofar as immunity from reprisal is concerned.

The twenty-year process of civilian mobilization after 1967 in the occupied territories built the capacity for massive resistance during the uprising, but the political contours of the coming intifada were shaped by the ferment of ideas cum action from Arab East Jerusalem. Human agency was instrumental in preparing the groundwork for the intifada through changes of outlook inside the occupied territories and the development of a new orientation on the assertion of Palestinian rights. These included the imagining of Israeli-Palestinian solidarity in that what was forgotten was as important as what was remembered, and in which the occupation was recognized as degrading Israelis as well as Palestinians. Publishing in Hebrew and English was adopted by some Palestinians in order to reach Israelis and the international community with the news of and opinions on new conceptions.

Contributing to the evolution in Palestinian nationalist thinking occurring inside the territories was a small group of individuals that was, at a simple and practical level, taking initiative and visibly showing how nonviolent action could lead towards the achievement of political goals. These persons, many officially or unofficially associated with Fateh, often themselves empowered in the broad civilian mobilization discussed earlier, sought to exercise their influence within the territories, among diasporan exiles, in Israel, and internationally. Some of their ideas were cross-fertilized by education abroad or contact with Israeli dissidents. Such concepts not only prepared the political framework for the intifada, but their advocacy of direct negotiations with the Israelis strategically affected the choice of nonviolent means of struggle.

The conceptual alterations represented by the Fourteen Points, the declaration of independence articulated in the Husseini Document, and the programme outlined in the
Jerusalem Paper epitomized a turning away from the guerrilla strategies which had produced so little and undermined (instead of reinforcing) the political and moral need to resolve the Palestinian issue. Striding away from short-term tactical thinking, the East Jerusalem activist intellectuals sought to transform ideologies and recruitment mythologies of armed struggle by the few into forms of struggle relying on invigoration of the many. The willingness of this epistemic community to invest in elusively political goals, pragmatic advocacy of nonviolent tools, reliance on one's own exertions, and insistence on direct talks also held potential for a sympathetic response within Israel, while at the same time their longer-term strategies of building a state were being crystallized by the ongoing formation of civilian committees. The growth of ideas on legitimizing rights and throwing off occupation—by bringing Palestinian grievances face to face with widening international norms on human rights—was accompanied by the development of a doctrine of popular participation, manifesting a belief that the political fate of the Palestinians rested with themselves, and that they could, through their own exertions, create the compromises required to live side by side with Israel.
Chapter Five

'WE CHOSE TO ACCEPT OCCUPATION'

*A Biographic Approach to the Transmission of Knowledge about Nonviolent Struggle*

Apart from the three major outbreaks of violence in the two decades following the Balfour Declaration, Palestinian leaders predominantly relied on nonviolent political techniques to protest changes to their patrimony, yet it would be another fifty years before such nonviolent approaches reappeared with any degree of coherence. As the British supplanted Ottoman rule by force of arms, followed by the Zionists’ advantage in the establishment of their state through British political and military intervention, and as armed resistance by Palestinian Qassamite groups produced results when all else had failed, violence—whether initiatory or reactive—came to be accepted by both Zionists and Palestinians as a sound procedure. When such a mutual conclusion is drawn, if one of two contending parties withdraws from the basic bargain to use violence, its opponent may be startled and unsure. Lost in most analyses on the Palestinian *intifada* is recognition that the Palestinians in the occupied territories—for a period of two to three years—broke the ‘contract’ in place by the end of the 1930s, whereby the Jewish émigrés and Palestinian indigenous leadership both concluded that violent resistance was the best way to attain their goals. This does not mean that the *intifada* was a prototype for nonviolent movements.

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1Observations on the symmetry of violence are not new. Amos Oz, for example, views Likud and Hamas as reinforcing each other, the messianic mysticism of the Israeli right nourished by Hamas, with its 'atmosphere of religious, chauvinist egoism'. Amos Oz, ‘The Hamas-Likud Connection’, *New York Times*, 11 April 1995, p. A25.


3Scott Atran’s view of ‘alternating structures’ in Israeli or Palestinian violence, which has been cited more than once in these pages, represents a step forward analytically in recognizing that both sides were engaged in violent struggle, but it still does not go far enough in explaining how this pattern was broken by the *intifada*. Atran, ‘Stones against the Iron Fist’.
More so than most unarmed movements, it represented a continuum from fully disciplined nonviolent struggle at one end to straggling violent tendencies at the other.¹

In explaining how the break from patterns of violent struggle to forms of nonviolent resistance occurred, the discussion thus far has focused on two forces propelling Palestinians in the occupied territories towards nonmilitary approaches. Chapter Three lays out the two decades of social mobilization after 1967—in effect a civil society—accompanied by alternative views on sharing the land, the deliberate adoption of civilian measures by a handful of movements, and development of an organizational capacity for mass responses to military occupation. Chapter Four clarifies how an epistemic community’s introduction of new symbols and ideas moved nationalist thinking inside the territories towards negotiations, affecting the choice of political tools, while a reciprocal relationship was sought through which to influence the PLO. Now to be explored is how external influences affected the mix of ideas and methods for resisting occupation, how knowledge spread about the implementation of nonviolent strategic action, and how the idea gained ground that it was within the power of the Palestinians themselves to refuse to submit to Israeli occupation.

Aziz Shehadeh, Sari Nusseibeh, and Feisel Husseini were disseminating their ideas with interviews and publications, often through international outlets, while others such as Ziad Abu Zayyad and Radwan Abu Ayyash were actually in the business of putting out information. Concurrently, another type of literature was also moving through the territories during the 1980s prior to the intifada. It was similar to the samizdat used in the struggle of the Czechs and Slovaks against Soviet hegemony. Booklets, pamphlets, leaflets, flyers, street handouts, and translations of materials from other movements were not secret, but neither were they destined for publication. Since this literature cannot be traced through periodicals or libraries, a biographical approach will be used to help illustrate its dissemination as well.

¹As noted in Chapter One, only Souad Dajani and Glenn E. Robinson have to date realized the magnitude of the exception represented by the uprising. Dajani, Eyes without Country; Robinson, Building a Palestinian State.
as the continuing impact of ideas and their connexion to the uprising.

This chapter is built around a narrative biographical account of an accoucheur for certain, specific catalytic learning that took place in the occupied territories during the mid-1980s: Mubarak Awad. Awad and two individuals significantly associated with his work—Jonathan Kuttab and Gene Sharp—made accessible a theory of power and knowledge of nonmilitary methods that could be used by any Palestinian in the occupied territories, and they circulated materials from other movements on how to disconnect from the implicit pact to use violence against violence. Obligatory to an understanding of the intifada is examination of their distributed writings. These individuals stood remote from the ideologies engendered by the PLO and the various factions of the front. In looking at how Palestinians living under the constraints of occupation were exposed to ideas from other parts of the world by persons who were not in the Palestinian factional mainstream, we again must take into account human agency in a complex movement that has been made even more complicated by the persisting claim of the PLO in the diaspora that it was the cause of the uprising, overwhelming evidence to the contrary. Yet merely disproving the PLO’s avowed ‘authorship’ of the intifada would shed little light on the subtler questions involved in the transmission of ideas that helped to shape the uprising.

To clarify these developments and the literature that has been largely unaddressed, the tool of biography will be used to show the following:

- Catalytic agents argued for four years prior to the intifada that the Palestinians should disconnect from the use of violence to fight military occupation, because this would be less self-destructive, within the capacity of the Palestinians, and more effective.
- Ideas from other movements were presented—including Gandhian principles of power and those emphasizing self-reliance and the power within oneself—and put forward straightforwardly, without repackaging for Muslims, and equally without concern for whether such concepts were acceptable within the ideological framework.
of the PLO.

- A cross section of the population experienced hands-on exposure to knowledge on how to struggle nonviolently.
- The Israeli use of expulsion to squelch the spread of concepts of nonviolent struggle enhanced the transmission of these ideas. Such Israeli countermeasures also raised the awareness of the Israeli public of the internal debate taking place among the Palestinians and heightened international understanding of the Palestinian predicament.

'Get Your Rights without a Single Bullet': Workshops and Samizdat

As William Vogele has noted, 'the application of power through nonviolent action challenges the presumed effectiveness of violence as a form of power', while it also 'undermines the normative justification for the necessity of violence to provide collective self-preservation in the face of violent force'. During the four years prior to the outbreak of the intifada, a body of material was disseminated among Palestinians in the occupied territories that not only questioned the values underlying armed struggle, but also argued that, rather than strengthening the Palestinians in their struggle against military occupation, violence had the effect of worsening their situation.

In August 1983, forty-year-old Mubarak Awad, a Palestinian-American clinical psychologist, returned from years of living in the United States to Jerusalem, where he and a cousin, the lawyer Jonathan Kuttab, brother of the journalist Daoud Kuttab, wrote a series of papers arguing the necessity for a nonviolent form of resistance by Palestinians. Various circulars contended that the use of nonviolent direct action would be more compatible with actual Palestinian resistance capacity than armed struggle, and that simply by choosing not

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to use weapons, humiliation could be lifted. Disseminated whenever opportunity afforded itself, one of the earliest points of distribution occurred at a series of three workshops organized by Awad in October 1983. At the sessions, a six-page workshop programme was handed out which defines some of the problems facing Palestinians and lays out a series of techniques for solving them. (See Appendix 6 for the full text.) Reading it, one is struck by what Richard Gregg called an attitude—‘we can be free from the Israeli military’, however, ‘we chose to accept occupation’. Conceding that nonviolent action might seem unfamiliar, even ‘vague and mysterious’, the paper regrets the lack of ‘any ready list in Arabic or articles in Arabic on this subject’. Its definition of the term nonviolence is that it is ‘social change—a method for social liberation from the Israelis’. The goal of nonviolent struggle for the Palestinians is defined as ‘social justice and self-determination’. ‘Anyone seeking justice through law and action who wants to liberate himself/herself from the Israeli military rule’ is welcome to join this ‘citizens’ action’, according to the programme. Four methods are listed for accomplishing these goals: openness, personal risk, truthfulness, and self-suffering. The techniques mentioned include negotiation, direct action, agitation, consumer boycotts, picketing, strikes, sit-ins, noncooperation, nonpayment of taxes, civil disobedience, and the development of a parallel government. Aspects of nonviolent resistance are enumerated for discussion in the programme:

1. Nonviolent struggle is not a method for cowards.
2. It does not seek to defeat or humiliate the opponent.

7Gregg, Psychology and Strategy, p. 81.


9Ibid., p. 1.

10Ibid.

11The acceptance of suffering is among the most difficult of Gandhian theories and is expressed in the workshop programme as follows: ‘Self-suffering is `not as “martyrs”, yet not harming our opponents even if they harm us’. Ibid., p. 4. Satyagraha provides for several stages of winning over the opponent. In the first, protest and persuasion is used, but the second enters the domain of persuasion by attempting to reach beyond the target group’s rational defences, so that the sight of suffering penetrates psychologically. If this fails, other stages of nonviolent coercion can be employed. Bondurant, Conquest of Violence, p. 11.
3. Attack is directed against forms of evil, not the person who commits the evil.
4. Nonviolent resistance requires a willingness to accept suffering without striking back.
5. Nonviolent struggle avoids not only external physical violence, but also internal violence directed at the spirit.
6. Nonviolent resistance is based on the conviction that the universe is on the side of justice.  

Although neither scholarly credit nor attribution is given, it is worth pausing to note that these six 'aspects' are unequivocally taken from the writings of Mohandas K. Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr., often verbatim:

(Point 1) Gandhi: 'Cowardice is worse than violence'.  
King: 'This is not a method for cowards; it does resist'.  
The first thing that can be said about this method is that it is not a method of submission or surrender. . . . [I]t is a method that is very active in seeking to change conditions'.

(Point 2) Gandhi: 'The end of non-violent "war" is always an agreement, never dictation, much less humiliation of the opponent'.  
King: 'The nonviolent resister seeks to lift or rather to change the opponent, . . . not seek to defeat him or to humiliate him'.

(Point 3) Gandhi: 'My enmity is not against them, it is against their [British] rule'.  
King: 'You work to defeat
evil systems, but not the individuals who are caught up in [them]).

(Point 4) Gandhi: 'What then is the meaning of non-co-operation in terms of the Law of Suffering? We must voluntarily put up with the losses and inconveniences that arise from having to withdraw our support from a government that is ruling against our will. . . . We may make mistakes; there may be avoidable suffering. These things are preferable to national emasculation'.

(Point 5) King on Gandhi: '[Gandhi] would resist evil as much as the man who uses violence, but he resists it without external violence or violence of the spirit'.

(Point 6) King: 'The method of nonviolence is based on the conviction that the universe is on the side of justice'.

The six-page programme for the October 1983 workshops holds out the possibility that if well planned, with 'masses of people', nonviolent struggle could be viable for the Palestinians, although acknowledging that nonviolent resistance does sometimes fail. It suggests a rotating system, so that any persons who are arrested are replaced, and it questions assumptions:

Many Palestinians deal with injustice on a daily basis, either from the occupation or Arab nations. Either we think that we are sick and insane to

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21 Gandhi, *Young India*, 16 June 1920.

22 King, question-and-answer session, National Press Club luncheon, 22 August 1962, Washington, D.C., audio transcription, Martin Luther King, Jr., Papers, King Library and Archives, Atlanta, Georgia.


24 King, 'Nonviolence and Racial Justice'.

25 Ibid.

accept this injustice or everybody is sick to inflict on us this injustice. So we need to make a change. . . . With non-violent action. Palestinians and (not the politician) but every Palestinian can participate. . . . By doing this we can overcome the feeling of impotence. 

At the workshops, Awad and Kuttab also distributed a booklet in Arabic about wielding power to accomplish political goals. (See Appendix 7 for the booklet, minus its attachments.) By mutual agreement, Awad and Kuttab decided that the latter’s name would not be listed as co-author, to avoid compromising his ability to practise law before the Israeli bar. A draft of the booklet was given to former president Jimmy Carter on 7 September 1983 at a New York meeting of Habitat for Humanity, a private U.S. voluntary group. Shortly thereafter, Awad went to Atlanta, Georgia, to meet with Carter and ask his advice. The former president marked up the text, emphasizing the need for an exclusively nonviolent approach. Awad was fearful that word of the Atlanta session would reach East Jerusalem, where, if known, his ideas might be considered foreign; he nonetheless took the criticism seriously and made revisions. In the booklet, the reader is prepared for pain beyond any experienced under occupation:

The enemy in this battle is very serious and ferocious. There is no assurance and we cannot expect that he will himself be nonviolent. On the contrary, there are great sacrifices that are expected in the nonviolent struggle. . . . Nonviolent struggle is a real war and is not an easy alternative. Nonviolent struggle is not a negative or passive method. It is an active affirmative


28Mubarak E. Awad, Nonviolence in the Occupied Territories, English tr., archives of PASSIA (East Jerusalem, Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence, 1983). Hereafter, PCSN shall be used in citations of the publications of the Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence.


30Diary of Beth Heisey Kuttab, who represented the United Methodist Women at the meeting.


32Mubarak E. Awad, one-hour interview (Boston, 19 October 1995).
operation, ... a form of mobile warfare. ... It requires special training and a high degree of organization and discipline.\textsuperscript{33}

'The Israeli soldier is an ordinary human being', the text reads; 'he is not a frightening beast, nor an animal devoid of conscience and feeling'. He possesses 'an understanding of right and wrong to which it is possible to appeal. ... He can be demoralized because he constantly needs a reasonable justification for his activities'.\textsuperscript{34} A reading of the booklet shows a search for methods that might resonate with the target group, Israelis, thus potentially splitting their official position.\textsuperscript{35} It contends, 'the Israeli government is also sensitive to public opinion, both local and international. ... Israel does not possess the internal resources which will enable it to bear international isolation for a long time'.\textsuperscript{36} According to the booklet, a capacity for resistance is bolstered by the institutions and civilian infrastructure of a society, and efforts must be directed towards sustaining and strengthening such entities; social structures are deemed central to a resistance effort whose control must remain in the hands of the people, or resistance may be more difficult.\textsuperscript{37} Methods for maintaining such institutions (outside those overseen by the occupying regime) include defying orders or operating underground committees. Most activities contemplated would be illegal under the occupation, the booklet warns:

To bravely ... accept persecution for one's belief brings one very close to the

\textsuperscript{33}Awad, Nonviolence, p. 4.

\textsuperscript{34}Ibid., p. 5.

\textsuperscript{35}Writing when the field of psychology was still in its infancy, Gregg observes such a psychological aspect: 'We may say that ... non-violent resistance is a sort of moral manipulative activity in which the factors used and operated upon are largely psychological'. Gregg, Psychology and Strategy, p. 61.

\textsuperscript{36}Awad, Nonviolence, p. 5.

\textsuperscript{37}Awad's 1983 booklet resembles the steps in a five-stage 'revolutionary model' for campaigns of nonviolent resistance by George Lakey: 1. Cultural preparation and the raising of consciousness, including analysis, strategic debates, and living with fear and alienation; 2. Building organization (in the intifada, this stage had begun in 1969, as we have seen); 3. Confrontation, a stage requiring the advance formation of organization to withstand the repression that follows effective confrontation. At this point, the goal is to place the target group in the position of losing, whether it gives in or not; 4. Massive noncooperation, with huge strikes or refusals to obey; 5. Consolidation of new societal institutions, i.e., alternative institutions to meet legitimate needs, having been started during earlier stages. See George Lakey, Strategy for a Living Revolution (San Francisco, W. H. Freeman and Company, 1973); idem, Powerful Peacemaking: A Strategy for a Living Revolution (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, New Society Publishers, 1987).
power of nonviolence. It neutralizes the effectiveness of the instruments of repression. . . . The most powerful weapon in the hands of the authorities is fear. A Palestinian who can liberate himself from fear and who will boldly accept suffering and persecution without fear or bitterness or striking back has managed to achieve the greatest victory of all. 38

The ability to withstand pressure and suffering is obligatory for such a programme to work, notes the booklet, and must be accepted voluntarily in defence of principle, instead of having suffering imposed involuntarily. Most important, says the booklet, plans for civilian-based defence must be critically reviewed and extensively planned, and a thorough understanding of the intricacies of power must be applied.

The three workshops discussed here took place in East Jerusalem from 13 to 15 October 1983. The first was held at the Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA), preceded by an announcement of its topic: How You Can Get Your Rights without a Single Bullet. 39 A newspaper reported that the session was contentious:

Awad’s ideas were repeatedly challenged from the floor. One typical response was ‘Violence begets violence and, from a Palestinian point of view, Zionism is violence’. Others argued that while his ideas were intriguing, Palestinians could not afford different forms of struggle and still had to acknowledge the predominance of armed confrontation. 40

According to the newspaper account, Awad told the participants, ‘Palestinian struggle requires a new method of social liberation’. His goal was reported as being to bring about a movement of civil resistance among Palestinians, and ‘the predominant examples that he and others cited of non-violent struggle were those of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King’. 41 In the workshops, ‘actively supported and encouraged’ by the Society of Friends (Quakers) and Mennonites, the question arose of acting outside the framework of the PLO, as the journalist David Richardson noted: ‘Awad has been curtly dismissed by many West

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38 Awad, Nonviolence, p. 16.
39 Awad, interview (19 October 1995).
Bankers as "another one of those American Palestinians with their imported ideas" or even as a "CIA or an Israeli agent". Awad made a point of insisting on the need for openness and told Richardson, 'No one, like the Israelis or the organization (the PLO), can tell me that my approach is not allowed'.

When participants arrived for the second session on the following day, the director of the YWCA announced that the Israeli authorities had denied permission for the meeting to take place. Awad led those who had shown up into buses and taxis. They shortly arrived at the front gates of the Friends' Girls School in Ramallah, to the surprise of the headmistress, Awad's future wife Nancy Nye. Perhaps thirty individuals survived the shift in venue for rousing discussions. On the third day, fewer attended because rumours were spreading of likely arrests and reprisals. Despite intimidation, attempts to derail the workshops, and changed locations, newspaper accounts said that 'a few hundred mainly young Palestinians' had heard Awad explain the theory and practice of nonviolent resistance. Other estimates were of 'several hundred'—'far more' than expected by Awad. A sprinkling of Palestinian intellectuals and Israeli political activists attended. Richardson called Awad's plan 'a schedule for civil disobedience' and singled out for mention the methods of obstruction cited in the booklet, ways that would 'aim at the morale, psychology and mentality of the oppressors'. Awad told the reporter that he thought the Palestinians were sufficiently politically astute to undertake nonviolent resistance and offered his assessment that villages

42 Ibid.

43 Richardson, 'Pros and Cons'. The PLO's call for 'all means of struggle', and Fatah's pooling of guerrilla operations with political activities, were not open invitations to action—as Nusseibeh's beating showed in the previous chapter. Controversy was associated with Awad's endeavours from beginning to end, because he was independent, about which more will be said.


45 Richardson, 'Confrontation Quest'.

46 Milton Viorst, 'Letter from Jerusalem', Mother Jones, April 1988, p. 23

47 Richardson, 'Confrontation Quest'.

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offer more fertile ground than urban areas, where business and mercantile concerns come first. He stated his opinion that women were politically more fervent than men and that the plight of the Palestinian refugees was inherently political. In the days following the seminars, acrimonious denials revolved around their sponsorship. Various groups and friends claimed that they had been pressured—without saying by whom—not to take responsibility for Awad’s presentations.

Gene Sharp’s Chapter and a Pragmatic Stance

Append to the Arabic translation of the 1983 booklet was a list of 121 methods of nonviolent protest, reduced from the 198 methods enumerated in Gene Sharp’s three-volume Methods of Nonviolent Action. David Richardson called the booklet a ‘blueprint’ for nonviolent resistance in the territories, noting Awad’s indebtedness to Gene Sharp. At workshops and lectures, in addition to the booklet and other pamphlets, Awad also routinely passed out an Arabic translation of a work by Sharp. In it, Sharp argues that accepted precepts of power and defence demand to be reconsidered and that old formulations of systems of allies and military-based defence are proving fallible, even disastrous. Methods of civilian defence should place their emphasis on the precept of self-reliance and preparedness, breaking with the outmoded belief that defence is synonymous with military strength. Defence thus calls for a redefinition of the concept of power. The central thesis in

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48 Ibid.
49 For the list, see Sharp, Methods of Nonviolent Action, pp. xi-xvi.
50 Richardson, ‘Confrontation Quest’.
51 Generically entitled by Sharp in English as Power, Struggle and Defense, although translated into Arabic as al-Muqawama bi La-’Unf, and into Burmese, Brazilian Portuguese, and Thai, this work has never been published in English. A version was brought out in Israel in the mid-1980s by Mifras Publishing House, in Hebrew, entitled Hitnaggedut Lo Alima, or Nonviolent Opposition. An English approximation is found in the first chapter of Sharp’s National Security through Civilian-Based Defense, which bears close resemblance to what Awad had translated into Arabic in 1983. Gene Sharp, National Security through Civilian-Based Defense, monograph (Omaha, Nebraska, Association for Transarmament Studies, 1970). Gene Sharp, two-hour interview (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 19 October 1995)
the theory of civilian defence is that an entity occupying through military force has no true power without the consent and obedience of those who are occupied. Civilian-based defence—or active nonviolent resistance—requires no ideological basis for success, it argues; it simply requires a desire on the part of the occupied to defend their society and way of life in a manner that offers limited destruction and harm. It maintains that defence based on planned nonviolent direct action and noncooperation by the citizenry—along with a social infrastructure—offers an effective alternative to military response against foreign invasion and internal confrontations. Such a programme is based on the objective of creating a society which is ungovernable for the oppressor or attacker, thereby deterring aggressive behaviour. An undertaking such as this requires a definitive plan, according to the Sharp chapter, including strict adherence to a set of priorities focusing on the ability of the people to continue living under their accepted precepts—instead of the militarily oriented goals of land acquisition or the causing of injury or death to the occupier’s army. Extensive training and planning is absolutely essential, the chapter contends, and must be accompanied by de facto support by the people’s representatives. It concludes by asserting that costs and benefits must be carefully weighed.

Awad’s booklet and Sharp’s chapter circulated informally throughout the occupied territories in the early and mid-1980s. During the years 1983 and 1984 somewhere between 4,000 and 7,000 copies of the Arabic translation of Sharp were handed out. Palestinians in the territories recall furtively reading the two documents. ‘They seemed to be read everywhere on the West Bank, even on Israeli-owned buses’. Some purposely left the booklet and chapter on buses when they disembarked from public conveyances to be picked up by others, and dog-eared copies were passed from family to family. In contrast to the

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52Sharp, interview (19 October 1995); Jonathan Kuttab, interview (12 December 1997).
51Jonathan Kuttab, two-hour interview (East Jerusalem, 17 June 1995).
54Individuals on the West Bank who asked not to be identified.
Palestinian-authored essays and articles intentionally published in Hebrew and English discussed in Chapter Four, or the clandestinely printed and circulated underground documents of the uprising to be considered in Chapter Six, this literature was comparable to the *samizdat* of the Czechs’ and Slovaks’ Velvet Revolution. Unofficial publications were the stock-in-trade of the Czechoslovakian resistance after the country fell under Soviet domination in 1948, and included letters, books, appeals, periodicals, journals, opinion essays, or summaries detailing government persecution. Papers and manifestoes were plastered on walls, to be copied and memorized by citizens, who would, in turn, go to other areas of the country and transmit them so they could be posted on walls there. The appearance of materials from unlawful printing presses and publications aroused fearlessness in the Czech and Slovak populace, and as the underground publishing houses and journals flourished, information swirled beyond the reach of government censorship. Some documents were secreted out to an international audience, in hopes that world attention could accelerate reform. Awad’s materials, similarly, were disseminated and as publicly discussed as possible. He had no official outlets, seized whatever channels were available, expressed no pride in authorship, and took no pains at concealment. He did not care if he were harassed, arrested, or injured in the process, as it would draw more attention to the ideas presented in the handouts.

Having studied Sharp, Awad believed that the mixing of nonviolent civilian resistance with occasional violence by the Palestinians would contribute not to their success

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57 Awad, interview (11 October 1992). Awad spoke as a street organizer, Jonathan Kuttab noted. ‘He could be very influential, very effective, and reach many, many people without making an impact on the official political scene—either for the Israelis, or with the Palestinian intellectuals or political speakers. The issue for Mubarak was just to get the ideas circulating’. Kuttab, interview (12 December 1997).
but to their further defeat. In trying to attract Palestinians away from armed struggle, Awad was more interested in teaching behaviour that he considered less self-destructive than he was in political platforms. ‘Awad isn’t out to persuade his people that violence is morally wrong’, according to an Israeli journalist, ‘He just wants ... to convince more and more of them that violence at this time, in this place, doesn’t work, and that it’s smarter to continue their drawn-out war against us [Israelis] using other weapons’. Awad maintained neutrality on political issues, saying, as David Richardson reported in one of his first articles about Awad, that nonviolent struggle does not dictate the terms of political solutions. Yet, Richardson notes, ‘his talk of different strategies and another political “movement” ... incurred the wrath of PLO supporters, particularly those on the radical left and the Moslem Brotherhood in the West Bank’. In the highly charged atmosphere, Awad’s political detachment pleased no one, and as time passed it appears from news accounts that he was increasingly pressured by the Palestinians to declare a position and by the Israelis to explain why he did not repudiate cross-border sorties, guerrilla raids, and terror tactics. He maintained that he could not condemn the PLO’s armed struggle, because it might be interpreted as blanket condemnation of the organization, and he did not wish to be perceived as its opponent. Newspaper reports from 1983 until his deportation in 1988 show him resisting the endorsement of any particular framework, but by 1986 it was reported in the

58Mubarak E. Awad, two-hour interview (Washington, D.C., 14 January 1995). Gene Sharp writes, in one of his briefest comments on the question of mixing nonviolent and violent resistance, ‘Use of physical violence against the opponent instead of weakening him may in fact strengthen him and weaken the resisters. This violence is likely to serve as an excuse and “justification” for severe repression, to reduce the sympathy and support of the nonviolent actionists from “third parties,” to increase the loyalty and obedience of the opponent’s own troops, agents, and general home population, and to alienate support for, and participation in the nonviolent struggle from the population of potential resisters. The resisters’ violence, therefore, is likely not only not to weaken the opponent but may reverse the operation of the process of “political jiu-jitsu” which nonviolent action introduces and thereby strengthen the opponent while weakening the resister’. Sharp, *Gandhi as a Political Strategist*, p. 294.


Israeli press that Awad had endorsed the 1969 goal of a secular democratic state in all of Palestine. Although this position represented herculean compromise with the ANM’s and PLO’s earlier postures, because of its acceptance of sharing land that the Palestinians had considered entirely theirs, it still carried an implicit suggestion that Israel would have to be dismantled, and thus could appear to onlookers as ‘extremist and maximalist’. Journalist Edward Grossman writes of Awad, ‘He is honest enough to tell me that while his “immediate goal” is to end the occupation of the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem, his “other long-term thing” is to “crack the Zionist set-up” and have it replaced by one state for Jews and Arabs from the river to the sea’. By 1987, he was reported as favouring a ‘unified, secular’ state in which ‘no Jew would have to leave’, yet Palestinians would have passports: ‘Call it Israel-Palestine or Palestine-Israel, and slowly build it, whatever it is’. An even thornier problem was created because Awad’s booklet and seminars allowed the possibility of a return to guns if the nonviolent strategy failed, again out of an apparent desire not to renounce persons who were supporting violence. Awad claims that he was attempting to be realistic, to show that he was not asking for a creedal or spiritual commitment, and saying let us try something with the potential for making us strong—something that will not weaken us or rebound in even harsher retaliation. In acknowledging the possibility of regression—even as his own confidence was unbroken that nonviolent strategies were the only approaches that could work—he created a predicament for himself in Israeli eyes:

For the Palestinians who are living in the West Bank and Gaza . . . the most effective method of struggling is the strategy of nonviolence. This does not

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64 Grossman, ‘Palestinian Pacifist’.
effect [sic] the methods open to Palestinians on the outside, neither does it constitute a rejection of the concept of armed struggle. Neither does it negate the possibility that the struggle on the inside may turn into an armed struggle at a later stage.67

His pragmatic stance was, instead, interpreted by some Israelis to mean that his advocacy of nonviolence was merely a precursor to further armed struggle. Awad’s wording was admittedly ambiguous and conjures up Fateh’s vague inclusiveness and equivocality in mixing every which form of struggle. Since he does not use the subjunctive mood in English, nor speak Hebrew, Israelis listening to him speak heard what one reporter called ‘hesitant English’.68 David Richardson, the Jerusalem Post reporter covering the three initial workshops, excerpted the following from Awad’s booklet:

Non-violence does not affect the methods open to Palestinians on the outside, nor does it constitute a rejection of the slogan of armed struggle. Nor does it negate the possibility that the struggle on the inside may be turned into an armed struggle at a later stage. . . . The strategy of non-violence does not impose or indicate a particular political position. It is not necessary that such a position be politically moderate. . . . There is nothing that requires the non-violent movement to prefer a two-state solution to a secular democratic state on all the Palestinian homeland.69

‘Awad’s point . . . is that nonviolent struggle will, at this time, be a more effective strategy in dislodging the Israelis’ from occupation.70 Numerous accounts appearing in print from 1983 to 1988 encouraged the perception that Awad spoke in contradictory terms. This lack of clarity would dog Awad’s efforts, until his deportation in 1988.71

67 Awad, Nonviolence, p. 3.
69 Richardson, ‘Confrontation Quest’.
People Are People, and There Is No Reason to Fear Them

Mubarak Awad and Jonathan Kuttab

Awad's writings represented years of study and innumerable discussions among Awad, Kuttab, and the Paris-based Palestinian artist Kamal Boullata. The body of materials Awad disseminated is related to his life experiences. Born to a Greek Orthodox family in the once-grand Musrara neighbourhood of Jerusalem in 1943, Mubarak Awad's life was drastically affected in 1948 when his father was gunned down by sniper fire. Awad, his mother, and six siblings, the oldest of whom was ten years old, were forced from their home located in what became 'no-man's land' during the period of 1948 to 1967. Awad's mother Huda Kuttab Awad, a nurse, was unable to work to support her children and care for them at home, and therefore was forced to place them in orphanages and foster homes. Although they were under many roofs, she was still able to guide the closely knit family. Awad's conviction that injustice must be fought without bloodshed probably originates with his mother's insistence. The children never found out whether their father had been shot by an Israeli or an Arab sniper, although they later learned that Israeli sharpshooters had been positioned in nearby buildings. His bones remain to this day where he fell. Huda taught her children that killing was wrong and that what had happened to them should never be the cause of anyone else's death: 'She told us never to seek revenge, but to work so that other mothers don't suffer'.

Mubarak and his brother Bishara were taken to an orphanage in the Old City of Jerusalem by his mother. They were the only children of the family who remained in the city. A refugee for almost two decades, Awad witnessed the plight of thousands of Palestinian refugees living in refugee camps and towns. This experience contributed to his understanding of the suffering of the Palestinian people.

Kuttab, interview (17 June 1995); Kamal J. Boullata, affidavit on thirty years of friendship with Mubarak Awad, 20 May 1988. Boullata is among the Palestinian diaspora artists who have emerged as studio artists since 1960. Cooley, Green March, Black September, p. 83.

Kuttab, interview (12 December 1997).

According to Awad, his father's corpse remained initially unburied in 'no-man's land' because the family was unable to get authorization to retrieve it. Later, when such permission might have been obtained, his mother declined to do so. Awad, personal communication (East Jerusalem, 10 March 1997).

Jerusalem founded by Katy Antonius, widow of the historian George Antonius, author of *The Arab Awakening*. Called Dar al-Awlad, or House of Boys, the orphanage was not a punitive Victorian institution but part of a growing Palestinian phenomenon of establishing institutions to help children whose parents had been killed or uprooted in the 1948 war. As a young boy, Mubarak organized a food strike to secure the addition of eggs to the schoolboys’ diet. Katy Antonius would prove to be a powerful influence in Mubarak’s life, instilling in him the idea that ‘people are people, and there is no reason to fear them or their rank’. Awad recalls hearing the doyenne curse the Jordanian monarch for his approach to the Palestinians.76 Hers was the ‘most popular salon in Arab Jerusalem during the Mandate’,77 and when the boys visited her home, she taught them Arab history and culture. If they failed to participate in the discussions and debates taking place at the Antonius home, she upbraided them afterwards, telling them that their opinion was as valid as that of the other guests.78 She arranged for Mubarak and Bishara to attend St. George’s preparatory school in East Jerusalem, and found a young American nuclear scientist, George P. Sakalosky, who would pay the boys’ tuition at the élite school for ten years, until they were graduated.79 There, Mubarak developed friendships with boys from Jerusalem’s aristocratic families, such as the Husseinis and Nusseibehs, forming bonds that would help to account for the ease of sharing ideas and action two decades later. Mubarak’s first arrest came at the age of twelve—for protesting against Jordanian rule. A reporter said that he had been gaoled by the Jordanians on another occasion for ‘asking questions about the budget of the Greek Orthodox Church’.80 He refused to carry a gun during the school’s military training and was

76 Richardson, ‘Confrontation Quest’.  
77 Ibid.  
78 Awad, interview (19 October 1995).  
79 George P. Sakalosky, thirty-minute communication (Columbus, Ohio, 11 November 1998).  
ridiculed for the decision. Awad’s friendship with Kamal Boullata dates to this period, when, as classmates at St. George’s, their conversations on how to struggle without violence began. From a Hashemite gaol cell, by then in his teens, he began to study the popular movements of other peoples.

In 1960, Awad moved to the United States, where two colleges accepted him as a student. Knowing nothing of either, he turned down Yale University and chose the one that offered room and board as well as tuition—Lee College, a small Christian institution in Tennessee. With the civil rights movement in full throttle, he began reading the writings of Martin Luther King, Jr. The mores of the Tennessee campus shocked him in two particular ways: the inexplicable defence of segregation by avowed Christians and the relaxed American attitudes towards sex. He decided to return home after only two years. Back in East Jerusalem, he taught English, mathematics, and religion at a Mennonite orphanage school for boys in Beit Jala, a few miles south of Jerusalem, until 1969, when he was arrested by Israeli authorities for preparing leaflets encouraging resistance against the military occupation, then in place for two years. Gaoled for two months and beaten, he bargained his way out of a ten-year prison sentence by agreeing to leave the country—his first exile. He had become interested in militant nonviolence and returned to the United States, matriculating in 1970 for the bachelor’s degree at Bluffton College, a Mennonite institution in Bluffton, Ohio.

The United States was divided over the war in Vietnam, and Awad observed the student resistance to military conscription. At Bluffton, he came under the influence of Professor Elmer Neufeld, later the college’s president. Neufeld challenged him with a strongly stated conviction that God is found in every person, and therefore one does not have the right to kill the Divine in another human being. Awad internalized this Quaker view, and years later echoed the professor in writing, ‘You and I, as living beings, are portals
connecting the past and the future. . . . I cannot do harm to others'.

"If you want to destroy me, that’s your decision", he claimed, ‘but I do not have the right to destroy you, if by destroying you, I am destroying part of God'.

Awad’s return to Ohio was accompanied by his increasing inquiry into Mennonite and Quaker beliefs, and the study of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr., particularly King’s 1963 letter from the Birmingham, Alabama, city jail. After deciding to implement his growing body of beliefs through work with juvenile delinquents, Awad was awarded the master’s degree in social work from St. Francis University in Indiana, in 1977. This was followed by a Ph.D. in clinical psychology from the International Graduate School in St. Louis, Missouri.

In 1978, the newly trained psychologist and social worker established the Ohio Youth Advocate Program (YAP), a treatment programme focusing on children with severe behavioural problems. It merged two methods for working with youngsters who were considered by state authorities to be intractably damaged in both their mental and emotional capacities, by combining the proven plan of Foster Family programmes with that of the Big Brother technique. Soon after starting YAP, Awad pursued American citizenship so that he could possess a U.S. passport. Having been initially denied citizenship because of his refusal to pledge allegiance to the flag, he appealed to the court, outlining his need for citizenship. Without the formality of his reciting the oath, citizenship status was granted him in 1983,

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84YAP provides licenced psychologists and psychiatric social workers to work with troubled youth through contracts from county and state governments, particularly with those who have been classified as unremediable in the customary state-run programmes for juvenile delinquents. Now operating in seven U.S. states and working with 1,500 youths on any given day, emphasizing innovative interventions, the programme has begun international advocacy against children soldiers, child trafficking, child prostitution, and child labour. It is seeking to establish a Palestinian youth service programme to enlist the intifada generation into the building of Palestinian institutions.
after he told the judge that his allegiance was to Palestine. Awad took a leave of absence from the youth programme, and in March 1983 he returned to Jerusalem to start the Palestinian Counselling Centre to train psychologists and social workers who were working with Palestinian youth.

Awad's personal background is important in examining the role he played in the occupied territories, because it was as a result of his success as a clinician with American youth who had histories of extreme violence and deviancy—among them killers and arsonists—that he determined to apply his knowledge to the chronic provocations faced by Palestinian youths. 'If American children needed that kind of support and counselling, the Palestinian youth needed it even more, more than anybody else, since they were under the constant pressure of a brutal occupation, and had to deal with their fear and anger every day'.85 He was troubled by Palestinian hatred 'so deep that the Palestinians are not functioning normally', and considered that 'the outside situation [the PLO and the Arab world] affects the inside situation so much they cannot function properly as individuals or groups', while Israel proceeds to 'take everything from us without any resistance'. 'With preparation and a systematic approach, we could achieve more than has been achieved by violence', he told a journalist. 'We have reached such a point of despair, feeling that our identity is going without admitting it to ourselves. That is the moment for a non-violent struggle'.86

The October 1983 workshops were actually modelled on workshops that Awad had run six months earlier, in the spring, when he set up the Palestinian Counselling Centre, which is still functioning. Questionnaires filled out by participants in a school counselling workshop, on 3 May, showed that the respondents ranked 'political problems' as the greatest area in which they needed help, followed by problems of anxiety, alcoholism, divorce,

85Awad and Cavanaugh-O'Keefe, 'Sabr', p. 84.
86Richardson, 'Confrontation Quest'.
changes in moral values and traditions', being released prisoners, and gambling. Awad conducted a series of workshops on counselling skills for professional educators at the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), attended by perhaps fifty pedagogues who received certificates of completion at the close of each workshop. It was after such a counselling encounter that Awad spent a week windsurfing in Cyprus, in August, with his U.S.-educated cousin Jonathan Kuttab, after which the two returned to East Jerusalem to co-author the series of papers arguing the necessity for nonviolent resistance by Palestinians, among them the booklet spoken of earlier. According to Kuttab:

Being alone on Cyprus gave us a sense of perspective. There was an absence of pressure, we had no agenda and no plan other than to learn windsurfing. Slowly, we developed the idea that we must work on a systematic and a conscious application of a nonviolence strategy. I say systematic and conscious because we concluded that there was a very strong inclination towards nonviolent struggle—a strong practice and history of nonviolent struggle in Palestine—none of it conscious, none of it articulated, and certainly none of it systematic. To the contrary, side by side with the widespread practice of nonviolence was a rhetoric of violence. When we came back, we wrote out our formulations.

Kuttab, who had received the bachelor of arts degree from Messiah College in Pennsylvania and had been graduated from the University of Virginia School of Law, had left the Wall Street firm of his employment and returned to Jerusalem in the late 1970s. One of the first West Bank Palestinian lawyers to learn Hebrew in order to pass the Israeli bar examination, Kuttab also become a member of the Jordanian bar. He had joined with the Palestinian jurist Raja Shehadeh to found al-Haq in 1979, after completing his legal training with Aziz Shehadeh.

Kuttab and Awad responded positively when Palestinian educators asked for additional training in the autumn of 1983. Awad held a second course and ran child-care

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88 Kuttab, interview (17 June 1995).

89 Kuttab, interview (18 March 1997).
training programmes in Bethlehem, where he tried to convince administrators of the need for more counselling services. Helping clinicians and counsellors to enhance their skills made Awad realize that counselling alone would be insufficient. Nancy Nye recalled,

The counselling workshops convinced him that social problems couldn’t be dealt with until political concerns were addressed. There has always been an interesting blend of psychology and political activism in Mubarak’s thinking. . . . emphasizing [the psychotherapist] Carl Rogers’s teachings that the solutions to one’s problems come from within. So it was natural that he would also say that each individual should assume responsibility for trying to end the occupation . . . he said again and again that the occupation of one’s nation did not mean that one’s spirit was also occupied.

Rogers’s approach to conflict resolution emphasized allowing both positive and negative attitudes to be aired, with a focus on attitudes rather than the content of the issues.

Awad married Nancy Nye in St. George’s Cathedral, on 29 April 1984, in a Quaker wedding with no clergy. The couple did not obtain a civil wedding licence, because they did not wish to apply to the issuing Israeli Ministry of Religion, believing the requirement to be a politicization of religion. Even in matrimonial matters, Awad evinced resistance, adding to his growing notoriety. After the close of the year, the centre’s annual report said that it was taking ‘a small step towards the goal of helping the Palestinian child to think, and be able to make choice’ [sic]. Awad and Nye worked together on the counselling workshops and planned training programmes and technical assistance for the next four years. By 1985, a counselling centre would develop with a staff of ten. Awad ran nine workshops that year, provided free counselling services for any Palestinian who lacked the ability to pay, and helped schools without counsellors. The centre conducted a study of children in prison in the West Bank and Gaza and surveyed handicapped children. A summer computer camp was

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92Nye, memorandum (20 April 1995), p. 3.


opened to Palestinians from both sides of the 1948 border and was attended by ninety girls and thirty-six boys.95

The workshops on nonviolent struggle were thus related to the counselling programme. 'Under occupation, there is so much frustration, so much anger, so much enmity, that the children don't know how to handle it', Awad said, 'When they try to do something about it, they are likely to handle it with violence'.96 His fundamental theory was that 'individuals have the power within themselves to change their situation’, yet ‘must have the will . . . courage . . . and . . . be willing to sacrifice’.97 In Awad, clinical training, work with juvenile delinquents, a political monologue of many years, discourses with Kuttab and Boullata, theoretical exposure to nonviolent struggle, an ethic influenced by Quakers and Mennonites, and counselling of Palestinians were synthesized into a determination to teach another way of struggle.

**Ideas from Other Movements**

**A Centre Opens in East Jerusalem**

In mid-March 1984, the Palestinian-American historian Hisham Sharabi of Georgetown University convened a meeting in Washington, D.C., to discuss the deteriorating situation for the Palestinians under occupation.98 In addition to Mubarak Awad, Jonathan Kuttab, and Kamal Boullata, also in attendance was Eqbal Ahmad, the Pakistani political scientist who had first broached the subject of nonviolent direct action with the PLO in Beirut in 1974; Jim Fine, an American Quaker and staff worker of many years in Jerusalem for the American

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95Documents from PCSN files.

96Awad and Cavanaugh-O’Keefe, ‘Sabr’, p. 84.


98Diary of Beth Heisey Kuttab. The meeting, starting on 16 or 17 March, lasted for two nights and three days. Sharabi serves on the boards of directors of numerous private nonprofit organizations and chairs the executive committee of the Centre for Policy Analysis on Palestine, in Washington, D.C.
TEXT BOUND INTO

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Friends Service Committee; the scholar Gene Sharp; Beth Heisey Kuttab, representing the United Methodist Women; and R. Scott Kennedy, head of the Santa Cruz Resource Center for Nonviolence, who has published on the Druze and is currently mayor of Santa Cruz, California. Sharabi declared at the end of the session that the group should not sit still and that someone must proceed to the occupied territories to open a centre on nonviolent action. Kuttab was concerned that the centre be established cautiously, with the declared purpose of study rather than of stimulating direct action, concern with which Sharabi concurred. In the spring of 1984, Sharabi raised $30,000 privately through the Jerusalem Fund, a registered charity in Washington, D.C., and by late autumn had delivered a cheque to Awad for the funds to set up the centre. In March 1985, Awad and his wife of one year went to India for a study tour of six weeks, travelling to Ahmedabad, Bombay, and Vellore. Awad met with Gandhians who had participated in the Indian independence movement and asked their help in applying lessons from their satyagraha campaigns to Palestinian nationalism. Muslims who had worked with Gandhi told Awad it was their conviction that nonviolence started with Islam; they thought that what Gandhi was doing was Islamic.

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99 Hisham Sharabi, one-hour interview (Washington, D.C., 22 February 1995); Awad, interview (14 February 1995).
100 Awad, interview (14 February 1995); R. Scott Kennedy, personal communication (East Jerusalem, January 1996).
101 Kuttab, interview (17 June 1995); Sharabi, interview (22 February 1995).
103 Awad recognized the cultural differences: 'When [Awad] tried to apply a Gandhian tactic by calling for wealthy Palestinian land-owners to donate land to poor Arab farmers, there was no response. He said an Indian follower of Gandhi had told him during a visit to Ahmedabad ... that Arabs would not be able to make the material sacrifices, adding, "You have everything but freedom, while we have freedom but nothing else ". William Claiborne, 'Palestinian Group Tries the Passive Tactics of Gandhi', Washington Post, 17 March 1986.
104 Awad's relationships with Muslims left indelible imprints. His closest childhood friend, Mehtab, was Muslim. In South Africa, Gandhi practised with the Muslim legal firm of Dada Abdulla and Co., where one of the partners, Abdulla Sheth, gave him a working familiarity with Islam. He read the Qur'an in translation, and throughout his life was involved with Muslims. Nanda, Gandhi, pp 21, 29, 81, 37, 40, 41; B. R. Nanda, Gandhi: Pan-Islamism, Imperialism, and Nationalism in India (Bombay, Oxford University Press, 1989); Encyclopedia of Religion, ed. Mircea Eliade, vol. 5 (New York, A. millan, 1987), p. 482.
Awad made himself knowledgeable about imperatives to nonviolence in Islam, but was unconcerned about whether he would be hindered by his Christian background. His contact with Muslim adherents of Gandhi strengthened Awad’s resolve, and the couple arrived back from India by ship to the port of Haifa in late April 1985. The three-room Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence (PCSN) officially opened its doors later in the month in a walk-up called the Nuzha Building on Abu Obedieh Street in Arab East Jerusalem, a few hundred metres from Orient House, headquarters of Feisel Husseini’s Arab Studies Society.

Awad’s clinical, religious, and political background predisposed him to accept the Washington group’s challenge to establish a programme in the occupied territories. The first year of the centre’s modest existence was spent writing and publishing, holding discussions in villages and refugee camps, translating analyses of power by Gandhi, King, and Sharp, and distributing information to an often skeptical audience. Among the first translations into Arabic was a biography of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, A Man to Match His Mountains. Despite the suspicions and cynicism of many Palestinians, social ostracism, and occasional allegations that he was a CIA agent, one year after opening the centre it was staffed by

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105 Richardson, ‘Confrontation Quest’.


107 As Awad recalled, Sharp had protested his modification of Sharp’s writings and lax interpretations and admitted liberties taken with Sharp’s text. Mubarak E. Awad, graduate seminar, Peace and Conflict Resolution Department, the American University, notes of Mary Lundregan (Washington, D.C., 5 April 1995).

108 Khan (1890–1988) led the Pushtuns, or Pathans—a Pushto-speaking Muslim people in portions of what are now Afghanistan and Pakistan—in nonviolent struggle against the British, and by the late 1930s had become part of Gandhi’s inner circle of advisers. Eknath Easwaran, A Man to Match His Mountains: Badshah Khan, Nonviolent Soldier of Islam (Petaluma, California, Nilgiri Press, 1984); ‘Nonviolent Soldier of Islam Introduced to Palestinians’, Newsletter (East Jerusalem, PCSN, April–June 1986). In 1929, Khan formed the Khudai Khidmatgars, or Servants of God, the ‘Red Shirt’ movement of the Northwest Frontier Province of India, a nonviolent nationalist movement in support of Indian independence, which sought to awaken the political consciousness of the Pathans. He wanted an independent state for the Pathans, but opposed the partition of India. Khan, the ‘Frontier Gandhi’, came from a family of sharpshooters of the Mohmadzai nomads, famed for their ‘reckless bravery’. According to Shridharani, the Khudai Khidmatgars numbered 100,000 mountaineers, ‘famous for their militarism’, who ‘threw away their arms’ to join the Gandhian movement. Shridharani, War without Violence, pp. 213, 289. Khan gained control of Peshawar without any shots being fired, although the British army later retook the city with its machine guns. Catherine Clément, Gandhi: Father of a Nation (London, Thames and Hudson, 1996), pp. 79, 89, 92.
eleven volunteers.\textsuperscript{109} Bi-weekly seminars at the centre’s library were described in a Bombay newspaper:

For some, the Centre is simply a rendezvous where they can exchange ideas; for others the focal point is the library, stocked with several hundred books on and by Gandhi, ... [Gandhi’s autobiography.] \textit{The Story of My Experiments with Truth}, apart from a comprehensive, cloth-bound, hard-cover edition of his collected works. Also biographies of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan ... and Martin Luther King; literature on Jawaharlal Nehru and the works of Rabindranath Tagore. Most of the volumes are in English, a few in Hebrew and Arabic.\textsuperscript{110}

Although Awad was concerned about how little Palestinians knew about nonviolent resistance and the paucity of literature in Arabic, he did not try to Islamize it or use gimmicks to sell it to Muslims.\textsuperscript{111} From time to time, materials alluded to the compatibility of Islam and nonviolent struggle, and the biography of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan was considered a ‘perfect example of how a devout Moslem found his religion to be a source of nonviolent philosophy’.\textsuperscript{112}

The physically small three-room office was not matched by the scale and audacity of the ideas emanating from it. In early 1985, a leaflet aimed primarily at Palestinians who lived inside the Green Line, the 1948 border of Israel, proposed ‘apology’ visits by Palestinians to their ancestral homes.\textsuperscript{113} Entitled ‘For Every Palestinian Who Lives in the Centre of Palestine, for Those Who Have Lost a House or Field in Which Strangers Live Today’, it read, ‘Let’s talk in nostalgic terms about the appropriated houses of our parents’. The leaflet called for Palestinians to make an ‘apology visit to the houses which still mourn

\textsuperscript{109}Nye, memorandum (20 April 1995), p. 4; Peery, ‘Palestinian Center Advocates Nonviolence’.

\textsuperscript{110}ORonita Torcato, ‘Tranquility amidst Terror’, \textit{Indian Post} (Bombay), 19 May 1987.

\textsuperscript{111}Bondurant reports that Pathan women participating in Khan’s campaigns would frequently lie down, side by side, holding copies of the Qur’an. Bondurant, \textit{Conquest of Violence}, p. 136. Nothing like this appears in the public record of Awad’s activities.


\textsuperscript{113}An Invitation to Palestinians to Visit Their Homes in Ramallah and Jaffa’, \textit{al-Fajr}, 13 January 1985.
their owners’. It suggested setting aside one day annually for the visiting of previous abodes, to show the current residents that ‘the houses are ours, and we shall continue to wait for the day when we will return there’. The purpose of the appeal was to ‘counteract Israeli claims that settling in the country is derived from the Jewish past’; Awad told Hadashot, ‘We have a much nearer past which continues to live in our hearts forever’. Palestinian children were counselled to knock on the doors of their family homes, potted rosebushes in arms, and politely explain to the present Israeli inhabitants that since their grandparents, or great-grandparents, had built the house, they would like to plant a rosebush in the garden in their memory. The visits, said Awad, should not ‘cause hatred to those who are living in our houses, but sorrow for the lost humanity. We don’t want them to be our enemies. We want to explain to them that these are our houses’.

In the autumn of 1985, the centre distributed 1,500 leaflets in the West Bank and Gaza calling for a campaign of economic independence, the centrepiece of which was the purchasing of ‘local’ products, as opposed to Israeli-made goods. Leaflets and posters appearing in November called for the first Monday of each month to be Local Products Day, with coordinated action to begin on 2 December 1985. Even if the buy-Palestinian tactic had a marginal impact on Israeli sales, its purpose was to promote self-reliance and show families that they did not have to comply with the occupation.

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115 Stephen Franklin, ‘“Palestinian Gandhi” or Terrorist?’ Chicago Tribune, 18 May 1988.


117 ‘Local Products Day: First Monday of Each Month; Eat and Drink Only Local Products’, al-Fajr, 30 May 1986; ‘Local Products Day: First Monday of Each Month; Eat and Drink Only Local Products’, trans. from Arabic, al-Quds, 2 June 1986; Local Products Day, 4-page tabloid supplement (East Jerusalem, PCSN, November 1986); ‘Summary of Actions, Report on Previous Year’s Activity’ (East Jerusalem, PCSN, 1986).

118 Awad, interview (11 October 1992).
Disseminating the Message

Ze'ev Schiff and Ehud Ya'ari may have understated the opprobrium against the new 'attitude' among Palestinians in the 1980s, while probably overstating the high regard in which it was held by Israeli authorities:

Israel's security services were aware of the doctrine being preached by Mubarak Awad and, unlike his detractors, even appreciated its potential. But because the response to it was pathetically negligible, they did not bother to close down his rather pathetic operation. . . . Awad's ideological isolation and lack of organizational backing made it all the more difficult for him to put his ideas into practice, on even a modest scale. 119

Among the obstacles Awad encountered was a perception among Palestinians that nonviolent sanctions implied passivity or weakness. 'Awad's call to abjure violence . . . [was] frequently misunderstood as a call for submission', and it was reported that he was having trouble showing that nonviolent struggle is not for the weak—effective though it may be for those who lack conventional power. 120 Gandhian concepts had been disputed by the Muslim community in India seven decades earlier, because they were interpreted as cowardice or unmanliness. 121 Moreover, although constantly dismissing spirituality as obligatory for civil resistance, Awad repeatedly had to clarify that nonviolent methods do not require certain religious beliefs. The simple desire to protect one's life and society was enough, he tried to explain. In addition, the conservatism of farmers inhibited their absorption of anything that seemed radical, and some had forgotten the effectiveness of the general strike of 1936, obliterated as it was by the violence in the second phase of the 'great revolt'. Villagers responded, 'nonviolence is all right but we need action'. 122 Awad also


120 Similarly, see Smerling, 'Gandhi's Spirit on the West Bank?', p. 15. 'I am not pleading for India to practise non-violence because it is weak', Gandhi said, 'I want her to practise non-violence being conscious of her strength and power'. S. R. Bakshi, Gandhi and Ideology of Non-Violence (New Delhi, Criterion Publications, 1986).

121 Nanda, Gandhi: Pan-Islamism, Imperialism, and Nationalism, p. 290.

encountered an aversion to ideas associated with Gandhi's analyses of power due to the Mahatma's opposition to the partition of India into Muslim and Hindu states. Mention of the U.S. civil rights encounter had its drawbacks too; Palestinians who had studied Martin Luther King, Jr., were dismayed by his silence on the rights and security of Palestinians, despite frequent expressions of concern for Israeli rights. 123

Among Awad's problems was the search for an Arabic term for nonviolent action that did not denote subservience or acquiescence. 124 He tried sabr—the prickly pear that yields delicious fruit despite arid conditions—because of its implied reward, the fruits of patience as taught by the desert. 125 This did not work. A Jew born in Israel is known as a sabra in colloquial Hebrew, with the same derivation. In Islamic texts, sabr has multiple shades of meaning, 126 including postponement until one can strike again. The only term that seemed to fit was la-'unf, 'no violence'. Awad's own Arabic-language skills had been weakened by years of living in the United States, and his English was not smooth either. 127

**Outside the Framework of the PLO**

Awad never joined a Palestinian faction, and comes from a family which believes that remaining independent allows them to work with all factions. He claims that he was summoned to Cairo for two separate meetings with the PLO's Abu Jihad in 1985, which never took place, because when he went to the appointed place at the specified hour, no one

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123 Awad, interview (14 January 1995).

124 Such a hunt occurs early in unarmed political movements. In Burma, the National League for Democracy, led by Aung San Suu Kyi, uses the term political defiance rather than nonviolent struggle. In Poland in the 1980s, nonviolent was difficult to translate into Polish, and social self-defence was chosen.

125 Awad and Cavanaugh-O'Keefe, 'Sabr'.


127 Jonathan Kuttab, interview (5 November 1994).
was there, and he refused to wait. This might have been considered impertinent in the world of clandestine movements, where protocols demand a period of waiting. According to Awad, after agreeing to a third request, he was met at the plane in Cairo by Abu Jihad, who told him, 'I believe in what you are doing'. Awad countered, asking why in that case people had been sent to break the computers at the centre and intrude on the office. When Abu Jihad asked if they could work together, by Awad's account he responded that this would not be feasible because Abu Jihad believed in guns.

Although Awad was handicapped by organizational estrangement within the Palestinian community and lacked the sponsorship of the PLO, one significant asset was the vital protection extended to him by Feisel Husseini. Awad's East Jerusalem workshops were attended by Feisel Husseini and his associates, the newspaper editor Hanna Siniora, and others who sent subalterns and representatives. Awad's ideas needed resonance within Fateh and other factions, and unless key figures appreciated his ideas and encouraged others to listen to him—and defended him to the PLO in Tunis—his impact would be marginalized. A symbiotic relationship developed: Awad generated plans and projects, while Husseini grafted them onto his own personal explication of nonviolent struggle, broadcast them through the Arab Studies Society, and helped Awad. 'Feisel protected Mubarak', recalled

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128 Awad, interview (14 January 1995); Mubarak E. Awad, one-hour lecture, Peace and Conflict Resolution Department, the American University (Washington, D.C., 26 March 1998).

129 Should the person with whom one is meeting fail to arrive, it is expected that one will return to the same place at the same time on the following day or at the same time on the same day of the following week.

130 Awad, lecture (26 March 1998).

131 Rigby, *Living the Intifada*, p. 174; Nusseibeh, interview (28 January 1996). Bir Zeit professor Musa Budeiri twice invited Awad to speak on campus, once to faculty members, noted in Chapter Four, and again to his class. 'I was teaching a course on political philosophy, in which there were readings from Gandhi, but I had never read any Gandhi. I thought, "I can get Mubarak to come and talk on this"'. Budeiri, interview (28 January 1996).

132 Husseini, interview (30 January 1996). Most of the volunteers at the centre were simultaneously working with Husseini, Awad recalled. Relationships with Husseini and Sari Nusseibeh were always excellent, according to Awad, who could not recall a single instance of friction. Awad, interview (19 October 1995).
Haj 'Abd Abu-Diab. Although Awad's propounding of a nonviolent Palestinian state drew fire, Husseini admired Awad's range of ideas. Awad said he was looking for a 'manifestation of defiance which showed that the Palestinians were not all terrorists but a people concerned with justice', an approach compatible with Husseini's own, while Husseini's hereditary stature and position as virtual head of Fateh inside the territories made it possible for him to protect Awad. The Israelis knew that Awad was not in conformity with the rigidly politicized social order, so much so that Awad was told by one Israeli government official, 'We are waiting for the Palestinians to bury you'. He tried to make the most of his neutrality, did not view it as a deficiency, and hoped his nonpartisanship could be advantageous.

Awad's willingness to rely on the news media—often crucial to nonviolent campaigns in their efforts to pursue political jiu-jitsu or build internal morale—continues to incur criticism from those who do not view communications as a tool of their struggle. 'Publicity is important for me,' Awad told a reporter; 'we can influence Jews here who have been in much worse places than us. Not "look what you are doing to us", but "look what you are doing to yourselves".' Despite problems, the centre amassed volunteers, published documents, reprinted books, and held seminars and workshops for three years prior to the

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134 Husseini, interview (30 January 1996).


136 Peery, 'Palestinian Center Advocates Nonviolence'; Grossman, 'Palestinian Pacifist'.

137 Nancy Nye, thirty-minute communication (Washington, D.C., 3 July 1995).

138 Grossman, 'Palestinian Pacifist'.
outbreak of the intifada. Its occasional eight-page newsletter carried articles on leading Israelis who favoured coexistence, such as an early peace advocate named Joseph Abileah and the moral philosopher Yeshiahu Leibovich. Awad ‘labored without glory and virtually without supporters to counsel Palestinians in nonviolent ways to resist Israel’s occupation’, a journalist notes; ‘he was no charismatic leader and he seldom drew as many as 200 people to his peaceful demonstrations. . . . Some Israeli officials condemn him as a “terrorist” mastermind of the Palestinian uprising’. After three years, the budget of the centre was approximately $50,000 a year, with contributions mostly from private nonprofit institutions in the United States, including American Near East Refugee Aid, the United Palestine Appeal, the United Methodist Women, the Lutheran Church of America, the Church of the Brethren, the Mennonite Foundation, and private donors.

Recovering Land through Nonviolent Direct Action

By 1985 Awad had begun a programme of village outreach along the lines of Gandhi’s `constructive programme’. Gandhi’s approach involved creating a set of decentralized institutions to serve as the infrastructure of a just society. If accepted by a

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139 Abd al-Jawad Saleh, the former mayor of al-Bireh cited in Chapter Three for his sponsorship of the Voluntary Work Committees, was one such PCSN volunteer.


141 Franklin, ‘“Palestinian Gandhi” or Terrorist?’

142 Letter to Eschaton Foundation, to Deena Hurwitz from Mubarak Awad, thanking the foundation for $1,000, 23 August 1986; Peter Gubser, ‘Letter of Grant Award’, to Mubarak Awad, $40,000 to PCSN from American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA) 26 August 1987; Kenneth O. Holderread, ‘Letter from Church of the Brethren General Board’, letter to Nafez Assaily awarding $1,000 grant to PCSN, 30 November 1990, East Jerusalem, PCSN files.

143 Awad, interview (14 January 1995).

144 Khan quotes Gandhi as being concerned that some of his adherents were ‘sincere but incomplete’; they might have understood how to resist nonviolently, but failed to think of such struggle as a ‘tool for building a just and productive society’. Easwaran, Man to Match His Mountains, p. 155.
whole nation, he thought it could lead to *poorna swaraj*, or ‘complete independence’, functioning as both a ‘general and universal programme of social reconstruction and a concrete scheme of work’. It was to be ‘built up brick by brick by corporate self-effort’. Most significant for Awad’s application was that Gandhi saw a village-based work programme as a concrete way to proceed towards a new social order in the midst of the old—in Awad’s case, while Palestinians were still under military occupation. In what might be classified as an evolution towards civil society, and what Gene Sharp has categorized as ‘nonviolent intervention’, the building of new institutions rivals the previous entities, replaces them, or provides a counterpart in long-term noncooperation: ‘the opponent’s institutions will no longer have the field to themselves, and the actionists will have intervened by offering substitute institutions’. In Eqbal Ahmad’s words,

> A revolutionary movement ... must demonstrate, in practice, that there are alternative structures and arrangements which approximate the popular yearning for a just, communal, and participatory system. ... Its central objective is not simply to achieve the moral isolation of the enemy but also to confirm, perpetuate, and institutionalize it by providing an alternative to the discredited regime through the creation of ‘parallel hierarchies’. The major task of the movement is not to outfight but to outadminister the government. The main target in this bid is the village.

Awad’s adaptation of Gandhi’s constructive programme included a library-on-wheels (bookmobile), clean-up campaigns, and simple techniques of empowerment. Awad gathered about him several dozen volunteers who assisted in organizing visits to forty or fifty villages. A newspaper reported that he was ‘buzzing around the West Bank on a powerful

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149Awad, interview (14 January 1995).
motorbike he brought with him, spreading his ideas... in refugee camps and villages'.

Some 60 per cent of Palestinians were then living in villages on the West Bank, 30 per cent in towns or cities, and the remaining 10 per cent in refugee camps. 'He was trying to help people to organize themselves', a newspaper editor said, 'especially in villages where they didn’t have a council'.

Mubarak was interested in working with the villagers to defend the land which the Israelis were going to confiscate, and helping some villages to make Work Committees in their villages—to help the villagers to have water. There are many villagers along the Green Line from the 1948 war, and the Israelis wanted, at that time, to cut [down] the olive trees in their villages.

Early 1986 was the start of a new direction for the centre’s work. An elderly man from the al-Asakreh tribe, from the small town of Tqu’, or Tekoa, near Beit Sahour, came to the Nuzha Building asking for la-unf, and demanding to see the technique that Awad had been describing in his rounds of the villages. Rejecting pamphlets, books, and reprints, he said that he did not want to read about it or hear a lecture; he wanted to see it in action.

Despite Awad’s initial reservations about leading demonstrations—a result of the advice from Sharabi and Kuttab—he thought it prudent to prove the legitimacy of the theories he had been advocating. The Tqu’ leader’s specific request was for Awad and the centre to help his family and fifteen thousand residents of his town take back several dunums of land seized by Israeli settlers. On 10 January, Israeli settlers from a settlement near Tqu’ had expanded their holdings by ten dunums of his family’s land. Moving the settlement’s iron gate, they had placed it in the centre of the road that connected the village of Tqu’ with the nearby municipalities of Beit Sahour and Bethlehem and had posted a sign on the gate

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150 Richardson, ‘Confrontation Quest’.

151 Kifner, ‘Wave of Palestinian Unrest Reaches Once-Quiet Village’.


153 Ibid. The New York Times notes that Awad organized a dozen committees in the mid-1980s. ‘One committee provides support and services to Palestinian prisoners and their families; another is trying to return refugees to the villages that were their homes before the 1967 Middle East war, while another is trying to prevent the demolition of Palestinian homes’. ‘A U.S. Arab in West Bank Loses Rights’. 299
saying, ‘use of road forbidden except for security vehicles’. Bulldozers plowed through ten
dunums outside the settlement fence, and metal stakes were driven into the ground to enclose
the area with wire.\textsuperscript{154} The villager said that his sons wanted to kill a settler to avenge the land
expropriation; he did not want to kill anyone but wanted his land back. Awad stipulated that
nonviolent direct action meant sacrifices, no running away, and no guns. When the villager
indicated readiness, Awad instructed the man to return to his village and gather between one
hundred and three hundred individuals who would be willing to abide by his guidelines.
Three days later, the man brought news that he had amassed the willing villagers. Journalists
were invited to watch.\textsuperscript{155}

According to eyewitness accounts, the centre’s staff and its lawyer, Jonathan Kuttab,
arrived on 14 January in Tqu‘, along with Israeli sympathizers and foreign guests. More than
three hundred persons were waiting to take part in la-‘unf. Walking, Awad silently led the
group towards the border fence and started to take it down. Israeli settlers began shooting
into the air and around the group, apparently to scare them. The villagers responded, ‘Go
ahead! It will only show the world that you are killers!’\textsuperscript{156} According to Haj ‘Abd Abu-Diab,
a participant in the protest, the Israeli settlers fired into the crowd, wounding seven youths.\textsuperscript{157}
None of the villagers fled; they kept working on the fence. Shortly thereafter, settlers, border
patrols, and the military governor arrived.\textsuperscript{158} The governor suggested that the Palestinians
take the case to court; the Tqu‘ villagers said that the Israeli settlers should be the ones taken
to court. Finally, the military governor agreed to the removal of the stakes and set a meeting

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\textsuperscript{154}'Tqu‘ Villagers Block Settler Expansion', \textit{al-Fajr}, 17 January 1986. Ibrahim Matar’s survey of all
Israeli settlements on 54 per cent of the West Bank and 30 per cent of Gaza confiscated by Israel after 1967
claims, ‘95% of all land taken for Jewish settlements was, in fact, private Palestinian property, and only 5%
could be classified as state land’. Ibrahim Matar, ‘Settlements: Facts and Figures’, \textit{Settlements and Peace: The
Problem of Jewish Colonization in Palestine}, special report (Washington, D.C., Center for Policy Analysis on

\textsuperscript{155}Awad and Cavanaugh-O’Keefe, ‘Sabr’, p. 135.

\textsuperscript{156}Smerling, ‘Gandhi’s Spirit on the West Bank?’

\textsuperscript{157}Abu-Diab, interview (11 December 1997).

\textsuperscript{158}'Tqu‘ Villagers Block Settler Expansion'.
for two days later, to which the settlers could bring their maps and claims of a confiscation order dating to 1980.

Two days later, the settlers removed the disputed metal gate and the meeting with the military governor was rendered unnecessary. Villagers, however, responded immediately by replanting the dunums with olive seedlings.... [and planned to] build a retaining wall.... [They] advised their lawyer Jonathan Kuttab to sue the settlers for the loss of their grain crop and other damage to the land. 159

So far as the public record is concerned, this was the first time that any West Bank village had recovered land that had been taken from it. 160 According to Daoud Kuttab,

The Israeli army then decided to look into the land dispute and later accepted the Palestinian contention. This small Palestinian victory angered the Jewish settlers, hence their decision that Awad was their number one target. From that time on the settlers used every opportunity to demand Awad's punishment. When they pressed the Israeli government the Minister of Police replied that Awad's visa would not be extended. 161

Tangible results had accrued. Palestinians who participated in the action claimed that they had gained a sense that their own actions could produce results, even if the problem was not permanently resolved. 162 The Tqu' episode changed the centre's emphasis, as it began receiving requests from other villages asking how to fight with nonviolence. 163

Olive Trees at Qatanna

By 1986, the cautionary advice of Sharabi and Kuttab to make analysis the priority of the centre, rather than deeds, had been abandoned, and Awad was soon enmeshed in

159Ibid.

160Robert Hirschfield, 'Practicing Nonviolence on the West Bank', Christian Century, 8 October 1986, p. 853. As far as I have been able to ascertain, no military, guerrilla, or terrorist operation has resulted in a single dunum of Palestinian land being returned from Israeli control.

161Kuttab, Dr. Mubarak Awad and the Palestinian Center for the Study of Nonviolence, p. 3.

162Abu-Diab, interview (11 December 1997). At a 16 June 1995 roundtable on nonviolent struggle at the Palestinian Centre for Democracy and Elections in East Jerusalem—an outgrowth of the Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence—a representative from Tqu' said that Israeli authorities had subsequently confiscated other land in the vicinity for settlements.

163Kuttab, interview (5 November 1994); Abu-Diab, interview (11 December 1997).
direct action which took the centre into the land question at the heart of the titanic Palestinian-Israeli struggle. Even before the Tqu' leader came calling, on 7 January farmers from Qattana, fifteen kilometres northwest of Jerusalem near the Green Line, had visited the centre. They claimed that in the preceding week labourers from the Green Patrol—the Nature Preservation Authority of the Israeli Ministry of Agriculture—had uprooted thousands of olive and almond trees on land that was owned and worked by eight families in Qatanna. Staff and volunteers from the centre went to the village to photograph and document the uprootings.

When al-Fajr visited the site January 7, an Israeli crew of two bulldozers and a half dozen workers were leveling a hillside ... scooping up a number of still standing trees and damaging in the process topsoil and terraces. Two patrol cars of Israeli border police were pushing away a large group of angry villagers who were shouting: 'This is our land. You can’t destroy it like that'.

An ITV film maker captured on tape a wizened villager explaining that the robbed trees each yielded eight gallons of olive oil per year, perhaps two hundred dollars income per tree per annum. Amina Mustafa, a sixty-year-old village woman, told a reporter:

Our trees were here from Turkish times. . . . When the tractor came to dig up the plants, I threw myself in front of the tractor, but they . . . dragged me away. They set a big dog on me. . . . We sold everything to take care of these trees. They took part of our land four years ago to make a road. Now they've taken the rest. . . . Next time they will throw us from the house.

An Israeli newspaper confirmed that the Nature Preservation Authority had uprooted the trees, but also cited Uri Baidats, director of Israel’s Lands Administration, as saying that the trees had been planted there recently, illegally, and claiming that because the land

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164 ‘Nature Preservationists Uproot 6000 Trees’, al-Fajr, 10 January 1986. The paper reported, ‘Nearly 6000 olive and almond trees, as well as grapevines, were lost last week to the Jewish National Fund and the Israeli Army. . . . Israel’s ‘Land Administration’ and Green Patrol, an Israeli group of nature preservationists, launched an intensive seven-day campaign in which they chopped down and uprooted 6000 trees in a 2000 dunum area’. Ibid.

165 Victor Schonfeld, Courage along the Divide, 78-minute documentary film broadcast on ITV, London (9 September 1986); David Whitfield, ‘Shopping to Undermine the Israeli Occupation: Civil Disobedience on the West Bank’, Morning Star, 9 September 1986. Damage was estimated by the villagers at more than 100,000 Jordanian dinars, or $250,000. ‘Nature Preservationists Uproot 6000 Trees’.

belonged to the authority, he had asked for their removal. Israeli authorities asserted that the trees were inside the Green Line in what had become ‘no man’s land’ during the period of 1948 to 1967, and they now claimed this as ‘state land’. The farmers produced tax records documenting their ownership of the property which, the eight families told journalists, they had worked for as long as anyone could remember. These included a 1956 mortgage document for olive tree planting from the Jordanian government which verified that the trees were between fifty and sixty years old. Kuttab checked armistice maps and found the property to be on the West Bank, rather than ‘no man’s land’. He told reporters, ‘In the law we are clear. The Israeli land is much further down. Jordanian outposts lie further to the west. ... This is private Palestinian land for which we have documents. We have no intention of violating the law. We plan no violence’. He noted that the Israelis had classified the land under the jurisdiction of the Custodian of Absentee Property, meaning that Palestinians living metres from their own property were considered to be ‘absentees’.

The centre’s staff conferred with the Israeli chapter of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR), which agreed to contact its members. Coordinated by the centre, on 25 January—the Jewish Holiday of Planting Trees, or Tu Beshvat—more than 150 Palestinians, Israelis, and foreign observers carrying borrowed hoes joined the villagers to replace the deracinated olive trees with five hundred seedlings. The instructions read:

Under no circumstances may a participant throw rocks or use violence or attempt to defend him/herself through violent means, no matter what the provocation from the soldiers. ... No action that is intended to provoke or irritate the authorities may be undertaken. ... Every attempt will be made to


168Tilley, ‘Israel Authority Breaks a Promise’.


170Tilley, ‘Israel Authority Breaks a Promise’.

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have ... a joint activity between the Israeli and Palestinian participants.\textsuperscript{171}

While the Israelis and Palestinians worked—watched by both armed Israeli settlers and military personnel—the settlers, who included U.S. citizens, pulled out the saplings as soon as they were planted and tossed them into the underbrush.\textsuperscript{172}

They walked among the planters, yanking the little trees from their new places, throwing them on the ground. Root balls smashed, leaving roots naked, leaves mixing with dirt. The planters retrieved them, put them in new holes. Again they were yanked out, thrown into the bushes.... The authorities and the volunteers went round and round, until the authorities began to break the trees, snapping the thin stems. At last the planters sat around the trees, protecting them with their bodies.\textsuperscript{173}

The centre's report described the action as 'a constructive act': 'Although the people planting olive seedlings were confronted, threatened, and harassed by authorities from the Green Patrol, all remained nonviolent. . . . Soldiers present to protect the two Green Patrol workers did nothing but watch the action'.\textsuperscript{174} When a Major 'Amr arrived from the office of the Israeli military governor in Ramallah, it was mutually agreed that all parties would leave the area until a court of law resolved the matter.\textsuperscript{175} 'Major 'Amr guaranteed that not a single tree would be touched', a news account noted. Following speeches, the villagers brought out

\begin{quote}
171 'General Instructions for Participants in Tree Planting Action at Qatanna', 1-page flyer (East Jerusalem, PCSN, 1986). See, here, Appendix 8. Participating Israeli peace activists hailed the guidance: 'The distribution to all participants of written guidelines, prepared beforehand, and including a clear commitment not to act violently even when provoked, can be very useful'. 'Summing Up', in Kaufman Nunn, Creative Resistance, p. 85.

172 Schonfeld, Courage along the Divide.

173 'Nature Preservationists Uproot 6000 Trees'.


175 When Israel occupied the West Bank in 1967, two thirds of the land was not officially registered. Title had been established under Ottoman, British, and Jordanian rule through use. In December 1968, Military Order 291 forbade any further registration of land. In 1980, a law dating to 1858, when the region was under the Turks, was interpreted to mean that unregistered land which had not been cultivated for a period between three and ten years could be declared state land without compensating the alleged owner; ownership could be proved only by actual registration or continuous cultivation. Under neither the British Mandate nor Hashemite rule was such a definition of 'state land' employed. Cultivation of the land was no guarantee against its confiscation. A team from Yale University Law School writes, 'Israeli stewardship of the West Bank has been an exercise in exploitation and demoralization'. Seizure may be effected without showing cause. Palestinians have difficulty pursuing legal avenues since broad legal mechanisms are available to Israel for expropriation, while the review and appeal mechanisms are under the Civil Administration. Confiscation can be appealed only to a committee composed entirely of Israeli officers, and no further appeal is available. Richard Toshiyuki Drury, Robert C. Winn, and Michael O'Connor, Plowshares and Swords: The Economics of Occupation in the West Bank (Boston, Beacon Press, 1992), pp. 55, 69, 57.
\end{quote}
fruit, bread, and olives; 'Kuttab and Awad gave the soldiers fruit—embarrassed, they ate it'.¹⁷⁶ According to an Israeli peace activist present, Amos Gvirtz, no one was arrested.¹⁷⁷ The next day, 26 January, thirty of the original group returned to water the trees.

The trees were gone. They had been pulled up, the villagers told us, an hour after we left the day before. The agreement had been broken. . . . The Palestinian families standing watching us beside their houses on the hill had, by a fait accompli, already been utterly stripped of their livelihood.¹⁷⁸

The story aired on Israeli television, with Awad’s comment, 'We lost those seedlings, but our action and the military response publicised what was happening all the time to the Palestinians— their land was being confiscated, their lives destroyed. So the villagers had proved that, in a nonviolent way, they could confront the authorities and their guns'.¹⁷⁹

The centre discovered that some of the uprooted trees from Qatanna had been 'sold without benefit to the villagers',¹⁸⁰ reportedly purchased by municipal authorities and planted in an Israeli memorial dedicated to the memory of Martin Luther King, Jr.¹⁸¹ Rafi Davara, spokesperson for the Jerusalem municipality, confirmed that some of the uprooted trees had been planted near the King memorial in West Jerusalem: 'We needed some trees and when we called the Keren Kayemet, the Jewish National Fund, they asked us to send two trucks', claiming that the land belonged to the Israel Land Authority.¹⁸² 'What distressed the Arabs the most', according to an American eyewitness, 'was that 16 of the trees had been sold to

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¹⁷⁶‘Nature Preservationists Uproot 6000 Trees’.

¹⁷⁷Amos Gvirtz, 'Planting Olive Trees at Qatana–Palestinians and Israelis for Nonviolence', in Kaufman Nunn, Creative Resistance, pp. 23–4. According to Gvirtz, he gave Israeli officers at the scene a 'lecture' about nonviolent struggle, Gandhi, and King. What especially perturbed Gvirtz was hostile Israeli actions, when 'a person is robbed of his means of making a living, because of being an Arab, when he has wronged no one'. Ibid., p. 24.

¹⁷⁸‘Nature Preservationists Uproot 6000 Trees’.


¹⁸⁰Press Release on Tree Planting, "Tu Beshvat" in Qattana", joint PCSN and Arab-Jewish Fellowship of Nonviolence and Peace (East Jerusalem, PCSN, 24 January 1986).


¹⁸²Tilley, ‘Israel Authority Breaks a Promise’.
the municipality of [West] Jerusalem to be planted along a street named in honour of... King'. Letters of protest were sent to Jerusalem mayor Teddy Kollek and King's widow Coretta Scott King, and on 3 March a demonstration was held at the memorial in West Jerusalem. As excerpts from King were read aloud, along with texts from the Qur'an and the Bible, seventy-five Palestinians, Israelis, and foreign visitors participated, among them Qatanna villagers. The programme was led by Awad's uncle, the Reverend George Kuttab, a minister of the Church of the Nazarene, and the American-born Rabbi Jeremy Milgrom. Holding hands, they sang 'We Shall Overcome' in Hebrew, Arabic, and English, with a policeman reportedly joining in the refrain. Yellow ribbons hung from branches, 'a remembrance that the trees had been taken from their home[s]'. A Jewish protester from California, then living in Israel, notes:

The irony couldn't be missed. Israel was dedicating a memorial to Martin Luther King, Jr. Nonviolent advocates, both Israeli and Palestinian, publicly objected to it, for only days before, the trees planted around the memorial site had been expropriated from the Palestinians. [The uprooting of the trees] made a mockery of Dr. King and what he lived and died for.

Three months later, a settler near Jenin 'proudly admitted' to journalists on 29 May that twenty olive trees planted in his Israeli settlement had come from Qattana.

In that spring of 1986, a reporter notes, the Palestinians around the centre were convinced that armed struggle had failed the Palestinians, but thought Gandhian methods might 'prick the conscience of Israeli society'. Other planned noncooperation measures

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183Pippiri, 'Seeking Justice through Nonviolent Resistance'.

184Torcato, 'Tranquility amidst Terror'.

185'Summary of Actions', 1986 PCSN report.


187Qattaneh Trees Show Up in Settlement', al-Fajr, 1 June 1986. The settlement reportedly received the trees from the Herzliya municipality, which had obtained them from the Israeli Land Authority. Ibid.

188Claiborne, 'Palestinian Group Tries the Passive Tactics of Gandhi'. 'So far, without gaining any significant public notice, the center has demonstrated peacefully against the Israeli expropriation of land near Bethlehem, has organized an Arab boycott of Israeli-made goods, and has recruited Palestinians to visit houses they vacated in what is now Israel at the outset of the 1948 war of independence'. Ibid.
included the refusal of Palestinian labourers to work in Israeli settlements, refusal to fill in governmental forms requiring Hebrew, refusal to comply with Israeli taxes, and civil disobedience measures such as forming human chains to block roads or lying prostrate in front of bulldozers at public works projects administered by Israel. Such tactics had a better chance than the military option, according to Awad, who was quoted as saying, 'Palestinians here are so tired of having nothing to do for achieving their freedom. They don’t want to throw bombs, but they want to do something. I am trying to offer them a revolution by nonviolence'.

Also in 1986, Awad brought the villagers of Yatta to plant trees on disputed land near the settlement of Sussia. Another protest took place at the village of Bidya, north of Ramallah, after it lost more than a thousand olive trees. On narrow technical grounds, it could be argued that Qatanna was but one incident which made no impact on the overall situation, and that the centre's other tree-planting demonstrations also had no effect on the conflict. Indeed, it could be argued that 4 million olive trees planted by Palestinians on the West Bank during a ten-year period—a mid-1970s programme for the mass distribution of olive and fruit tree seedlings assisted by U.S. private voluntary agencies—had no impact. These demonstrably nonviolent efforts failed to stop what Ibrahim Matar calls the Israeli

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189 Ibid.
190 Joel Greenberg, 'Trespass Charges against Palestinian', Jerusalem Post, 24 September 1986; Whitfield, 'Shopping to Undermine the Israeli Occupation'.
191 Olive Trees at Root of Land Dispute ... A Continuing Story, Newsletter (East Jerusalem, PCSN, April–June 1986), p. 5. Similar incidents of land expropriation were reported by news media in the mid-1980s as occurring in numerous parts of particularly the West Bank. See, for example, Awad 'Abd al-Fattah, 'Shamlawi Family Loses Land in Confusing Confiscation', al-Fajr, 14 March 1986. According to the New York Times, 'one of the more successful—and effective—protests organized by Mr. Awad has been to prevent Government expropriation of Arab lands by planting olive trees'. 'A U.S. Arab in West Bank Loses Rights'.
'outright seizure of private property'. Yet episodes such as those at Qatanna, Sussia, and Bidya provide evidence that rural Palestinian folk living in the agricultural subsistence economies of isolated villages were being introduced to methods of standing up for their land which relied not at all on violence. These protests, some of them occurring nearly two years before the intifada, are indicative of a stream of activities flowing with others in different mileux towards the uprising. In reconstructing what occurred at Qatanna from Israeli, Palestinian, and international news accounts, apart from the avoidance of violence one sees an effort to demonstrate the six principles of Gandhi and King cited at Awad's 1983 workshops, including the avoidance of humiliation of the opponent and directing action against the 'evil' rather than the persons involved.

Shopping in Hebron and the Committee on Family Reunification

On 28 January 1986, four Hebron shopkeepers approached the centre and said that their businesses were being hurt by the searching and questioning by Israeli soldiers of anyone who wanted to come to their stores. Israeli settlers had established an enclave in the business district of Hebron, and the downtown Palestinian commercial areas had been cordoned off with barbed wire and patrolled by Israeli soldiers. A high-wire fence in front of a section of Palestinian shops was guarded by soldiers at either end, creating a 'guarded walkway'. Ordinary shoppers were understandably reluctant to pass through this passage. Hebron's mayor, Mustafa Natsheh, agreed to join Awad and others from the centre in visiting shops behind the fence, where they, too, were searched and questioned. The

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193 After 1967, land seizure was not the process of land acquisition that occurred prior to 1948, but 'outright seizure of private property', often based on the 'pretext of security'. Matar, 'Settlements: Facts and Figures', p. 11.

194 By 1989, some 6,500 Israeli settlers were reported to be living in and around Hebron, 'hundreds' of them armed. George D. Moffett III, 'Digging in Their Heels outside Hebron', Christian Science Monitor, 6 June 1989.

episode occurred in front of British television cameras and other international news media, one of which reported,

The issue revolved around three shops near the centre of town, which the Israeli authorities coveted... When we got there, we found that access to the shops, located on the ground floor of a building, had been made extremely difficult with the erection of a barbed wire fence, which left a narrow passage barely a few feet wide. Large stones painted blood red had been stacked on top of tin drums placed alongside the fence. [Everyone entering] the shops—even the shop owners—was subjected to a rigorous check by the soldiers.\(^{196}\)

Film showing body searches and Awad being forced to take off his shoes aired in British cinemas and on ITV.\(^{197}\) Shortly thereafter, plans were developed by the centre for coordinated groups to go shopping at Hebron's Beit Hadassah and Daboiah Buildings, and an Israeli co-sponsor was sought.\(^{198}\) The Israeli branch of IFOR agreed to join the endeavour, and its news release spoke of the shared risk to Palestinians and Israelis from the settlers—another instance of imagined community and a creative forgetting of the past:

Since early January seven shops have been isolated by a high fence with soldiers at each end who check and harass customers. They are in danger of losing their lawful livelihood and places of business. The Israeli army considers these shops a security risk to the [Israeli] settlers above them. Our group of Palestinians, Israelis, Jews, and foreigners considers the illegal settlers and the policy to protect them to be the real security risk.\(^{199}\)

In May, thirty volunteers from IFOR and the centre went shopping at the stores, arriving in Arab taxi-cabs which proceeded through Israeli roadblocks without incident.\(^{200}\) A leaflet urged 'solidarity with those who are surrounded by wire fences and the guns of soldiers', and a schedule for visits by Israelis, Palestinians, and expatriates was organized.\(^{201}\) The joint

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\(^{196}\) Torcato, 'Tranquility amidst Terror'.


\(^{198}\) 'Summary of Actions', 1986 PCSN report.

\(^{199}\) IFOR News Release’ (East Jerusalem, IFOR in collaboration with PCSN, 28 May 1986).

\(^{200}\) Joel Greenberg, 'Peace Group Visits Hebron to Support Arab Shopkeepers', *Jerusalem Post*, 30 May 1986.

\(^{201}\) Campaign of Solidarity with Hebron Merchants, 1-page public invitation (East Jerusalem, PCSN, 1986).
PCSN and IFOR activities continued for several months.

In addition to the piloting of direct action campaigns, the centre organized the Committee on Family Reunification to publicize the difficulties faced by tens of thousands of Palestinians who were prohibited from living with their families because they lacked the identity cards issued by Israel in September 1967, shortly after the military occupation. One member of the group who was married to a Palestinian woman caught outside the occupied territories in June 1967, and therefore unable to return, recalled how the committee made contacts with Israeli members of the Knesset, at which the case of Palestinian families who were divided was presented.202 The committee used basic techniques. Events were organized, such as a picnic and march six months before the start of the intifada.203 A parallel between Soviet Jewish and Palestinian families was alluded to, because families in both settings were split by the refusal of powerful states to allow movement by their populations.204 A handout argued the comparison:

People who were not physically in the occupied territories on the day of the actual occupation were not allowed to return.... An application for family reunion is.... submitted to the military authorities.... A military committee sits irregularly and decides on the applications. There is no hearing.... the applicant is not given an opportunity to present or argue the case.... Most applicants are in fact allowed into the country, repeatedly, on visitors’ permits. If they were considered a threat to security, they would undoubtedly not be allowed in.... The fact that any Jew is entitled to enter Israel on demand is in stark contrast to the situation suffered by the Palestinian.... The fact that the immigration of Russian Jews.... is a topic of concern in the Western world contrasts sharply with the relatively unknown and unreported struggle of the Palestinian families wishing to be reunited.205

On 14 June 1987, carrying placards in Arabic, Hebrew, and English, demonstrators presented U.S. consular officials with a letter to President Ronald Reagan asking for

203"Public Invitation", flyer inviting public to picnic sponsored by the Committee on Family Reunification, garden of Palestinian (Rockefeller) Museum, East Jerusalem, Friday, 19 June 1987.
humanitarian assistance for families divided because husbands, wives, and children who were refugees in Arab countries were prevented from joining them, due to Israeli policies. A permit for the demonstration was secured from Israeli police. The committee’s petitioning of the authorities reportedly aimed at Israeli sensibilities:

For the first time Palestinians demonstrated—legally—in front of the Israeli Prime Minister’s office. On behalf of the committee, Awad sent letters to international leaders, including... heads of state... [in] the US, the Soviet Union, and Europe. Awad met personally with US Vice President George Bush and pleaded the case of broken Palestinian families. He visited the Israeli Knesset and spoke to parliament members about family reunification cases.

Additional efforts were made to publicize the family dilemma in correspondence with the U.S. State Department. The record reveals actions undertaken with a view to summoning sympathetic responses from Israelis.

**Gene Sharp and His Theory of Power**

In November 1986, Gene Sharp traveled to Israel and the West Bank for the first time, where he spoke with Israeli strategic studies specialists in Tel Aviv and visited the Knesset. He met with Labour MK Ephraim Sneh, a physician and a former general who would later become minister of health, but who was at the time head of the Israeli civil administration in the West Bank, in hopes that he might try to influence Israeli policy ‘in case there was a major shift to nonviolent struggle by the Palestinians’. Sharp expressed the

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207 Kuttab, Dr. Mubarak Awad, p. 2. On 24 November 1987, Awad visited the Knesset, resulting in a tempest in the dining area. The guest of Yossi Sarid of the Citizens Rights (Ratz) faction of Meretz, Awad met with Ora Namir, Shevah Weiss, Mattityahu Peled—also members of the Israeli peace camp—and Muhammed Mi’ari and ‘Abd al-Wahab Daroushe—Israeli Arab MKs. Geula Cohen, a member of the Tehiya faction and considered politically far right in the Knesset, ‘burst into the dining room, waving her arms, and marched to the table where Awad sat’, refusing to speak with him in English, as he did not speak Hebrew. Asher Wallfish, ‘Awad Visits Knesset, MKs Scramble to Vent Anger over Deportation Case’, Jerusalem Post, 25 November 1987, p. 2.


209 Sneh, in his capacity as head of the civil administration, was later described by Raja Shehadeh as ‘the last decent man’. Yehuda Litani, ‘We Have Nothing to Lose’, Jerusalem Post, 15 January 1988, p. 10.
view that it was in the interest of both Palestinians and Israelis for the Palestinians to adopt nonviolent struggle, which 'would give greater power to the Palestinians in pursuing independence but would also relieve the Israelis of the problem of terrorism'; 'Hence, it would be in Israel’s interest not to impose such severe repression as to drive the Palestinians back into violence'. Sneh recalls, 'I remember meeting with Gene Sharp in my military office. I was quite skeptical. I didn’t think the Palestinians would buy his offer. I remember a very strong argument. I felt it was not applicable to Palestinian reality'.

Having been present at the March 1984 Washington meeting that resulted in the opening of the Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence, Sharp now led several workshops with Palestinians and met with the activists who had become involved in the centre’s activities. He spoke widely, offered lectures, and spent time in Qalandia refugee camp, meeting with youth. Awad and Sharp joined a group in the camp that was building a new youth centre, and while hammering nails talked about the type of power that is possessed by each person.

Sharp’s lectures and discussions with Palestinians, Israelis, and mixed groups offered broad historical analyses of nonviolent struggle. He provided scholarly examples of how it can split the ranks of the target group so that even some soldiers and police may begin to examine underlying grievances, while, in contrast, violent struggle unites the target group against the resisters. He spoke of how repression can unify and strengthen nonviolent resisters. When speaking with Palestinian audiences, he focused on military occupation.

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211 Ephraim Sneh, thirty-minute interview (Jerusalem, 10 March 1997).

212 Among Sharp’s lectures was one at the Truman Institute at Hebrew University, attended by sixty persons. Edy Kaufman, thirty-minute communication (Jerusalem, 17 March 1997).

213 Sharp, interview (19 October 1995).

214 Two-hour interview of ten youths (Qalandia refugee camp, West Bank, 22 January 1996).
being rooted in and dependent upon obedience from civilians. The basic conceptual
background for many of the arguments Sharp made, and which underlies his pioneering
cross-cultural analysis of 1973—by then circulating for more than one year in the territories
and Israel in Arabic and Hebrew\textsuperscript{215}—rests on insights from the 1577 essay by Étienne de la
Boétie, as noted in Chapter One.\textsuperscript{216} As a student at the University of Orléans, de la Boétie
hypothesized that any form of government, no matter how despotic, relied on the consent of
the populace, and that since cooperation with any bureaucracy was voluntary, it could be
withdrawn at any time. In addition, Sharp pointed out that acts of terrorism often lead to
international isolation, while nonviolent struggle engenders sympathy and support. He
questioned the 'blind faith' in violence of some Palestinians—despite decades of disastrous
results from its use—and said that Jews throughout the world and Israelis in particular had
adopted irrationally negative attitudes about the Palestinians because of violence, when they
might have become allies in their quest for a homeland. Unquestioning confidence in
violence prevents the elaboration of alternatives and criticism of failure, Sharp pointed out,
and vastly fewer Palestinians could participate in violent struggle than could in nonviolent
struggle. Thus, faith in the efficacy of violence threatened the future of the Palestinians.\textsuperscript{217}

According to Mahdi 'Abd al-Hadi, head of the Palestinian Academic Society for the

\textsuperscript{215}Sharp, Politics of Nonviolent Action.

\textsuperscript{216}De la Boétie, 'Discours de la Servitude Volontaire'. Also see Paul Bonnefon, Étienne de la Boëtie: Sa Vie, Ses Ouvrages et Ses Relations avec Montaigne, repr. 1888 Bordeaux edn (Genève, Slatkine Reprints, 1970). De la Boëtie's propositions on the nature of power form the acknowledged or unacknowledged context for writings on civil disobedience, including those of Thoreau, Tolstoy, Gandhi, King, Havel, and Aung San Suu Kyi. English versions are found in Anti-Dictator: The Discours de la Servitude Volontaire of Étienne de la Boëtie, tr. Harry Kurz (New York, Columbia University Press, 1942) and The Will to Bondage, Being the 1577 Text of 'Discours de la Servitude Volontaire' in Parallel with the 1735 Translation as 'A Discourse of Voluntary Servitude', ed. William Flygare, Libertarian Broadsides 6 (Colorado Springs, Ralph Myles, 1974).

\textsuperscript{217}The points made by Sharp in his 1986 lectures are aptly reflected in an extensive interview with him, by Afif Safieh, which was distributed widely in the occupied territories during 1986 and 1987. Safieh was then a visiting fellow at Harvard University, on leave from his position as PLO general delegate to the United Kingdom. The first of the two interview segments is found in Afif Safieh and Jennifer Bing, 'Exclusive Interview: Gene Sharp on Nonviolent Struggle', al-Fajr, 2 May 1986, pp. 7, 13. The full text of the interview was reprinted by the centre and distributed as a forty-seven-page booklet, 'Nonviolent Struggle: An Efficient Technique of Political Action' (East Jerusalem, PCSN, 1987). An edited form appeared as 'Gene Sharp: Nonviolent Struggle', Interview by Afif Safieh, Journal of Palestine Studies 65 (Autumn 1987): 37-55.
Study of International Affairs, many of the ideas proffered by Sharp in his lectures and writings would eventually find their way into the Jerusalem Paper, drafted by Sari Nusseibeh. Jonathan Kuttab concludes that the most significant of Awad's contributions to the forces building towards the intifada was his interpretation of Sharp's theories. Haj 'Abd Abu-Diab surmised, 'Of all the things introduced by Mubarak, the most important was the idea of noncooperation.' This concept—called 'disengagement' in the intifada—would take firm grip early in the uprising and become one of its 'main platforms'.

Self-Reliance

Awad's 1983 booklet considered the hope for salvation from the outside as implausible: 'The military branches of the PLO are presently incapable of liberating the occupied territories by force and the Arab governments appear presently unable or uninterested in entering into a broad military confrontation with Israel aimed at liberating the

218 Al-Hadi, interview (13 December 1997). Six months before the start of the intifada in 1987, Nusseibeh would write that the Palestinian state would not rise if Palestinians did not construct its components: 'I am not saying that we shall then have to carry arms. . . . I am saying . . . we must take matters seriously . . . willfully cutting off our links with the occupation authorities. . . . [on] payment of taxes . . . licences and permits . . . carrying (Israeli) identity cards . . . work inside Israel . . . products. This link will not die off or wither away unless we ourselves one day collectively embark on putting an end to it'. Sari Nusseibeh, 'The Foundation Stone for the State', reprinted from al-Quds, 8 July 1987, in Safieh, Palestine, pp. 4–5.

219 Kuttab, interview (12 December 1997).

220 Abu-Diab, interview (11 December 1997). 'Destruction of the habit of unquestioning obedience and the development of conscious choice to obey or disobey' is an important intangible factor in nonviolent struggle. Sharp, Dynamics of Nonviolent Action, p. 749. Italics in original. A central theme in Awad's 1983 booklet echoes Sharp's insight, 'Israel cannot govern the West Bank and Gaza Strip without the agreement, approval, and cooperation of the subject people. This approval and cooperation is usually obtained by force, threats, violence, and punishments (individual and collective). Yet in spite of all this, the oppressed people always have the option of rejecting the oppression and refusing to cooperate with it if they are willing to pay the price'. Awad, Nonviolence, p. 9.

221 The Popular Movement: The Process of Disengagement', Towards a State of Independence: The Palestinian Uprising, December 1987–August 1988 (East Jerusalem, FACTS Information Committee, 1988), [hereafter FACTS], pp. 16–19; Khatib, interview (15 December 1997). This concept was expounded by Gandhi's first tract on Indian independence, written while he was still in South Africa to rebut anarchists who were propounding violence. He argued, 'it is truer to say we gave India to the English than that India was lost. . . . The sword is entirely useless for holding India. We alone [the Indians] keep them [the British]'. M. K. Gandhi, Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule, ed. Mahadev Desai (South Africa, n.p., 1909; repr. English edn 1938; Ahmedabad, Jitendra T. Desai, Navajivan Mudranalaya, 1995), pp. 36, 37.
military areas by force’.222 Waiting for liberation and pursuing armed struggle were fundamentally contradictory in Awad’s view:

To tell me the only way to resolve this conflict is armed struggle is a bunch of baloney. If you don’t have arms, don’t say we are waiting for others to come liberate us. If you want to be violent, be violent. But don’t play the game that ‘we believe in armed struggle and are waiting for someone to come do it for us’.223

Compared to the asceticism, abstinence, austerity, and self-discipline of nonviolent struggle, violence has hedonistic expressive appeal, according to Jonathan Kuttab. While the Arabic language is verbally aggressive, with the poetry and semantics of violence, the reality of Arab culture is not violent, he claimed,

We are not militaristic—even Saladin was a Kurd. The Arab civilization . . . never pioneered a single weapon, tactic, or campaign. Our battles were usually one-day assaults and skirmishes. The Prophet had an Ethiopian convert who taught him how to build moats and trenches. Trenches! We have always compensated by militant rhetoric. In early Islam, there were not even regular armies. . . . The history of Palestinian armed struggle is a disaster.224

Although Awad personally believed in ethical nonviolence, the public record suggests that he relinquished any attempt to make such an argument to the Palestinians and, instead, presented nonviolent struggle as a practical and empowering method in which one does not await interventions from others. It appears to have been of no consequence to him whether his ideas were adopted as a tactical concession or a matter of principle as long as individuals adhered to the operational principles of the method. Awad knew that some who had joined with him were merely making a tactical decision: ‘If we gave them tanks, they’d use tanks’.225 The record on Awad suggests that his clinical training led him to believe that changing behaviour could have its own rewards. ‘Whenever the Palestinians start violence, we start losing’, he said.226 Gandhi had viewed both ethical and practical approaches to

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222 Awad, Nonviolence, p. 3.

223 Fletcher, ‘Awad: Crucial Question’.

224 Kuttab, interview (5 November 1994).


226 Awad, interview (14 February 1995).
nonviolent struggle as unified: ‘Satyagraha is, as a matter of fact and in the long run, the most expeditious course’.\(^\text{227}\) ‘As the means so the end. There is no wall of separation between means and end’.\(^\text{228}\) Awad also promoted another Gandhian distinction—hate the oppression, but not the oppressor.\(^\text{229}\)

As the notion of ‘liberation’ by outside forces continued to fade, the idea of independence deriving from exertions by those under occupation grew. Kuttab observed, ‘Palestinians have for a long time had a “sit and wait” attitude’, waiting for the United States, the Arab world, the Arab masses, ‘we even invented a wonderful term for it: sumud—steadfastness’.\(^\text{230}\) A more muscular activism was being encouraged by the Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence to replace the perseverance of samud. Haj ‘Abd Abu-Diab recalls:

Mubarak was the one who taught us that holding an onion in front of your face

\(^{227}\)Young India, 19 September 1924; Gandhi, Satyagraha (Ahmedabad, Navajivan, 1951), p. 296, as cited in Sharp, Gandhi as a Political Strategist, p. 289.

\(^{228}\)M. K. Gandhi, Young India, 17 July 1924. Gandhi rejects the traditional view that one’s method can be separated from the results achieved. Not merely arguing that a good purpose does not justify morally bankrupt or violent means, he also repudiates any possibility of differentiating between the methods used and the purpose. The means of action, or techniques, should embody the purpose and reveal the goal; they may be protracted over time but cannot be cut in two. ‘[T]here is an intimate connection between the end and the means, so much so that you cannot achieve a good end by bad means’. Idem, Young India, 11 August 1921. ‘Terrorism must be held to be wrong in every case. . . . Pure motive can never justify impure or violent action’. Idem, Young India, 18 December 1924.


\(^{230}\)Jonathan Kuttab, ‘The Children’s Revolt’, Journal of Palestine Studies 68 (Summer 1988): 28. At the summit of Arab leaders in Baghdad in 1978, holding fast under occupation—sumud—was suggested as a form of resistance aimed at stanching the flow of Palestinian exiles. This outlook is described by Raja Shehadeh in The Third Way: A Journey of Life in the West Bank (London, Quartet Books, 1982), reprinted as Samad: Journal of a West Bank Palestinian (New York, Adama Books, 1984). For some, sumud, clinging to the land, became a form of nonviolent resistance. Political scientist Azmy Bishara uses the term to refer to the alternative institutions of the intifada, differentiating between civil disobedience on the one hand and, on the other, ‘steadfast’ nonviolent initiatives for preserving the society’s defences. Azmy Bishara, one-hour interview (East Jerusalem, 17 June 1995).
would help against tear-gas.\footnote{211} He showed us how we should never use our hands with the police or soldiers—we should present our backs so that they would push against our backs—because if we used our hands, they would hit our hands. . . .

Mubarak was the first person to hang the Palestinian flag in Jerusalem. When the police told the protesters to remove the flags, the people sat down and refused to cooperate. He taught us how to make traffic stoppages. Once, more than five hundred people sat down at the Damascus Gate to the Old City and the cars couldn't move for more than thirty minutes; meanwhile, we were issuing statements to the press. He showed how those in front should clench their hands together and wrap them with rubber bands, so that when the police moved one of us, ten persons had to be moved together.

In 1985, Mubarak came to me with thirty Palestinian flags. He wanted to organize a flag-waving demonstration from a mosque in the Old City. . . . I took the flags, layered them around my waist, and carried my coat in front of me. [We] went to the mosque together, handed out the flags, and a demonstration emerged.

When the Israelis closed the borders into Jerusalem, Muslims were not allowed to go to the mosques to pray; Christians were not allowed to go to the churches. We organized it so that the people would pray at the borders, in front of the soldiers and police. . . . We often timed it so that the Muslims were praying and the church bells were ringing at the same time. On other occasions, when the police came for the young people who were involved, instead we sent old women in their place.\footnote{222}

Awad told a Harvard seminar that nonviolent struggle could work to eliminate the causes of fear in Israel that were being used to justify militarization of the West Bank, thereby neutralizing some Israeli security justifications. Mutual fear drove each side to want to destroy the other, he said; Palestinians' fears were based on concern for survival as a people and worry that their national destiny was dependent on outside help, while Israeli mistrust derived from survival anxiety following upon the Holocaust.\footnote{223} In the words of Jonathan Kuttab, 'Weak as we are, we are the only ones who can ensure Israel's security, defuse the threat of an Arab-Israeli war, and, by granting Israel recognition, legitimacy, and acceptance, ensure its security in a way that military power and stockpiling of weapons

\footnote{211}An onion, which normally induces tears, is an antidote to the burning itch of tear-gas. Onions lay quartered and ready on kitchen counters during the intifada. \textasciitilde Ali H. Qleibo, \textit{Before the Mountains Disappear: An Ethnographic Chronicle of the Modern Palestinians} (Jericho, Kloreus Books, 1992), pp. 56–7.

\footnote{222}Abu-Diab, interview (11 December 1997).

cannot’.234 Power to grant legitimacy to Israel rests with the Palestinians, Hanan Mikhail Ashrawi claims: ‘The whole world may recognize Israel, but the only people who can give Israel legitimacy are the Palestinians, because we are the aggrieved party. Israel was created on our land. And we will choose when, and how, and if to give Israel legitimacy.’235

Awad’s ‘True Offence’

Observers and actors in the Israeli-Palestinian drama not only have questioned Awad’s purported pacifism, they have also impugned his integrity, in one case referring to him as a ‘self-styled pacifist. . . . The latest in a parade of Palestinian phonies’.236 Yet pacifism had little if any role in the ferment underway.237 As Sharp notes, pacifism is ‘inadequate or incomplete on both political and moral grounds’, because people and societies will not opt to remain defenceless.238 Awad told a reporter that although he, personally, was a pacifist in principle, his ‘campaign to sell nonviolence to his fellow Palestinians stresses

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237Intifada, the highly rated account by Schiff and Y’ari, contains factual mistakes in virtually every paragraph of chapter nine that is devoted to Awad, ‘The Pendulum of Civil Disobedience’, pp. 240–66. Among the biggest faults is the failure to grasp Awad’s role in transmitting both practical and theoretical information about realistic benefits of a nonviolent approach, including test cases of direct action, and in not seeing the intifada, especially during the first two years (the period about which they write), as a phenomenon involving the use of overwhelmingly nonviolent sanctions. Deprecating Awad’s role, they seem not to have consulted authoritative sources, nor, apparently, did they speak with Awad directly, although, as Susan Hattis Rolef has pointed out, he was ‘easily accessible’. Susan Hattis Rolef, ‘Give Peaceful Resistance a Chance: Harassing and Antagonizing Awad for His Line of Thinking Will Gain Us Nothing’, Jerusalem Post, 2 December 1987. Rolef, then editor of the Labour party monthly Spectrum, is the author of ‘Bi-National Idea in Palestine’, which was published in Hebrew in the mid-1970s. For an example of condemnatory journalism about Awad, based on Palestinian and Israeli sources, see Michael Widlanski, ‘Ouster of “Palestinian Gandhi” Is Hardly Noticed’, Chicago Tribune, 20 July 1988, p. 14.

238Sharp, assisted by Jenkins, Civilian-Based Defense, p. 4; Gene Sharp, Making the Abolition of War a Realistic Goal (Cambridge, Massachusetts, Albert Einstein Institute, 1980), p. 5. Gandhi believed that war could not be avoided without a radical reorientation of human consciousness. ‘It is a far cry . . . from pacifism to Gandhiji’s idea of non-violence’, writes one analyst, employing the affectionate diminutive. Editor’s note on Gandhi’s writings for World Pacifist Conference in India, December 1949–January 1950, M. K. Gandhi, For Pacifists, ed. Bharatan Kumarappa (Ahmedabad, Navajivan Publishing House, 1956), pp. v–vi. From the Boer war onwards, Gandhi gave moral support to various groups engaged in war. Naess, Gandhi and Group Conflict, p. 118.
practical self-interest, not religion or principle'. Speaking to a symposium of nongovernmental organizations at the United Nations, Awad described the uprising as a turning point in which,

The ideas of Martin Luther King and Gandhi have been mixed together and have taught the Palestinians that by using civil disobedience they can put the Israelis on the defensive. . . . [T]he Israelis [must] know that we as Palestinians are willing to do anything and everything other than violence to have a Palestinian state.

Awad's return to Jerusalem was viewed as 'a new form of political sophistication' by some who believed he was striving to move the confrontation with the Jewish state onto 'moral terrain'; 'he seems to be searching for the same sense of tempered control and political timing that once characterized the Yishuv's defence doctrine of havlage (self-restraint)'. Yet, he was not moralistic enough for others, with his talk of self-interest and efficacy. The arrival of Awad had introduced a 'foreign, non-Middle Eastern strategy for victory by the underdog', said a commentator who criticized him as Machiavellian. Richardson wrote, 'Awad's ideas are strategic, tactical and not without contradictions'. Don Peretz deserves credit for observing that there was a new dimension to the discourse in the territories and for quoting sections from Awad's 1983 booklet, although he ignores the profound pragmatism underscoring the writings of both Gandhi and King when he says of Awad, 'Though supposedly influenced by Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Awad's approach . . . was based more on practical than on moral considerations'.

In June or July 1986, Awad had travelled to Plains, Georgia, to meet again with former president Jimmy Carter, something that he told a reporter he tried to do whenever

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239Grossman, 'Palestinian Pacifist'.
241Franklin, 'What Makes Awad Run?'
243Richardson, 'Confrontation Quest'.
244Peretz, Intifada, p. 53.
possible. The discussion turned to the necessity to exclude all violence from any protests against the occupation, whatever the provocation. As a result of Carter’s strong stand on an exclusively nonviolent approach, Awad began openly to condemn the PLO whenever the front accepted responsibility for violence. ‘I am completely against violence from the PLO and from the Israelis’, he told three hundred religious Jews at the Beit Elisheva meeting hall in Jerusalem, just before the start of the intifada. He had been criticized previously for not having done so: ‘I would have a bit more respect for the Mubarak Awads and their supporters if I could recall his “nonviolent” centre’s coming out against PLO acts of violence’. Although acknowledged as ‘one of few Palestinian leaders who openly condemns violence, and the only one who actively promotes and teaches nonviolent theories of resistance’, Awad had initially confused his Israeli viewers by holding back complete repudiation of the use of violence. His 1983 booklet says that a nonviolent strategy does not ‘constitute a rejection of the concept of armed struggle’.

Nonviolence is the most effective method of resisting the Israeli occupation in the West Bank and Gaza today. These methods can be successfully utilized, at least in part, by individuals who are not necessarily committed to nonviolence.

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245 Grossman, ‘Palestinian Pacifist’.


248 The group that invited Awad to speak, on 1 December 1987, was Oz Veshalom. Devotees of Meir Kahane’s Kach party demonstrated outside the hall, as an anonymous telephone caller announced that a bomb had been set to go off inside the building. As Awad began his lecture, an Israeli leaped on the stage, seized a microphone to shout epithets, and smashed a drinking glass. Fletcher, ‘Hecklers’. A rabbi in the audience criticized the news media for printing photographs of ‘those who came to subvert the event’. Saul Perlmutter, ‘Disappointing Coverage’, letter to the editor, Jerusalem Post, 20 December 1987. The event might not have been reported at all without the intrusion. ‘Left to his own devices in Jerusalem, Awad is hardly more than a nuisance’. Litani, ‘Morning After’.


250 A U.S. Arab in West Bank Loses Rights’.

251 Awad, Nonviolence, p. 3.
and who may choose at a different stage to engage in armed struggle.\textsuperscript{252}

Such wording made it easy for an adviser to the Knesset’s Tehiya faction to write:

The truth is that Awad views himself as the complemental factor to terror. This ‘side-by-side’ component of his strategy reveals his inimical intentions to legitimize the PLO. His preference for a secular, democratic Palestine as the ultimate solution over the two-state proposal of the first-stage ‘moderates’ also uncovers the sham of his posturing as a Gandhi or King.\textsuperscript{253}

Israelis who, to the contrary, acknowledged Awad as ‘the first Palestinian to have publicly renounced violence against Jews’, pointed out, ‘When Awad advocates obstructive tactics against the occupation authorities in the territories, he is not recommending entering a Jewish settlement on the West Bank and cutting their electric wires’.\textsuperscript{254} Academicians at a Boston seminar in 1984 criticized him for saying that a nonviolent programme of resistance could eventually revert to armed struggle, because his argument seemed to assume that nonviolent resistance could sustain its moral force when applied only partially.\textsuperscript{255} Awad told a reporter, ‘Everyone under occupation should resist. One will do it through the gun. If I cannot carry a gun, I want to resist by some other way’.\textsuperscript{256} Kuttab observed that the historical circumstances had made it difficult for Awad initially to ‘disavow’ armed struggle and still have ‘legitimacy’ with many Palestinians.\textsuperscript{257} Lost in the reverberating claims and

\footnote{\textsuperscript{252}Ibid., p. 16. This posture would not be acceptable to classicists of Gandhian theory. Bondurant warns that the degree to which nonviolent resistance functions effectively may depend on the extent to which there is comprehension of its basic principles. Failure to grasp the fundamental elements and their ‘delicate articulation’ may result simply in adoption of the outward forms. Bondurant, \textit{Conquest of Violence}, p. 15. Naess avers, ‘If there is no serious resolve to act non-violently, following most of the norms, this has immediate consequences for how one appears to and is interpreted by the opponent. . . One of the most ruinous attitudes is that of \textit{trying out} non-violence, and, if that does not lead to success, \textit{intending} to use violence. . . . The thought “I shall first be non-violent, and if it does not succeed I am justified in using violence” is contradictory. There can be no first stage non-violence’. Naess, \textit{Gandhi and Group Conflict}, p. 115.}

\footnote{\textsuperscript{253}Yisrael Medad, ‘The House on Nablus Road’, \textit{Jerusalem Post}, 29 December 1987.}

\footnote{\textsuperscript{254}Dan Leon, ‘Mubarak Awad’s Friend’, \textit{New Outlook}, July 1988, pp. 34–5.}

\footnote{\textsuperscript{255}Eisenstadt, ‘Nonviolence in the West Bank’, p. 121.}

\footnote{\textsuperscript{256}Nakhoul, ‘Palestinian Nonviolence’, p. 1.}

\footnote{\textsuperscript{257}Franklin, ‘“Palestinian Gandhi” or Terrorist?’ Awad’s reluctance to condemn the use of violent resistance continued to be a matter of public debate as late as 1993. Responding to a letter in the \textit{Jerusalem Post}, the journalist Jon Immanuel wrote, ‘There is a difference between what he [Awad] advocated publicly, which was novel in Palestinian thinking, and what others advocated and he may not have condemned’.}
counterclaims is the fact that the presence of violence or violent elements does not mean or imply coordinated efforts between the purveyors of nonviolence and the perpetrators of violence. No linkage can be assumed.

**Awad’s Deportation Fuels Debate**

The chronology revealed by the public record supports the rapid legitimation and spread of Awad’s views in the period prior to the eruption of the intifada. When Awad returned from the United States to Jerusalem in 1983, he brought with him his old East Jerusalem identity card and, on 15 May 1987, sent it to the Interior Ministry to be replaced. In a letter dated 4 August, he was informed that he had lost his Jerusalem residency.

The Israeli Knesset’s 1967 unilateral extension of Israeli jurisdiction over the entire area of mandatory Palestine, and annexation of East Jerusalem, had brought Arab East Jerusalem under Israeli civil law rather than military order. To get rid of Awad, the government could not rely on the emergency regulations that dated to British rule, such as were being used to deport residents from the territories, because the Knesset had decided in 1979 that these regulations did not pertain in Israel, now interpreted to include annexed East Jerusalem. The Interior Ministry maintained that, in Awad’s case, Israel’s Law of Entry pertained, in which a resident who remains abroad for more than seven years or who takes citizenship elsewhere can lose his or her Israeli residency. A petition filed by Awad’s lawyers, Avraham Gal and Jonathan Kuttab, assisted by Hebrew University law professor

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One explanation for erroneous accounts regarding Awad is proffered by Hisham Sharabi, who suggests that Israeli electronic intercepts of his telephone calls from Washington, D.C., to Tunis, imploring the PLO to let Awad try his strategy, may have distorted the view of Awad’s work. Sharabi, interview (22 February 1995).


David Kretzmer, argued that Awad’s absence from 1969 to 1983 for academic study and his acceptance of U.S. citizenship did not alter the fact of his East Jerusalem residency. They maintained that he had not entered the country in 1967 but was already there, was enrolled in the population registry, and had been provided with an identity card. After his three-month tourist visa expired in the autumn of 1987 and Israel refused to renew it—one of sequential visas he had used, each valid for three months—the question of deportation loomed. Without a residency permit and possessing only an expired tourist visa, the issue became one of whether the High Court would judge the Interior Ministry to have exceeded its authority.

Awad was arrested by eighteen policemen who arrived at his home on 5 May 1988, six months into the uprising. On 6 May, Prime Minister Yitzak Shamir ordered Awad deported. Shamir, a former member of the Stern Gang and defender of terrorism for Israeli purposes, released to the news media letters he had written about Awad in response to

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262Israeli civil rights lawyers expressed concern that the Interior Ministry’s broad discretionary powers might be used to revoke the right of residency for other East Jerusalemites. Andy Court, ‘The Interior Ministry’s Powers of Discretion’, Jerusalem Post, 6 June 1988. Indeed, Awad’s case set a precedent. While B’Tselem acknowledges that the practice of deportation from the occupied territories had ceased to be used as a punitive measure by the end of 1992, the ‘quiet deportation’ of East Jerusalemites continued apace. More than 2,000 Palestinians have lost their Jerusalem residency cards based on the Awad case. Asher Felix Landau, ‘Wife Who Followed Husband Lost Her Way Back Here’, Jerusalem Post, 12 June 1995, p. 7; Deborah Horan, ‘Palestine: Administrative Ethnic Cleansing in Jerusalem’, Inter Press Service, 30 April 1997; Rand Engel, ‘To Be Born in Jerusalem; Lately, Palestinians Find Their Right to Return Revoked’, Baltimore Sun, 23 March 1997, p. 1F.


264Neither Jewish ethics nor Jewish tradition can disqualify terrorism as a means of combat. We are very far from having any moral qualms as far as our national war goes . . . Terrorism is for us a part of the political battle . . . and it has a great part to play . . . [Our terrorism] is not aimed at persons, but rather at representatives, and therefore it is effective. If, in addition, it shakes the Jewish population out of its complacency—so much the better’. Yitzhak Shamir, Lehi underground journal HехaZZit, or The Front, summer 1943, reprinted from al-Hamishmar, 24 December 1987, as cited in Middle East Report 18:3 (May–June 1988): 55. On 17 September 1948, after flying into an airfield at Qalandia, ten kilometers north of Jerusalem, Count Folke Bernadotte, the Swedish UN mediator for Palestine, set out for truce headquarters and was assassinated. Yitzhak Shamir, a member of Lehi, successor to the Stern Gang, initially acknowledged Lehi’s role in arranging Bernadotte’s death, but after coming to political prominence, he was no longer willing to
correspondence from U.S. senator Claiborne Pell and Coretta Scott King pleading Awad’s right to remain in Israel. 265 Awad was ‘not a man of peace’, Shamir said:

Side by side with his protestations of non-violence he has asserted repeatedly and consistently in public speaking and in writing his support for the aims of the PLO. These aims are explicit and clear, the destruction of the State of Israel. . . . His description of himself as a disciple of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King is not only an Orwellian inversion of language but a gross insult to the memories of those great leaders. 266

Don Peretz and others note that Israeli officials thought Awad to be a key leader of the uprising, the ‘mastermind’, a perception that led them to move to have him deported. 267 Media adviser to the prime minister Avi Pazner called him ‘the main brains of the intifada’, alleged that he was one of the authors of the leaflets that served as ‘instruction sheets’ for the Palestinian uprising, and claimed that Awad supported the PLO’s armed struggle. 268 Internal Israeli security documents record Awad’s activity as ‘genuinely harmful to the public security and order’, and state that the ‘seemingly moderate image that the petitioner attempts to project is but a cover that is incompatible with his real objectives’. 269 Piracy of Awad’s writings by Palestinians may have abetted his deportation. A court document sworn by a Shin Bet agent using the pseudonym Yossi—who was assigned to collect information on Awad—described what he saw as Awad’s true designs:

a) Political objectives—the liberation of the Territories from Israeli rule and


265 Claiborne Pell, telegram to Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir protesting impending deportation of Mubarak Awad, Western Union (Washington, D.C., U.S. Senate, 9 May 1988), PCSN files, East Jerusalem.


the subsequent establishment of bi-national Palestinian-Israeli state that would be Palestinian in nature.

b) Activity that constitutes civil disobedience—he expressed his ideas on this subject even before December, 1987, and most of his ideas have been incorporated in the leaflets that have been published by all of the forces behind the uprising. . .

From the outset of the uprising in the Territories in December, 1987, his ideas began to find actual expression in the leaflets that were issued by the command of the uprising, resulting in actions taken by the inhabitants of the Territories.270

On 24 May, Awad issued a statement through Kuttab:

They say I authored pamphlet No. 15. I did not. They say that my centre gets money from the PLO. It does not. They say that I advocate violence. I do not. They say that I am working to get all of Palestine. . . . I favor a two-state solution. One state for the Palestinians and one for Israel.271

Placed in solitary confinement for forty days while appealing to Israel’s High Court, Awad’s first week in gaol was spent in Muscobiyya prison, also known as the Old Russian Compound, in West Jerusalem. Awad went on a hunger strike and stopped drinking water, as dozens of Palestinians and Israelis marched in protest outside.272 In response, Nancy Nye claimed, the authorities removed the mattress from his gaol cell.273 Kuttab asked him to

270 Ibid. The ‘Yossi’ affidavit was introduced to show that the image of moderation did not accord with the petitioner’s actual objective of liberating the occupied territories and establishing a binational Palestinian state. Court, ‘Court Delays Awad Deportation’; Asher Felix Landau, ‘The Mubarak Awad Judgment’, Petition of Mubarak Awad to the High Court, before Justices Aharon Barak, Gavriel Bach, and Shoshana Netanyahu; Judgment given by Justice Aharon Barak, Jerusalem Post, 10 June 1988.

271 Mubarak E. Awad, ‘Statement of Decision Not to Appeal the Deportation Decision of the Israeli Government’ (East Jerusalem, law offices of Jonathan Kuttab, 24 May 1988). Critics alleged that not until gaol did Awad ‘deem’ to accept a two-state solution. Nisan, ‘Political Euthanasia’. In December 1987, three days before the outbreak of the intifada, he addressed religious Jews at Beil Elisheva, and said, ‘I am not for a two-state solution, nor for a one-state solution’, adding that he lacked a political formula for solving the conflict. Fletcher, ‘Hecklers’. On 19 January 1988, he told Tikkun, ‘I am for a two-state solution . . . [in] a peace agreement’, expressing the hope that if the Palestinians had a state of their own, they could better rein in those who wanted armed struggle than they were able to do when occupied. ‘Interview of Mubarak Awad, Conducted 19 January 1988’, Tikkun, March–April 1988. Two years earlier, in 1986, he had accepted the 1969 goal of a ‘secular democratic state’ in all of Palestine. Grossman, ‘Palestinian Pacifist’. His dilemma of trying to teach nonviolent struggle without its dictating a precise political outcome would finally be relieved by the consensus in the intifada on a two-state solution: ‘The uprising is telling the Israelis that we want to have a two-state solution now. In a country that used to belong only to us, we are saying: “We want to live side by side with you” ’. Ruby, ‘Awad: Palestinians Must Tell Arabs to Accept Israel’.


273 Court et al., ‘Mubarak Awad Faces Midnight Deportation’.

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desist from his fast. As Awad’s attorney and the only person allowed to see him, Kuttab told Awad that although he was ‘fat enough’ to survive, ‘there are supporters outside who are skinny, like Edy Kaufman, who could die because of their sympathy fast’. As protesters swirled outside, under a mulberry tree in the parking lot of the compound professor Edward Kaufman ‘set a precedent, as a Jew, by joining an imprisoned Arab friend in a hunger strike’, protesting Awad’s gaoling. Director of the Harry S. Truman Institute for the Advancement of Peace at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Kaufman had earlier in the spring invited Awad to address his political science course on human rights. When Awad stepped on the stage, he was arrested by Israeli authorities.

The Jerusalem Post carried quotations from a New York Times leader suggesting that the Israelis should read Henry David Thoreau, who had found no inconsistency between his own studied opposition to slavery and John Brown’s failed rebellion at Harper’s Ferry—the implication being that Awad should not be negatively judged because violent elements were at work. Secretary of State George P. Shultz wrote a personal appeal to Shamir asking him to revoke the deportation. Blandishments by the U.S. State Department notwithstanding, it

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275 Kuttab, interview (17 June 1995).
277 Mubarak Awad, one-hour interview (East Jerusalem, 23 January 1996).
278 ‘Awad to Stay in Jail until His Deportation’, Jerusalem Post, 8 June 1988.
279 ‘Message to Shamir on Mubarak Awad’, cable instructions to American Ambassador in Tel Aviv to deliver message from Secretary of State George P. Shultz asking the rescinding of the High Court’s order to deport Mubarak Awad, and text of message, U.S. State Department, Washington, D.C., 6 May 1988. See also ‘Demarche to Prime Minister Shamir on Mubarak Awad’, memorandum from Assistant Secretary Richard W. Murphy to Secretary of State George P. Shultz on decision to deliver message from Secretary of State to Israeli Prime Minister opposing deportation of Mubarak Awad, U.S. State Department, Washington, D.C., 9 May 1988; ‘Action Memo: Israeli Court to Issue Decision on Awad’s Deportation Order, Sunday, June 5’, cable to Secretary of State George P. Shultz regarding public statements and demarches on Mubarak Awad’s appeal of deportation order while the secretary is traveling in the Middle East, U.S. State Department, Washington, D.C., 4 June 1988. Copies of these three declassified documents are found here in Appendix 9. Also see Wolf Blitzer, ‘Shultz to Return to Middle East Immediately after Summit’, Jerusalem Post, 10 May 1988; ‘Forced Exile: An Activist Is Deported’, Time, 27 June 1988; Brinkley, ‘Israel Upholds Expulsion’.
appeared that 'even the friendly Superpower is powerless in such cases', writes Yehuda Litani. On 5 June, the High Court ruled in a sixteen-page decision that Prime Minister Shamir, in his capacity as acting interior minister, could deport Awad, because East Jerusalem residents had the option of becoming Israeli citizens. The following night, twenty members of the peace group Israelis by Choice set fire to a copy of the declaration of independence of the State of Israel. 'This declaration lost all of its meaning today', said Gershon Baskin, director of the Institute for Jewish-Arab Coexistence.

Thomas Pickering, U.S. ambassador to Israel, told the prime minister that it was 'incomprehensible' that Israel should deport an advocate of Palestinian nonviolence; 'you need more Awads in Jerusalem ... not fewer'. Newsweek interpreted official U.S. concern as arising from the knowledge that between 2,000 and 3,000 Palestinians in the occupied territories held U.S. citizenship, casting light on the 'statelessness' of the Palestinians: 'Like thousands of other Palestinians, Awad chose to apply for and accept US citizenship in lieu of remaining “stateless”'. Awad's case also reminded observers that more than 300,000 Palestinians who had resided in the West Bank or Gaza were exiled in the months following the June 1967 war, and a sizeable number of those who had been temporarily abroad had not been allowed to return—a violation of the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention to many.

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280 Yehuda Litani, 'Splitting Images', Jerusalem Post, 4 July 1988. After his possible expulsion became public in late 1987, it was reported that the U.S. government had pressed Shamir not to deport Awad during a scheduled trip by the prime minister to Washington. 'Shamir Confirms U.S. Aid Will Probably Not Be Cut', Jerusalem Post, 25 November 1987. The deputy chief of mission for the U.S. embassy in Tel Aviv, Arthur Hughes, and the consul general in Jerusalem, Morris Draper, visited the centre and were photographed there. Ambassador Thomas Pickering told reporters that the embassy in Tel Aviv had 'taken a great interest' in the case. U.S. State Department spokesperson Charles Redman said, 'Mr. Awad is a leading advocate of change through non-violent means in the occupied territories, and in our view, has served as a moderating influence in a potentially volatile area'. Joel Greenberg, Benny Morris, and Wolf Blitzer, 'State Department Urges Israel Not to Expel Awad', Jerusalem Post, 19 November 1987, p. 1.


282 Court, 'Landmark High Court Ruling', postscript by reporter Ben Lynfield.

283 'Forced Exile: An Activist Is Deported', p. 32.

In solitary confinement, Awad had written a statement, dated 8 May 1988, which he asked his wife to read publicly if he were deported before it could be released:

During the past years I have succeeded as a Palestinian from Jerusalem in encouraging Palestinians and Israelis to walk together even if they don't accept each other's opinions. Most of the activities of the Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence involved Israelis, other Jews and Palestinians. Through their assistance and mutual cooperation many relationships developed. Is this the real reason for my deportation?

At a news conference at the National Palace Hotel in East Jerusalem on 8 May 1988, Nye read the statement: 'The seeds of non-violence have already spread, and we see them in the daily activities of the intifada as it moves towards a full campaign of civil disobedience'.

Before Israel's High Court, Awad said that he accepted the legitimacy of the Israeli state and judiciary because 'only peaceful means can achieve peace'. Although Justice Aharon Barak's judgement went against him, Awad's position was described as follows:

He believes in the existence of a sovereign Israel and a sovereign Palestinian entity, living together in peace and harmony. He went even further, and in an Israel Television interview . . . urged full reconciliation, including negotiations with the refugees for paying them compensation for their property, and the opening of a new chapter in the relations between the Jewish and the Palestinian peoples.

To the court, Awad said Israelis and Palestinians 'both must be winners; there can be no losers'.

You have the power, the law and the gun pointing in my face. I am armed with hope, truth and nonviolence toward your conscience. If the uprising will not open your eyes and soul to tell you we need freedom I don't know what will.

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285 'Silencing a Troublemaker'. Former Israeli attorney general Yitzhak Zamir concedes that international law forbids the expulsion or transfers of populations, but says expulsion of individuals is 'not forbidden', in Benny Morris, 'Rights and the Man: Interview of Former Attorney General Yitzhak Zamir', Jerusalem Post, 15 February 1988, p. 4. In 1993, Israel recognized a couple's relationship as the basis for family reunification and set a quota of 2,000 Palestinian families per year for whom reunification would be allowed. B'Tselem says the quota proved small, considering the tens of thousands in need of permits. In 1997, virtually no family reunifications were allowed in the territories. '1987–1997: Ten Years', pp. 16–17, 21.

286 'Statement of Mubarak Awad Released to the Press', 8 May 1988, Jerusalem (East Jerusalem, PCSN files).

287 'Blitzer, Court, and Shalev, 'Shultz Urges Shamir to Reconsider on Awad'. In his statement, Awad notes, 'My ideas have caught on, and everyone is trying to use them in different forms'. Joel Brinkley, 'Israel Weighs Appeal by U.S. Arab', New York Times, 24 May 1988, p. 8.

288 Landau, 'Mubarak Awad Judgment'.

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As a government Israel is doing all it can to rid Palestinians from their land.
As a Palestinian I never hated you. I don’t hate you now. And I will never
hate you.289

In claiming that if peace meant victory, then victory had to be for both peoples, he had
invoked an imagined sense of solidarity and separated the deed from the doer.

Israeli Reaction Spreads Awad’s Ideas

In response to the Israeli government’s decision to deport Awad, left-leaning opposition
MKs united in calling for a vote of no-confidence. It was defeated by a vote of 19 to 12,
with no Labour members present.290 On 13 June 1988, Awad was expelled from Israel, but
not without a fight over whether the news media could record his departure.291 Mounting the
steps to the waiting TWA aircraft, with his fingers he flashed a Churchillian ‘V’ to the
Israelis and Palestinians who had come to protest his departure.292 The ‘V for victory’ sign,
appropriated by children in the intifada and a ‘password’ required of adults, was one of more
than a hundred nonviolent measures suggested by Awad. Israelis by Choice announced that
they would hold a study session on nonviolence ‘devoted’ to Awad, outside the prime
minister’s residence. ‘It’s a way of saying that although Mubarak Awad is gone, his ideas
remain’, member Chaia Beckerman told reporters.293 Widespread was the notion that ‘Israel

289 Mubarak Awad, ‘Statement’, to Israeli High Court, in Cainkar and Goldring, Uprising in Palestine,
The First Year, p. 195.

290 Dvora Getzler, ‘No-confidence Motion over Awad Deportation Defeated in Knesset’, Jerusalem
Post, 16 June 1988. Labour’s MKs were elsewhere, forming their list of Knesset candidates. Ibid.

291 Andy Court, ‘Mubarak Awad To Be Deported Today’, Jerusalem Post, 13 June 1988. ‘A huge
police contingent was mounted at Ben-Gurion Airport, to screen him, God forbid, from the press here’,

292 Sidra DeKoven Ezrahi, interview (11 November 1994); Wolf Blitzer and Joshua Brilliant, ‘U.S.
Deplores Awad Expulsion’, Jerusalem Post, 14 June 1988. ‘Jerusalem would be a diminished place if Awad
were made to leave’, Ezrahi told a reporter, ‘If we deport someone who stands for the values of recognition,
non-violence and cooperation, who will be left to talk to?’ Calev Ben-David, ‘Awad’s Backers Vow to Carry
on His Work’, In Jerusalem, 13 May 1988. Ezrahi was a courtroom observer at Awad’s trial, for Israelis by
Choice, an ‘immigrant peace group’, so described because its members, mostly U.S.-born, had voluntarily

probably made a mistake by moving against Awad, a largely unknown Palestinian whose international stature was elevated by the deportation'. They quoted an unnamed official as concurring, 'We probably shot ourselves in the foot'. The Jerusalem Post argued:

If anything is clear about the Palestinian uprising, it is that it would have started, and picked up strength, without Dr. Awad ever leaving America’s shores to preach his gospel among, at first, inattentive Palestinians. If Dr. Awad in the meantime became something of a national hero to the Palestinians, it is Mr. Shamir who has thrust that crown upon his head.

The Israeli decision to expel Awad enhanced his credibility among the Palestinians, as his notoriety sped communication of his ideas to groups that he might otherwise have been unable to reach. The controversy bestowed on him by Israeli officials helped the Israeli public to learn in its own news media about a Palestinian debate to which only its political left had previously been privy. Five years after the initial distribution of his 1983 booklet, the ventilation of excerpts in the media familiarized the Israeli public with his ideas. Judging from newspaper reports and published letters to editors, such passages were often liberally distorted, and interviews with Awad created more upheaval.

Some quotations attributed to Awad were 'violently torn out of context' and distributed by the Prime Minister's Office, according to one newspaper. A communiqué thus issued included an out-of-context statement by Awad apparently taken from a document originating from Kiryat Arba lawyer Elyakim Haetzni. Another account stated that much of the Haetzni text was not spoken by Awad at all, but by another participant who was attending a meeting between Awad and Jewish students in Jerusalem, and from which the

294Blitzer and Ruby, 'Awad Embarks'.
initial taped misquotations were apparently taken. In clarification, the *Jerusalem Post* published a full transcript of the tape from which the incorrect quotations had been taken.

If newspapers can be believed, Elyakim Ha’etzni was the originator of the out-of-context quotations from Awad and also the lawyer who filed the legal petition to start Awad’s deportation. Evidently basing his action on news stories of Awad’s 1983 workshops, Ha’etzni was joined in launching the legal effort to expel Awad by ‘right-wing activist’ Shlomo Baum. Published accounts suggest that Ha’etzni considered Awad’s materials as ‘incitement’ and ‘sedition’, and that what especially angered him was Awad’s 1985 campaign for Palestinians to boycott Israeli products: ‘He [Awad] said, “Don’t buy from the Jews”. It was just like the Nazis’. Ha’etzni and Baum charged that Awad was one of the chief organizers and ideologues of the uprising. Ha’etzni filed legal complaints with Israel’s attorney general, but apparently no action was taken until 1987, when Awad was refused his new Jerusalem residence permit. The Tehiya party reportedly joined the legal process, as hawkish MKs Yuval Ne’eman and Geula Cohen prepared a petition saying that

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299 ‘Prime Minister’s Office Used Misleading Awad Quote’.


303 Franklin, ‘“Palestinian Gandhi” or Terrorist?’ For a sample of Ha’etzni’s writings, in which making peace with the Palestinians is equated with putting democracy to death, see Elyakim Ha’etzni, ‘The Limit of Obedience’, *Jerusalem Post*, 15 November 1992.


305 The contentiousness with which some Israelis responded to Awad was shown when *Ma’ariv*, on 13 May 1988, carried an article by Ilan Bachar alleging a police investigation of Awad. He was described as the ‘director of a hostel for released convicts’, referring to his youth advocate programme, and it was alleged that he used the ‘hostel’ for drug dealing, the profits of which were sent to the PLO. Andy Court, ‘High Court Ruling Expected Today on Awad’s Petition’, *Jerusalem Post*, 23 May 1988. In response, Awad filed a libel suit against *Ma’ariv*.

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Awad ‘incites against state security and is in the country illegally’. Supremacy's life was in
danger from Jewish extremists, warned MK Michael Eitan, from Likud’s Herut wing: ‘If
Awad is not deported, . . . certain quarters intend to shut him up’.

Disputatious news accounts also resulted in invitations that offered Awad and his
Israeli supporters chances to clarify his position, including in synagogues. A group of
U.S.-born Israelis telegraphed Secretary of State Shultz, ‘Mubarak Awad and others like him
who were born here must enjoy the same freedom of movement between the U.S. and Israel
that we do’. American immigrants to Israel formed an Ad Hoc Committee for Mubarak
Awad, to protest the revocation of his Jerusalem residency card. Awad voiced amazement
to Joel Greenberg: ‘What I haven’t done in years, the Israelis have done in a week’.

According to the Jerusalem Post, instead of tackling a ‘real threat’, Israel’s moves
against Awad had ‘besmirched’ Israel’s image:

Awad after all is not a terrorist. He seeks to represent the very opposite—non-
violence. To take action against that is simply embarrassing especially for a
country that constantly argues that the Palestinians, or those who presume to
represent them, must first of all renounce terror. . . . [W]hy target a seemingly harmless voice? Could it be that the very call by a Palestinian for non-violent
resistance to Israel [sic] rule is what most unsettles authorities?

Meron Benvenisti testified on Awad’s behalf, saying that Israeli law was not

306 Joel Greenberg and Asher Wallfish, ‘Tehiya to Petition High Court to Deport Awad’, Jerusalem

307 Greenberg and Wallfish, ‘Tehiya to Petition’.

308 Randi Jo Land, ‘American Immigrants Rally for Activist Awad’, In Jerusalem, 27 November 1987;

309 Greenberg and Wallfish, ‘Tehiya to Petition’.

310 Land, ‘American Immigrants Rally’.

311 Greenberg, ‘It Depends on What’s “Non-Violence”’. Bishara Awad, brother of Mubarak, said, ‘the
Israelis made a hero of him’. Franklin, “Palestinian Gandhi” or Terrorist?


Several MKs took issue with the official position in favour of deportation.\footnote{314}{MKs Mattiyahu Peled and Mohammed Miari of the Progressive List for Peace and Dedi Zucker of Citizens Rights raised their voices. Joel Greenberg, ‘Palestinian Activist Told to Leave’, \textit{Jerusalem Post}, 18 November 1987; Greenberg, Morris, and Blitzer, ‘State Department’.}

In the words of Yossi Sarid, extremism posed no problem:

\begin{quote}
There is no need to take it into consideration, and certainly no need to enter into a dialogue with it. All you have got to do is take aim at it. With moderation, there is a big problem. You must sit down and have a coffee with it. You must, eventually, make some sort of proposal. . . . [A] moderate Palestinian [like] Mubarak Awad—is always looked upon with suspicion, as a blood-thirsty PLO man, whose moderation is nothing but a ploy.\footnote{315}{Yossi Sarid, ‘Enemy Number One on the West Bank’, \textit{Jerusalem Post}, 22 October 1987. Israeli political scientist Yaron Ezrahi made the same point to 120 demonstrators: ‘Mubarak Awad is more dangerous to the Likud than Abu Jihad’, as he was ready to talk with Israelis. Court et al., ‘Mubarak Awad Faces Midnight Deportation’.}
\end{quote}

Awad’s case graphically raised the issue of the right of return. ‘His case highlights the fact that Palestinians born here and living in the West Bank and Jerusalem are subject to far stricter residency requirements than Jews who may never obtain citizenship in Israel, but come and go virtually at will under the Law of Return all their lives’, Elaine Ruth Fletcher writes.\footnote{316}{Fletcher, ‘Awad: Crucial Question’. The article quotes Daoud Kuttab to the effect that thousands of U.S. citizens were then residing on the West Bank and in East Jerusalem, no more than several hundred of them possessing the requisite identity card number in their U.S. passports, and many of them travelling on tourist visas.}

What Awad did \textit{not} represent may have been his true offence in Israeli eyes: ‘he does not represent an attitude of adjustment and submission. . . . Successive governments have sought a political myth—a representative local Palestinian leadership ready to capitulate’.\footnote{317}{Franklin, ‘What Makes Awad Run?’}

Awad’s ‘rich store of ideas was readily available to the Palestinian establishment in the territories, but for years it was sniffed at with disdain’, Schiff and Ya’ari
correctly note, pointing out that it was not until just before the outbreak of the intifada that a positive reference in a PLO organ finally cleared him of suspicion of association with the CIA. ‘Once the uprising broke out, it was the forty-five-year old Awad who held the key to the problem that troubled all the rest: how to advance beyond violent demonstrations to a wholesale rout of the occupation’.

Amos Gvirtz observes that Awad’s deportation raised the legitimacy of nonviolence among Palestinians.

Awad’s impact was described by a Palestinian youth who met Awad in 1986, at age twelve:

No one accepted his ideas of nonviolence. The Israeli settlers were confiscating our land, and Mubarak said we should sit on the land and plant trees. I tried hard to understand what this meant. Originally I agreed with the villagers that we should fight with weapons, but I stayed in touch with the Centre for the Study of Nonviolence, and they encouraged me to be involved. I was already active with Shabiba and Fateh. . . . I organized demonstrations, youth groups, and nonviolent activities against the soldiers and settlers, and spent two years on Israeli wanted lists, much of it in hiding. I learned the techniques of action from the Shabiba and Fateh, but my principles and ideas came from the nonviolence centre.

According to Jewish literature professor Sidra DeKoven Ezrahi,

It may be very hard to establish a direct connection between Awad the man and the course of the intifada, but Israeli officials are going to great lengths to do so. The forms of civil disobedience—refusal to carry Israeli IDs, to pay taxes or to show up for work on this side of the Green Line—that have proved so effective over the past few months are the legitimate expression of a national will radically unlike the terrorism that is universally condemned as gangster behaviour. . . . It is not only Mubarak Awad we are demonstrating for; it is a sense of human dignity that is being trampled underfoot by our stampeding tribesmen . . . lost in the xenophobic claims of collective destiny and chosenness.

Hanna Siniora, editor of al-Fajr, deemed Awad a victim of the uprising:

Before the intifada, people would say Mubarak Awad was an Israeli agent or a CIA agent, but the intifada brought the awareness that nonviolent resistance is more important than military confrontation. . . . Mubarak brought a new trend, but the intifada itself expressed that at the beginning without the help of

318 Schiff and Ya’ari, Intifada, p. 243.


320 Name withheld, one-hour interview (East Jerusalem, 13 December 1997).

Mubarak Awad or anybody else; however, Mubarak became a victim of the intifada because he was targeted by the Israelis for preaching nonviolence, and this targeting by the Israelis brought his ways to the attention of the people.\textsuperscript{322}

PFLP spokesperson Riad al-Malki is correct when he asserts that no one single person was behind the uprising, a statement that would be theoretically correct for all social movements.\textsuperscript{323} As Jonathan Kuttab observed about Mubarak Awad,

He did not attack the politicos, he totally ignored them and went straight to the masses. . . . He is a very unsettling person. . . . He has no fear. He has no respect for authority figures. . . . The beauty of his ideas is that they hit very fertile ground. . . . The Palestinians lacked an articulation and a connexion with a conscious, consistent strategy of nonviolence. There was nothing new about hunger strikes . . . commercial strikes . . . boycotting . . . self-reliance. The seeds have always been in the Palestinian community and practised, but were never articulated and consciously claimed as a strategy until Mubarak.\textsuperscript{324}

Israel’s targeting of Awad meant that he was no longer a nonconformist; he was, instead, in the same situation in which innumerable Palestinians had found themselves.\textsuperscript{325} As his ideas were broadcast through the deportation proceedings, he reached more Israelis, and international awareness of the Palestinian dilemma increased.

\textit{Conclusion}

\textit{Was} Mubarak Awad’s contribution merely interesting, rather than important? So David Hall-Cathala asserts.\textsuperscript{326} Official Israeli and Palestinian figures dismiss him, but the evidence suggests that his role in the historic uprising was significant. As Daoud Kuttab stated, ‘His ideas, thoughts, and conceptions worked because he was able to convince

\textsuperscript{322}Siniora, interview (16 December 1997).

\textsuperscript{323}Al-Malki, interview (3 May 1995). Malki says he read all three volumes of Sharp’s \textit{Power of Nonviolent Action} in one day, ‘because a friend had them’, but gives no acknowledgment to Awad. Ibid.

\textsuperscript{324}Jonathan Kuttab, interview (17 June 1995).

\textsuperscript{325}Calev Ben-David, ‘Little Impact Seen in Awad Ouster’, \textit{In Jerusalem}, 10 June 1988. On Israeli harassing of persons such as Awad, Susan Hattis Rolef notes: ‘They are a minority among their own people, and . . . struggle against other moods and trends, frequently at the risk of their lives. The odds for their success are low even if we do not try to stop them. We should have no interest in their failure’. Rolef, ‘Give Peaceful Resistance a Chance’.

\textsuperscript{326}Hall-Cathala, \textit{Peace Movement in Israel}, p. 184.
key people—it was not intrinsic. He has not received proper credit. It's no accident that the Israelis picked Mubarak to deport. Mubarak Awad’s literature—like the *samizdat* of the Czech and Slovak struggle—was distributed however possible. Boyhood friendships dating to school days at St. George’s aided the diffusion of his ideas into the circles of Feisel Husseini, Sari Nusseibeh, Musa Budeiri, and others around East Jerusalem and Bir Zeit. Explaining a system of principles that must be applied openly and without clandestinity, with assistance from Jonathan Kuttab, and aided by the theoretical studies of Sharp, Awad purveyed a catalogue of ideas, many of them borrowed from the Indian independence struggle and the U.S. civil rights movement. Utterly clear was the notion that anyone, young or old, male or female, rural or urban, could participate. To a community befallen by loss, ineptitude, and oppression, the idea of intentionally accepting pain, injury, or death without retaliation—the core specificity of nonviolent resistance—could not have been easy to explain. Yet not only did Awad contest the presumed efficacy of violence as a form of power, he undermined its logic and that of the basic bargain that had been struck in the late 1930s by both sides in the conflict to use violence.

In arguing philosophical norms that differentiated the antagonism from the antagonist and seeking redress for injustice rather than revanchism, he was paradoxically assisted by Israel’s moves to expel him. He had admitted that he had no political formula for resolving the conflict and was vulnerable, since he was not a member of a PLO faction. These liabilities were neutralized by Israel’s reaction, which instead lent credence to the arguments he had been making among the Palestinians, aroused some Israelis who said that it revealed moral turpitude to oppose someone who abjured violence, and for the first time moved U.S. officialdom to come to the defence of a Palestinian Arab.

While the three-room Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence spilled ideas from its cornucopia, its propositions spread—chiefly through its adaptation of Sharp’s

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327Daoud Kuttab, one-hour interview (East Jerusalem, 4 November 1994).

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insight that a people's submission to a military occupation is required for its sustenance. External influences percolated, affecting the mix of ideas and methods for resisting occupation, activating villages, buttressing other forces, and leading towards a conscious conclusion in the territories to reject the use of weaponry while rising up against the occupation. Awad’s printed materials and experimental exercises of nonviolent direct action reinforced developments concomitantly being led in other circles by Feisel Husseini, Sari Nusseibeh, and Ziad Abu Zayyad; thus, while one group of activist intellectuals was building the political parameters for the coming uprising, Awad was showing Palestinians how to rely on themselves and use simple techniques within their capacity. His interpretations of Sharp’s emphasis on self-reliance sped the diminution of expectations of outside help from the Arab world, a notion that would finally expire with the intifada.
Chapter Six

'NO VOICE RISES ABOVE THE VOICE OF THE UPRISING'¹

Identifiable forces leading to the intifada included nearly twenty years of civilian mobilization, the intellectual activism of an epistemic community groomed in nonmilitary struggle and purveying new ideas, and the spread of knowledge about theories of power from other social and political movements. In this chapter, the consolidation of these three pressures into a popular uprising will be considered. Accumulating grievances and misery also affected the outbreak of the intifada in 1987.

The year 1987 was the harshest in twenty years of Israeli rule, when beginning in the spring scores of Palestinians were detained without charge, universities were closed, deportations increased, and unarmed students were shot (one fatally) by Israeli soldiers.² In April 1987 at Bir Zeit University, a business student was killed, and others wounded when, according to Israeli security sources, armed forces opened fire to save two soldiers who had been ‘trapped’ by protesters throwing rocks.³ The incidents followed upon the burning to death of Ofra Moses, a pregnant Jewish woman, when her car was firebombed at an Israeli settlement near Kfar Sava.⁴ Friends and neighbours of the Moses family and other settlers rampaged, destroying cars and damaging homes in Qalqiliya, a near-by West Bank Palestinian town. The Palestinian prisoners’ movement initiated a three-week hunger strike by detainees demanding improved gaol conditions, triggering demonstrations among the 800,000 Palestinians under Israeli military rule on the West Bank and the 500,000 living in the Gaza Strip. The strikers were among four thousand Palestinians who sought recognition

¹Leaflets from the Unified National Leadership Command of the Uprising open with this proclamation on the masthead.


³Dan Fisher, 'Palestinian Student Killed in Clash with Israeli Forces at West Bank University', Los Angeles Times, 14 April 1987, p. 6.

as political prisoners, rather than as criminals.  

The actual ignition for the Palestinian mass movement came from the series of occurrences during 1987 that had added to a growing sense of calamity and embitterment in the occupied territories, such that the 9 December 1987 crushing to death of four Gazans at an Israeli check-point catalysed mass funerals and riots, touching off the territories-wide intifada.  

From the east and the west had come evidence of disdain for the Palestinians. An Arab summit in Amman, in November 1987, was concerned with the threat from Iran instead of the Palestinian dilemma, and news reports noted that Presidents Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev had failed to discuss the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during a summit meeting in Washington.

On 25 November, shortly before the Gaza incident that lit the fires of the intifada, a guerrilla from the PFLP-General Command of Ahmad Jabril crossed from Lebanon into Israel with a motorised hang-glider. Landing at an Israeli military post, he proceeded to kill six soldiers and wound seven others before being killed. Similarly, during the fourteen months prior to the start of the uprising, Islamic Jihad had carried out a series of ostentatious strikes in Jerusalem and Gaza; in one of them, seventy Israeli soldiers were wounded. Such sensational acts stirred the Palestinian populace. To journalist Elias Zananiri, 'the psychological impact was that it showed Palestinians that the Israelis were not invincible anymore'.

By 1987, according to Radwan Abu Ayyash, Palestinians had been driven into

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6Qliebo, Before the Mountains Disappear, p. 163. Qliebo notes the psychological impact of the provocations during 1987. When delegates arrived for the funerals of the Palestinians killed at the Gaza check-point, 'the gathering developed into a massive national demonstration of anger'. Ibid., pp. 164–5.


despair, turmoil, and anger because of Likud policies.

People exploded. . . They had to challenge everything—no food, no work, no freedom of thinking, of talking, of moving, nothing—so they said, 'What the hell are we doing? Are we going to die slowly?' . . . The young people were full of despair: no tennis shoes, no playgrounds, no gardens, no books, only roadblocks, check-posts, prisons, torture. 

Once the intifada erupted, the activist intellectuals and leaders of Palestinian factions began organizing to focus the energies of the Palestinian populace, and put to use the strategies of nonviolent struggle that had been building in the territories for years. 

**Intellectuals Guide a Mass Uprising**

**The Unified National Leadership Command of the Uprising**

Within the first two months of the uprising, the 1936–9 rebellion appeared to have been instructive, a political scientist at Hebrew University notes: unlike the 'great revolt', firearms were proscribed and civil disobedience paid handsome dividends, violent internal quarrels were avoided, a local secret committee sidestepped umbrella committees of figureheads, clever intellectuals played a significant role, and long-term objectives were identified. 

In the beginning, the intifada was entirely guided by local committees, many of them affiliated with PLO factions, and all of them outgrowths of the process described in Chapter Three. It was the success of these small entities, initially called 'support committees' and organized to respond to curfews, Daoud Kuttab notes, that 'triggered the establishment of a national Command that could continue to supervise donations and

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9Abu Ayyash, interview (29 January 1996).

10An early, relatively accurate comment on the feeding of ideas by the activist intellectuals during the intifada is found in Zvi Gilat, 'The Leadership of the Uprising', *New Outlook*, March–April 1988, pp. 11–13.


distributions', not only to formulate a strategy, but to control the situation so that no outside force could take over.\textsuperscript{13} The leaders of innumerable village support committees have never identified themselves, were not gaoled, and may never be known.\textsuperscript{14} A month of undirected uprising passed before the development of the Unified National Leadership Command of the Uprising, or al-Qiyada al-Wataniyya al-Muwahhada l'il-Intifada, when representatives designated by the four main secular-nationalist factions in the occupied territories—Fateh, the PFLP, DFLP, and PCP\textsuperscript{15}—began coordinating actions.\textsuperscript{16} As described by Fateh representative Hatem 'Abd al-Qader Eid:

We were five parties: Fateh, the Popular Front, the Democratic Front, the Communist Front (now the People's Party), and sometimes Hamas, but not all of the time. All the time, we were four, but if we had something dangerous, and they wanted to be involved, then we would invite one member of Hamas. . . . But they were not normally members of the Command.\textsuperscript{17}

There are a number of narratives to explain the Command's beginnings—a circumstance that is compatible with other mass movements where multiple chronicles often explain origins. The DFLP regards itself as the prime mover not only in the organization of the intifada, but in 'pioneering' the formalization of the Command, and the 'programming' of the uprising.\textsuperscript{18} Some contend that Samir Shehadeh, professor of Arabic literature at Bir

\textsuperscript{13}Kuttab, 'Profile of the Stonethrowers', pp. 21, 22.

\textsuperscript{14}See Litani, 'Protest in Territories', p. 1. Years later, Palestinians assert that leaders of the village support committees are still sought by Israel, including by sharpshooters working from lists that date to 1988. Interviews (West Bank, 1994–7).

\textsuperscript{15}The inclusion of the PCP on the Command on a basis equal to that of Fateh testifies to the influence of the numerically small party from 1969 onwards, as it led the way in political organizing.

\textsuperscript{16}Jarbawi, interview (16 June 1995). Notes Hiltermann, 'What is remarkable is that the entire population could be mobilized simultaneously, and that a support structure needed to sustain the uprising’s momentum came into being and functioned efficiently, with a leadership that was promptly accepted as legitimate by the population, in less than a month'. Hiltermann, Behind the Intifada, p. 173.

\textsuperscript{17}Hatem 'Abd al-Qader Eid, two-hour interview (East Jerusalem, 28 January 1996).

\textsuperscript{18}Muhammad Jadallah, two-hour interview (East Jerusalem, 15 December 1997). Jadallah, a physician who specializes in cardiovascular surgery is the co-founder and chair of the DFLP's Union of Health Care Committees. Hanna Siniora corroborates Jadallah's viewpoint: 'The younger generation of leaders from the Democratic Front were the first ones to act, people who later were exiled from the country, and they were the first to come out with the first proclamation. . . . Even Feisel [Husseini] at that time was not part of the intifada because he was in prison. People from Fateh joined the DFLP and the joint effort'. Siniora, interview (16 December 1997).
Zeit, brought back the idea of a unified leadership group from a chance meeting in Amman with Abu Jihad. Others regard it as the logical outgrowth of a preexisting and ongoing coordination committee. Informal coordination among the factions antedates the uprising; whenever a major issue was pending, a meeting would be called of representatives from the four main factions. ‘Coordination became regular and started to be called the unified leadership command of the intifada’, Ghassan Khatib noted, such that the leaflets of the uprising bore this name before consultations as a ‘command’ actually began. Fateh was the first to issue leaflets in the West Bank by the name ‘unified leadership command’; the PCP first used the name in Gaza; and later the DFLP applied the term, according to Khatib. This gave rise to ‘unified leaflets’, as the notion of a unified leadership settled. ‘Command’ meant coordination among the factions, as Khatib clarified:

This was not a leadership of persons, but of organizations. . . . Although the highest source of decision making was in the West Bank, there were joint meetings of the Command, many of which took place in Gaza, at the initiative of Dr. Haidar ‘Abd al-Shafi, and in many cases in his house. Representatives came with ideas from their groups, exchanged ideas, agreed on something, and went back to their groups, which started to work accordingly. . . . Individuals on the Command were not on a high level in their organizations, not even on the second level, but probably on the third level, because they were not meant to be a leadership. The leadership was in the factions and was not involved in the coordination on the Command directly as persons. The other reason for low-level persons was a security reason—it was known that they would be arrested, so instead of destroying the organizations, they ‘sacrificed’ persons whose arrest would not be harmful.

The strength and the weakness of the Command were one and the same. Its resiliency came from being multi-pronged and coalitional. It was egalitarian in allowing the key factions equal weight. By accepting each other’s representatives, Fateh, the PFLP, DFLP,
and PCP protected a corporate approach, even as individuals were detained; the Command could survive gaolings. The obverse was that it was ridden with disputes, mirroring the fragmented and discordant operating styles that had characterized the Palestinian response to the 1948 war and events of the three decades that followed. Its representative nature meant that it could not build a central, coherent executive body to make decisions on behalf of all factions. The major and most significant area of contention within the Command was also the issue that eventually became the most conspicuous contest between those in the territories and the PLO in Tunis, namely, the combining of military and nonmilitary methods of struggle, the classical theory traditionally advocated by Palestinian theorists.

As members of the Command were arrested by Israeli authorities, fresh delegates stepped in, newly designated by their factions. The Command survived at least four waves of arrests. Yet the moment would come when only one of the original members of the Command remained, all others having been incarcerated; Nusseibeh maintained that the Israelis always left one representative from the preceding group as ‘a hook’, therefore having

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25 This factor contributed to the eventual turn towards violence later in the intifada.

26 Daoud Kuttab notes, ‘One of the first decisions of the leadership of the Palestinian uprising when it started was that Palestinians will not use gunfire in their protest activities. The leaders of the uprising insisted on their position even when PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat threatened the possibility of ordering his supporters to use it [gunfire], if the Israelis didn’t lessen the oppression’. Kuttab, ‘Will Guns Be Used?’ dispatch to news media, East Jerusalem, ca. May 1988, Kuttab private papers. A policy proscribing the use of weapons was announced by the PLO in Tunis. The Jerusalem Post cited defence sources that ‘early in the unrest Israel intercepted secret orders from Palestine Liberation chief Yasser Arafat to supporters in the occupied territories not to use guns and bombs’. Peter Smerdon, ‘Israeli Army Fears Palestinian Rioters May Turn to Guns’, Jerusalem Post, 9 February 1988.

27 Fateh désigné Hatem ‘Abd al-Qader Eid has spent a total of six years in prison. Eid was locked up on six different occasions during the intifada, between 1987 and 1990, and spent time in al-Fara’a prison near Nablus, in Ramallah, Beersheba, and Ansar 3. Eid, interview (28 January 1996). He was never charged and, along with innumerable others, was held under administrative detention orders signed by the Ministry of Defense. ‘Yitzhak Rabin signed two of my orders; Menachem Begin signed two, and I think Shimon Peres signed another’. When he was in gaol, according to Eid, a representative stood in for him on the Command: ‘I had connexions with him, and we kept in touch. I knew everything’. Ibid. Born in 1955 in the Old City of Jerusalem, Eid studied journalism at Cairo University and was manager of al-Fajr from 1980 to 1990, during which time he worked with Feisel Husseini at Orient House, when the Arab Studies Society was producing materials on nonviolent struggle. Eid cites as formative influences on him Husseini’s speeches to Israelis, Husseini’s perseverance in making direct contacts with Israelis, and Mubarak Awad’s workshops and booklets. Eid was a member of the Palestinian negotiating team in Madrid, before being elected to the Palestinian Legislative Council on 20 January 1996. He stood for election on the Fateh list openly, as a former member of the Command. Ibid.

at least one person whose activities they could watch who straddled both the previous and current Command. This ceaseless interruption of arrests helps explain the wide variations in the experiences and perspectives of those who served on the Command. Fateh representative ‘Abd al-Fatth Hamayl recollects no face-to-face sessions of all four representatives, indicating instead that it ‘met’ every two days without actually sitting, and its members sometimes did not know each other. ‘It was like a circle’, said Hamayl, describing an arrangement in which the four representatives consulted two-by-two sequentially. Other representatives recalled meeting continuously: ‘We met weekly. . . . We met all the time. . . . If security was not good, the Command did not actually meet; but we were able to meet many times’, Hatem ‘Abd al-Qader Eid noted. The DFLP’s Muhammad Jadallah said, ‘You plan something and then meet with one of the factions, and then you move to the second, and so on. In the first few days it was not easy to have joint meetings. . . . at the beginning it was by lateral contacts’.

Following procedures similar to those of the communist cells of the 1950s, the representatives on the Command often communicated through couriers who went back and forth between the first and second representative, the second and third representative, the third and fourth, and back around from the fourth to the first again, relaying the thinking of the others, passing along argumentation, until a modicum of agreement was reached. Debates within the Command thus took place between ‘faceless interlocutors across the

29Nusseibeh, interview (5 November 1994).
30Hamayl was on 20 January 1996 elected as an independent from Ramallah to the Palestinian Legislative Council. Hamayl, interview (25 January 1996).
31Eid, interview (28 January 1996).
factional fence', as Nusseibeh puts it. The activist intellectuals advised the consultations unofficially, without sitting on the Command. According to Nusseibeh, '[A]n entire conceptual revolution was taking place, as committed thinkers, intellectuals and activists sought a way of harnessing the intifada to maximize its effects'. He observed,

The intifada leadership was able to do two things: to translate what was going on into tangible demands, that is, 'we're not striking to regain Haifa and Jaffa' (although in the first two weeks anybody would have said that it was to regain Haifa and Jaffa). Two weeks into the intifada, the leadership was able to formulate a coherent political message and to give it the vehicle of civil disobedience, or what I would call the implementation of the 'Jerusalem Paper'. This was an impressive achievement, and it went on for a couple of years.

Attempting to guide the intifada towards political goals, in addition to probing with Israelis for realistic solutions despite the penalties for such discussions, the activist intellectuals helped make the uprising a mass phenomenon, one in which they had as much at stake as anyone else. Potentially anarchic mass demonstrations or volatile reactions were channelled into coherent messages, as the publicly expressed demands emphasized the perspective of those under occupation: they wanted an end to Israeli military occupation, exercise of the right to self-determination, and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.

The Command's functioning was not pyramidal, imposing top-down instruction, but one of an ebb and flow of ideas and tactics. Daoud Kuttab contends that the Command was

33 Sari Nusseibeh, 'The Intifada: A Two-Year Perspective', speech given in Washington, D.C., November 1989, in Safieh, Palestine, p. 44. Nusseibeh explained, 'Let us say that you are a member of the unified leadership, a leaflet writer. . . . Someone came to say we want you to coordinate on behalf of Fateh. You know that someone chose you. That's it! You have meetings with the other representatives. How do you operate? Who is your leader? You don't know, because your leader is not going to tell you. . . . You come and speak with me. You see that I have some ideas. Maybe you will pick them up, or maybe you will not. You are given a working paper and asked what you think. You read it, and I read it. It circulates. People are communicating, but not directly. I would know you; you would know me; but I wouldn't necessarily speak with you openly about a problem or an idea that actually was being debated between you and me, through the working group'. Nusseibeh, interview (5 July 1994). Most Palestinians have never learned of all the persons who were representatives on the Command of the intifada.


35 Nusseibeh, interview (5 July 1994). A probable reference by Abu Iyad to the Jerusalem Paper appears in the Washington Post, in February 1988, the month it was initially faxed from Nusseibeh's office to Tunis. Jonathan Randal writes, Abu Iyad 'was impressed by a working paper on escalating the disturbances recently sent from inside the occupied territories', where, Abu Iyad said, 'they are highly conscious that victory inside should not be at the expense of those outside'. Jonathan Randal, 'Uprisings Invigorate PLO Leaders; Movement's Future Still Held Uncertain', Washington Post, 25 February 1988, p. A39.
‘a crucible for the population’s ideas rather than a leadership trying to impose its own predetermined ones’. This posture reflected the influence of the communists, whose membership ranks swelled once the uprising began. Recognized as a mainline faction in the PLO after the eighteenth PNC in 1987, they were philosophically committed to a strong role for the decentralized popular committees. Especially in the first two years of the intifada, it was the policy of the Command to share power and direction with the popular committees. Among the representatives on the Command were former prisoners—who had subsequently become students, teachers, or labour organizers—some of whom had become associated with the pro-Fateh Shabiba movement upon release. On this point Frisch is correct: the Command reflected a preference for representation that had been directly associated with the civilian mobilization noted here.

The most important functions of the Command were twofold: moving the centre of action from one location to another to distribute pressure and prevent fatigue, and creating different techniques of protest. The Command’s coordination exhibited more democracy than is reflected in the literature about the uprising or acknowledged by the PLO, because it was the only way to adjudicate differences between the factions and achieve unity. The leaflets from the Command reveal pragmatism in providing leeway to local organizers and in


40Frisch, ‘Middle Command’, p. 260.

41Kuttab, ‘Profile of the Stonethrowers’, p. 22.
issuing broad appeals rather than fixed orders.\textsuperscript{42} The development of a range of civilian leadership, culminating in the \textit{intifada}, transferred political initiative from the traditional leadership to the poorer classes, as members of the lower classes who had felt the effects of the occupation were able to sit on the Command and help lead the popular committees.\textsuperscript{43}

The Leaflets: A 'White Revolution'

The broad coordinating function of the Command during the \textit{intifada} was carried out through dated and numbered leaflets. On 4 January 1988, the first leaflet appeared in the Qalandia refugee camp and a few other locations.\textsuperscript{44} Qalandia was where Mubarak Awad and Gene Sharp had two years earlier hammered nails into a new youth centre while talking with young camp dwellers about the power possessed by ordinary individuals to fight tyranny and defend their way of life. The leaflet, printed at a print shop in Issawiya near the camp, was the byproduct of an ad hoc agreement between operatives from 'official' and 'unofficial' tendencies in Fateh.\textsuperscript{45} It was written by persons in Fateh, in consultation with Sari Nusseibeh, but without coordination with the other factions.\textsuperscript{46} The next leaflet maintained a continuity but was written by only one of the two signatories to the first, as the nationalist groups tried to keep up with the spontaneous surge in Gaza and offer direction for

\textsuperscript{42}Aronson, \textit{Israel, Palestinians and the Intifada}, p. 330.

\textsuperscript{43}Hillel Schenker, 'To Channel This Energy', interview of Azmi Bishara, \textit{New Outlook}, August 1988, p.18.

\textsuperscript{44}Ten Qalandia youths, interview (22 January 1996); Nusseibeh, 'Two-Year Perspective', p. 43.

\textsuperscript{45}Abu-Diab, interview (11 December 1997); Sari Nusseibeh, personal communication (East Jerusalem, 16 December 1997).

\textsuperscript{46}Khatib, interview (15 December 1997). According to Hilttermann, 'DFLP officials have claimed responsibility for establishing the UNLU [Command], but were upstaged, they contend, when a faction inside Fatah distributed a communiqué signed by the "Palestinian Nationalist Forces" in some areas of the West Bank . . . on 8 January 1988, despite Fatah assurances to the DFLP earlier that day that no decision had been reached on putting out a leaflet. The DFLP then issued a similar manifesto, naming it Communiqué no. 2 and signing it with the hitherto unknown name "Unified National Leadership of Escalation of the Uprising", on 10 January, reportedly after reaching agreement with Fatah. Further communiqués were coordinated by Fatah and the DFLP, and were signed by the Palestine Liberation Organization/Unified National Leadership of the Uprising. The PFLP joined the [Command] after Communiqué no. 3, a few days later, and the PCP joined after Communiqué no. 11 in March'. Hilttermann, \textit{Behind the Uprising}, p. 237 en 18.
the popular outpouring that was as massive as it was unfathomable.\textsuperscript{47} The third leaflet was drafted by Samir Shehadeh, who was officially involved for local Fatah, in consultation with Sari Nusseibeh, who spoke unofficially for Fatah, along with the DFLP.\textsuperscript{48} Nusseibeh noted,

The first two leaflets were created in total chaos with no clear policy, strategy, or coordination. . . . Everybody knew there was nobody in control. . . . The Israeli reprisal was so sudden, so intensive, so quick, that from a security point of view, it was just impossible to set up anything of lasting coordinating value to begin with. . . . With the third leaflet [to the PCP the fourth], you suddenly have organization. You can tell, actually, because if you look at the first two leaflets of the uprising, there was no format. Suddenly, with the third leaflet, you begin to have a format, and the format continues throughout two years of uprising.\textsuperscript{49}

This third leaflet is considered by the PCP to be the fourth, but by the Command to be its first.\textsuperscript{50} It was with this leaflet that the decision was made to drape the masthead with the mantle of the PLO, at the initiative of the DFLP, according to Muhammad Jadallah. He notes,

The most important leaflet was the second or the third. Somebody called it the third, but it is the second. The Democratic Front would call it no. 2, others would call it no. 3. . . . More than 100,000 copies were distributed in a matter of two or three hours in the West Bank and Gaza.\textsuperscript{51}

An activist of the DFLP, Muhammad ‘Abdullah Labadi, \textit{nom de guerre} Abu Samer,\textsuperscript{52} had

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{47}Nusseibeh, ‘Two-Year Perspective’, p. 44.
\item \textsuperscript{48}Nusseibeh, interview (13 December 1997). Shehadeh (no relation to Raja Shehadeh) was a professor of Arabic literature at Bir Zeit described by Agence France-Presse as a senior Fatah official. Hisham Abdallah, ‘Fatah Torn between Political Future and Revolutionary Past’, Agence France-Presse, 30 December 1993.
\item \textsuperscript{49}Nusseibeh, interview (5 July 1994).
\item \textsuperscript{50}No single account of the leaflets’ history is likely be agreeable to all factions due to variations in perspective and the fact that there can be more than one saga in oral histories of clandestine movements.
\item \textsuperscript{51}Jadallah, interview (15 December 1997).
\item \textsuperscript{52}Schiff and Ya’ari, \textit{Intifada}, pp. 106–10, 192–5. Labadi was deported in 1988. Dan Fisher, ‘Israel To Deport Ten Palestinian Activists’, \textit{Los Angeles Times}, 9 July 1988, p. 5. See Committee of Families of the Deportees, ‘Appeal of 13 August 1988: Trade Union Leader Muhammad Abdullah Labadi’, in Cainkar and Goldring, \textit{Uprising in Palestine, the First Year}, p. 315. Labadi’s confessions, upon arrest, are said to comprise the basis for the account of the leaflets in Schiff and Ya’ari’s \textit{Intifada}. The book is disregarded by Palestinian writers who claim that it is based on information obtained under duress, particularly material on pp. 106–11, and also pp. 198–219 of the chapter ‘The Unified National Command’. Ghassan Khatib claims, ‘It’s biased because those who got arrested first were the representatives of the DFLP—they were arrested first and they confessed first. Schiff and Ya’ari got their first information from Israeli intelligence, through the confessions of those persons. . . . The others, who were careful enough not to be arrested and strong enough not to confess, did not have the chance to put across their point of view, which is really ironic. . . . When this book came out during the \textit{intifada}, we were really frustrated because we knew that many things in it were incorrect, but we could not say that they were wrong. . . . The authors told me, “the sources are all from the written confessions of mostly Muhammad Labadi and members of the DFLP in Israeli gaols”. I myself have copies of some of
drafted what Ze'ev Schiff and Ehud Ya'ari call the first leaflet, but most Palestinians interviewed regard it as the second leaflet; others count it as the third.

In Gaza, says the PCP's Ghassan Khatib, the communist party took the initiative and brought out four communiqués, which the party believes laid the basis for the intifada, an effort led by Bassam Salhi, who would later be arrested and gaol for three years. In the PCP view, it was after the fourth Gaza communiqué that the enumerated leaflets began. The leaflets, nida'at, or appeals, were viewed by Fateh, the DFLP, and the PFLP—military factions with their origins in ideologies of armed struggle—as less directive in tone than bayan, 'manifestos' or 'declarations' that the same factions had previously issued to their cadres. Even so, the PCP regarded the leaflets as excessively directive in intonation, and as a result, the party formally withheld its endorsement of the first six enumerated leaflets. The PCP representative, Adnan Dagher, was asked by his supervisor in the party, Taysir Aruri, a professor at Bir Zeit University, to avoid language that militaristically gave orders. Each faction was responsible for the distribution of the leaflets to its constituency.

Having discussed in advance the issues to be presented in the leaflets, the DFLP representative might write the first draft one month, the PFLP representative write it the next, followed by the Fateh representative, with the PCP designated taking the initiative in turn, in rotation. If one were to lay the first eighteen month's leaflets alongside Mubarak Awad's 1983 booklet, with its appended translation of 121 of Gene Sharp's list of methods.

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54 Aruri, 'New Climate of Opportunity', p. 18. The leaflets were reminiscent in approach to the 1950s activities of the Jordan Communist Party, noted in Chapter Three.

55 Khatib, interview (15 December 1997).

56 Jadallah, interview (15 December 1997); Khatib, interview (15 December 1997).

57 Awad, Nonviolence; Sharp, Methods of Nonviolent Action, pp. xii–xvi.
substantial portions are immediately recognizable. Joel Greenberg describes the leaflets as strikingly similar to the organizing of sit-down strikes and home production of food expounded by Awad in camps and villages: ‘His ideas seem suddenly relevant, and the uprising strategists seem to be picking up his themes, formulating them in almost identical language’. Awad ‘denied helping prepare any of the uprising’s leaflets, but added, “If they use my writing, I’m proud of it”’. 

Often contradicting previous statements and sometimes internally illogical, the leaflets clearly reveal conflicts between the various leaflet writers. Disagreements about strategies and methods were frequent. Not only do the leaflets’ calls appear in various permutations—apart from Israeli counterfeits or competing Hamas leaflets—but paragraphs coexist in the same leaflet calling for knives or Molotov cocktails alongside others calling

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58 This is easily discernible simply by comparing a single section in Awad’s booklet, ‘Refusal to Cooperate’, with the first thirty some leaflets. Awad, Nonviolence (for which see, here, Appendix 7); Lockman and Beinin, Intifada, pp. 327–94; FACTS, pp. 90–136; Jean-François Legrain with Pierre Chenard, Les Voix du Soulèvement Palestinien, 1987–1988: Edition Critique des Communiqués du Commandement National Unifié du Soulèvement et du Mouvement de la Résistance Islamique, trans. Jean-François Legrain with Pierre Chenard (Paris, Centre d’Études et de Documentation Économique, Juridique et Sociale [CEDEJ]), 1991, passim. Awad’s urging of refusal to work as labourers in the building of Israeli settlements occurs in Leaflets no. 6, 9, 13, 14, 15, 18, and 19. Refusal to fill out forms, a type of cooperation with Israeli authorities, is found in Leaflets no. 17, 18, 19, and 26. Refusal to carry or produce identity cards is called for in Leaflets no. 18 and 19. Refusal to pay fines is noted in Leaflets no. 6 and 9. Refusal to submit requests for permits and licences is bade in Leaflets no. 13, 17, and 18. Refusal to appear when summoned by the police or civil administration occurs in Leaflet no. 26. Refusal to work as an employee of the military occupation is urged in Leaflets no. 6, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, and 20. Refusal to pay income taxes is specified in Leaflets no. 9, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, 20, and 26. Refusal to pay the value added tax or other taxes is asked in Leaflets no. 6, 9, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, 20, and 26. Refusal to accept house arrest, restrictions on travel, curfews, orders closing areas, or closed schools appears in Leaflets no. 13, 15, and 17.

The booklet’s concepts of self-reliance, of limited goals for specific actions, and of broadly preventing the authorities from accomplishing their aims are generally reflected in the Command’s leaflets. The idea of self-sacrifice—the literal meaning of the Palestinian fida‘iyyun, ‘self-sacrificers’, or guerrillas, of the 1950s and 1960s—is redefined in the booklet. The concept of sacrificing oneself is reconstituted in the leaflets as popular self-sacrifice by men, women, and children, and is usually aimed at specific injustices or survival.


61 Arguments among the leaflet writers went like this: Do you condone the attacking, throwing bombs or Molotov cocktails at civilians, or settlers, or soldiers, in the West Bank or in Israel, or knives, or whatever? Or do you only condone strikes? Nusseibeh, interview (28 January 1996). ‘There was always opposition, people wanting to make things violent, leaflets with two sides to them, and you must remember that . . . the mobilization Hamas was making wasn’t along these same lines’. Nusseibeh, interview (5 November 1994).

62 Shin Bet at times put out fake communiqués to bewilder and knowingly mislead the populace. Lockman and Beinin, Intifada, p. 327.
explicitly for nonviolent means.\textsuperscript{63} Such paragraphs reflect a compromise between those on the Command who wanted a reversion to violence and those who wanted adherence to the strategy of nonviolent resistance.

So that resistance could be sustained, feedback concerning the appeals contained in the leaflets was valued by representatives on the Command; the drafting of leaflets was preceded by intensive listening to what was being said in shops or markets, and the heeding of voices in the street, as people went about their daily rounds.\textsuperscript{64} Leaflets sometimes appeared in two or three editions, as word came back to the representatives that an appeal was too onerous to pursue.\textsuperscript{65} Once the general outlines of a direction had been agreed upon by the senior local leaders of the factions, who were not themselves on the Command, it was often intentionally left to their representatives on the Command to draft the leaflet. Leaflets would be recirculated for proofreading, to verify that factional viewpoints were accurately

\textsuperscript{63}After Leaflet no. 9 of 2 March 1988, fissures began to show on the question of arms, during a period said by human rights monitoring groups to have been characterized by a particularly brutal response from the occupying forces. Shehadeh, 'Occupier's Law', p. 29. See also al-Haq, Punishing a Nation, and idem, Nation under Siege (Ramallah, 1990). When differences between Palestinian communists and the rest of the Command arose over a proposed appeal for the use of Molotov cocktails, the communists urged the 'taming' of the uprising. Daoud Kuttab, untitled news report, East Jerusalem, ca. 10 March 1988, Kuttab private papers, confirmed by Ghassan Khatib, interview (15 December 1997). In Leaflet no. 11 of 19 March, although some calls from no. 9 are repeated, an additional bid asks for the raining down of stones, Molotov cocktails, and iron bars on Israeli soldiers and settlers. Legrain, Les Voix du Soulèvement Palestinien, p. 60; Joel Greenberg, 'Latest Leaflet Calls for Attacks on IDF, Settlers', Jerusalem Post, 23 March 1988, p. 1.

\textsuperscript{64}Acclaim for the Command was high, as shown by an amusing incident at a supermarket in Beit Hanina. 'The shops were supposed to close at 1:00 o'clock, but one shop used to stay open an extra thirty minutes. One day, when a woman was lingering towards the close of business, the owner told her to hurry because he had received a threat from the leadership of the intifada. She was excited and wanted to see the threat—the people usually wanted whatever contact they could make with the anonymous Command. When the shop owner showed her the warning, she studied it closely and recognized the handwriting. The “threat” was from her nine-year-old son, who had written that the proprietor had better stick to the hours set by the intifada'. Jonathan Kuttab, interview (5 November 1994).

\textsuperscript{65}Malki, interview (3 May 1995). Also see Tamari, 'Sociological Perspective', in Ateek, Ellis, and Ruether, Faith and the Intifada, p. 20. This fluidity is borne out by Legrain's compendium of the first year's leaflets, in which, for example, three versions appear for Leaflet no. 10, not counting Israeli counterfeits. Legrain, Les Voix du Soulèvement Palestinien, p. 50.

reflected. The Marxist jargon of third world revolutions that had been disappearing from the Palestinian discourse in the occupied territories throughout the 1980s, as noted in Chapter Four, is not to be found in the leaflets. Instead, they manifest the strategic debate discussed in the previous two chapters, with an Islamic undercurrent, and each begins, 'In the name of Allah, the beneficent, the merciful'.

Assembled in East Jerusalem, the proposed leaflets were faxed by Sari Nusseibeh, from an office that had belonged to his late father, to customary intermediary Abu Tariq, or Muhammad Raba‘ia, in Paris. Abu Tariq, in turn, sent them to Tunis. Nusseibeh regarded changes made in Tunis as minimal, especially in the beginning, when they 'dared' not make many suggestions. There were, however, occasional disagreements with the PLO in Tunis. Hatem ‘Abd al-Qader Eid recalled,

After the end of the war between Iraq and Iran [8 August 1988], we were

66Sari Nusseibeh's secretary, Hanan Gheith, who was graduated from a secretarial school run by his mother, Nuzha, typed many of the leaflets. 'I appointed her as secretary at the beginning of the intifada, when I was running [the Holy Land Media Press Centre], so she typed a lot of the leaflets. She may have been the person who typed the Husseini Document, drafts of the Jerusalem Paper, and other things'. Nusseibeh, interview (13 December 1997).


68More than 100 telecopier facsimile machines were in use in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Telephone links had to go through PLO 'stations' in Europe, because there were no direct phone connexions to the occupied territories from any Arab country. Mushahid Hussain, 'Faith in the Intifada', Jane's Defense Weekly, 24 March 1990, p. 556. Access to telephone lines for journalists and others was rigidly controlled, and a ban on fax machines in the West Bank was introduced in June 1991. Taher Shreiteh, a free-lance reporter who worked for Reuters, CBS, and the New York Times was gaoled for failing to report that he owned a fax. Jonathan Ferziger, 'Palestinian Journalist Held on Charges of Hiding Fax Machine',UPI, 18 February 1991; Caroline Moorehead, 'Israel's Censors under Scrutiny', Independent, 19 October 1992, p. 11. Aronson offers a third-hand account of the faxing process, in which organizations represented on the Command would each present a draft for each leaflet, rather than taking the lead in rotation, as noted here. According to Aronson, a single revised draft version was faxed or sent by courier to the PLO for approval. The approved draft would be faxed back to the West Bank, where a final draft would be prepared after listening to commentaries broadcast on PLO transmissions from Baghdad. Aronson cites al-Hamishmar, 19 October 1988, Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), 20 October 1988, in Israel, Palestinians and the Intifada, p. 331.

69Nusseibeh, interview (28 January 1996). This is corroborated by Joel Brinkley: 'The underground leaders—a rotating group of senior activists whose names are a closely held secret—are essentially on their own, too. Before they distribute the latest leaflet, they fax copies to P.L.O. headquarters in Tunis for comment. And though they consult with P.L.O. leaders on “foreign policy” matters—how to respond to this or that international peace plan, for example—the leaders in the occupied territories are not afraid to ignore the P.L.O.’s advice'. Joel Brinkley, 'Inside the Intifada', New York Times, 29 October 1989, section 6, p. 6.

70Mahdi ‘Abd al-Hadi, interview (13 December 1997).
happy to see the end of the war and sent a fax to Tunis. Abu Ammar [Yasir Arafat] sent his answer: say that Iraq was victorious over Iran, and that we Palestinians were happy that Iraq was the victor. . . . I called a meeting of all of the parties in the Command, told them about the fax, and that Abu Ammar wanted a change. All four parties refused. They said that they were not against Iraq and not against Iran, but were simply happy that the war had ended. They refused to change the leaflet. . . . I faxed Abu Ammar that I would not change it. . . . This happened many times. 71

Conflicts occurred over leaflets after agreed-upon versions had been released. Nusseibeh recalled a leaflet that referred to a ‘white revolution’:

I assumed that the term ‘white revolution’ had spread [to Tunis]. 72 I was surprised that it got through [Tunis]. Later, I discovered that in re-publishing this leaflet—in one or two of the magazines published outside by the PLO—one of the changes introduced in the re-editing was that this was deleted, a kind of interference. . . . 73

I remember thinking at the time, that is influencing the spirit, because the use of ‘white revolution’ was very conscious in trying to convey to the people . . . that the intifada was an unarmed revolt. It was a conscious use of that term, and the elimination of it was also a conscious elimination of it, to show that unarmed revolution is just a phase in this process.

Divisions of opinion persisted for the duration of the uprising. According to Eid, Fateh wanted to keep the political door open, but others wanted to shut the door and said we needed violence. . . . I sometimes refused to sign the bayan [calls], . . . not only on throwing stones, but about throwing Molotov cocktails, or opening fire on the Israelis. Bombs and any military activity, I refused, and Fateh refused. Part of the Command wanted to make the intifada military. I thought, this is not good for us—the intifada must be popular, civilian, not war, some stones, maybe a demonstration, but not opening fire, not throwing bombs. . . . It was our policy in the Command. Without me, they could not put it in the leaflet [but] Fateh was bigger, and without Fateh, [those wanting armed struggle] could not do anything. 74

Displaying an ‘astonishing degree of independence’, those affiliated with the PLO in the territories ‘turned out to have views of their own and a capacity for action not contingent on the authority of headquarters’. 75

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71 Eid, interview (28 January 1996).

72 According to Mahdi ‘Abd al-Hadi, Feisel Husseini took the term ‘white revolution’ from Abu Jihad, who, he says, first used it pertaining to the Palestinians in the occupied territories. By Hadi’s account, Abu Jihad had said, ‘This white revolution will not ask clean hands or dirty hands; it will ask all hands’. Hadi, interview (13 December 1997). Earlier, Gandhi had written, ‘I have no manner of doubt that, if it is possible to train millions in the black art of violence, which is the law of the beast, it is more possible to train them in the white art of non-violence which is the law of the regenerate man’. M. K. Gandhi, Harijan, 30 September 1939.


74 Eid, interview (28 January 1996).
upon direction or support from abroad'. Youths in Palestinian refugee camps confirmed the dynamic: 'The shebab are widely assumed to be linked to the PLO. But they appear to operate with relative autonomy'. Kuttab told a foreign correspondent that the PLO 'leave it up to their local people to decide whether the people are up to it or not. . . . It doesn’t take long for people working in these situations to be mobilized without somebody pushing a button in Tunis'. As Salim Tamari notes, the uprising ‘ended the period of waiting for instructions from outside, and the Palestinian people were able to assume the reins of the decision making from inside’.

A Think Tank and ‘Official’ and ‘Unofficial’ Local Fateh

Reuven Karniner has contended that nonviolent resistance fared poorly in the rocky terrain of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict because ‘there was no important, organized group which adopted these concepts as the starting point for their political program or strategy’. Apparently, in Karniner’s view, the communists were not ‘important’ enough to qualify, yet there remains an element of truth in his observation. The evolution of an alternative school of thought on the securing of Palestinian rights and the ending of the military occupation—particularly among the East Jerusalem and Ramallah circles of activist

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75Ya’ari, ‘Runaway Revolution’, p. 30. Power shifted to the territories, Daoud Kuttab notes. ‘The power of the new [C]ommand will be reflected in the much stronger position that the occupied territories will play in the internal power structure of the PLO. . . . [which allows] the [C]ommand the discretion to decide how best to move things locally. On the other hand the local command is willing and happy for the PLO to reap the political gains’. Daoud Kuttab, ‘Six-Month Anniversary of the Intifadah’, East Jerusalem, May 1988, Kuttab private papers, pp. 8, 9.


77Ibid. Helena Cobban suggests that a ‘shift in the centre of gravity’ was accelerating from 1977 onwards and quotes Khaled al-Hassan as saying in 1983, ‘I think now that the people inside, they have more weight than we have. Their support to us gives us the international legality. . . . They are the only source left to resist’. Cobban, Palestinian Liberation Organisation, pp. 257, 258.


79Kaminer, Politics of Protest, p. 128.
intellectuals—reveals a slowly growing critical mass of persuasion that there was no other way but a nonviolent political approach. Behind the Command stood perhaps twenty Palestinian activist intellectuals who were responsible for the direction of the intifada as a predominantly nonviolent political movement, and would later be called a 'think tank' political committee. They were at the core of a larger group of perhaps one hundred local individuals who were involved in the 'running' of the intifada—twenty or thirty from each of the four main factions, plus individuals who were independent.

As previously noted, sources ranging from PLO officials close to Yasir Arafat to Israeli scholars have asserted that leaders in the territories did not make strategic decisions, but only executed decrees drawn up elsewhere. Hillel Frisch correctly notes that the uprising's leadership was made up of middle-level representatives of the main PLO factions, yet he misperceives them as control units accustomed to carrying out orders received from outside the territories. Such an interpretation may be based on the supposition that factional allegiances overrode all other factors, or it may be a generalization based on the hierarchical structures of military cadres, whose rubric, devised in Tunis, was military. In speaking of the intifada, one official in Tunis compared the role of the outside leadership to that of a battalion commander who gives the orders but consents to company or platoon commanders using their own initiative. Although the premises of military-style organization and factional loyalty comprise part of the saga, they miss the more significant development in the territories by failing to note the interaction between the Command and the people of the popular uprising. The greatest deficits of such interpretations are, one, the failure to understand that most of the

80 Jadallah, interview (15 December 1997).
81 Ibid.
82 Frisch, 'Middle Command', p. 262; Mustafa (Mejdi) Showkat, two-hour interview (Gaza City, 24 January 1996). Showkat has worked closely with Arafat for many years.
83 Frisch, 'Middle Command', p. 254.
decisions during the first two years, and into the third year, of the intifada were emanating from the epistemic community of East Jerusalem activist intellectuals and the concentric circles around the Command within which the conclusions were drawn, and, two, to fathom the nature of the interplay between the Command and the local popular committees.\(^{83}\) In addition, they miss the way in which, during the intifada, as Nusseibeh notes, the Palestinians came to realize the link between ideas and the action manifesting those ideas.\(^{86}\) As Jonathan Kuttab explained,

The intifada introduced the attitude that everything is ‘tryable’. When the Israelis once stopped petrol supplies to Jericho, I filled my car with petrol and drove to Jericho to share it with whoever needed it. A baker hung a sign, ‘If you know anyone without food, take as much bread as you need’. No one was paying him to do this, and there was no accounting. In the refugee camps under siege, youths would throw stones as a diversion so that food trucks could come in the rear entrances to the camps. Nothing else in the Arab world compares with the intifada. We were all unified. The absence of hierarchism was also different from Arab culture. Its spontaneity was different from Arab culture.\(^{87}\)

Meetings of the so-called think tank took place in different locations. Although the locale for all of the sessions will never be known, the group sometimes gathered at the Ramallah home of Hanan Mikhail Ashrawi, a political independent and dean of the Faculty of Arts at Bir Zeit.\(^{88}\) The factions were represented, along with nonpartisan academicians and

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\(^{83}\)One journalist, Ned Temko, grasped the equation: ‘The intellectual direction of the uprising is being provided in large part by West Bankers in their twenties or thirties who, as students in high schools and universities, helped coin a distinctly local brand of Palestinian nationalism. Their avowed aim is to force the establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza that would be independent both of Israel and of the neighboring Arab states such as Jordan. Their reasoning is that the present uprising—deliberately avoiding the use of gunfire in favor of stones and roadblocks—has offered an unprecedented chance to galvanize world opinion for such an option. But on the front line, the unrest is being spearheaded by Palestinians in their mere teens, or even younger, . . . still subject to the discipline of its political strategists. On the crucial decision not to use firearms, the line is holding firm’. Ned Temko, ‘In Israeli-Occupied Lands, Youths Lead Charge. Palestinian Parents and Israeli Army on Defensive as Teen-Agers Lead Unrest’, Christian Science Monitor, 15 March 1988.

\(^{84}\)Nusseibeh, ‘Midwife at the Birth of a State’, p. 40.

\(^{85}\)Jonathan Kuttab, interview (5 November 1994)

\(^{86}\)Ashrawi would subsequently, with Feisel Huseini, become a surrogate for the PLO in meetings with U.S. secretary of state James A. Baker III in the months leading up to the October 1991 Madrid conference, a time during which the government of Israel still proscribed contact with the PLO.
professionals. Its ranks included the surgeon Mamdouh Aker, Muhammad Jadallah, Zahira Kamal as head of the Federation of Women’s Action Committees, Ghassan Khatib, the educator Khalil Mahshi, Riad al-Malki, and Sari Nusseibeh. Recalled Jadallah,

There were twelve or thirteen: six or seven people, sometimes nine, who were fixed, and four were coming and going. . . . There were two people from the Democratic Front, there was one from the People’s Party, and one from the Popular Front. Of the independents, there were four or five. The Fateh people sometimes came in one, two, three, or four. The reason that they came like that is that they had to show that they were the majority and had the right to be represented by more than one. Secondly, they had to satisfy many people within Fateh.

In addition to moulding the political presentation of the uprising, formulating ideas, and funnelling concepts and options to the Command, the think tank also assembled an informal speakers bureau. It arranged for speakers on the intifada to be empanelled at international seminars and conferences, meet with diplomatic envoys, be available to the news media to speak on the record, maintain dialogue with Israeli peace organizations, and shape an information campaign, including overtures to Israeli public opinion.

A similar group, often allied with Bir Zeit, developed the political approaches that

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89See Wallach and Wallach, ‘Mamdouh Aker’, in New Palestinians, pp. 164–84. Six months into the intifada, Aker stated, ‘We will not allow an Arab leader to make a demand for a Palestinian state in all of Palestine at a time that we Palestinians are asking for a two-state solution, neither will we accept anything less than a Palestinian state and our right to self determination’. Kuttab, ‘Six-Month Anniversary of the Intifadah’. Aker and Mubarak Awad were among the activist intellectuals who believed that the intifada should be kept independent from the PLO and the terms of reference for the Palestinians should be entirely defined inside the territories. Mubarak E. Awad, communication (Washington, D.C., 26 March 1998). Also see Mamdouh Aker, ‘The Correct Diagnosis: A Doctor’s View of the Unrest’, Jerusalem Post, 10 February 1988, p. 10; idem, ‘Dialogue Instead of the Cycle of Suffering’, Jerusalem Post, 7 March 1988, p. 2.

90By the time of the intifada, the federation Kamal led, noted in Chapter Three, had more than 5,000 members and 107 centres throughout the occupied territories, with much of its activity stressing the generation of income. Warnock, Land before Honour, p. 145; Hiltermann, Behind the Intifada, p. 151.

91Ashrawi, This Side of Peace, pp. 50–51.

92Jadallah, interview (15 December 1997).

93Ashrawi, This Side of Peace, p. 51. Papers were secretly circulated to elaborate different angles, suggest nonmilitary ‘strike forces’, determine how to handle the news media, and resolve financial issues. For example, ‘Lively discussions were held on whether a declaration [of independence] should follow upon or be complementary to the call for total civil disobedience’. Nusseibeh, ‘True People’s Revolution’, p. 18.
Fateh might pursue. It included author Izzat Ghazzawi,\textsuperscript{94} the professor Samir Shehadeh, and Samir Sbeihat, formerly head of the Bir Zeit student council.\textsuperscript{95} Nusseibeh, also involved with this group, claimed that one reason such a force could develop within Fateh to call the shots for the \textit{intifada} was that there was little ‘infrastructure’.\textsuperscript{96} A mechanism developed that came to be known as ‘unofficial’ local Fateh, as explained by Hanna Siniora, another participant:

Sari was never official Fateh. I was never official Fateh, although we were Fateh-leaning. Official Fateh was . . . underground; we were above ground. We tended to talk to the general public and not to partisans, because we felt that we had to talk to all the people, not just the party people, including Israelis. We encouraged dialogue and talking with everyone. . . . We became known as ‘local’ Fateh because we were working with the Fateh leadership outside.\textsuperscript{97}

Neither Nussejbeh nor Siniora had risen through the military cadres. They declared themselves independent, stood on their own stature, spoke from their individual credibility, and ‘never were party men’.\textsuperscript{98} According to Nusseibeh, there was a rift between the ‘official’ Fateh organization and the ‘unofficial’ Fateh group. ‘The people who were in charge of the official Fateh organization were not [involved in] the direction of the \textit{intifada}, as was the unofficial Fateh organization’.\textsuperscript{99} Nusseibeh commented,

Hanna Siniora—somebody who is always well known and has always been a spokesperson [for] Fateh, or thought of as such—even so, was never a part of the organization of Fateh. On the other hand, if I were to mention a name from


\textsuperscript{96}Nusseibeh, interview (13 December 1997).

\textsuperscript{97}Siniora, interview (16 December 1997).

\textsuperscript{98}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{99}Nusseibeh, interview (13 December 1997).
the Fateh organization at the time, it wouldn’t necessarily be recognized because the person wouldn’t have been a public figure, such as Hanna Siniora. So there [was] this constant division.100

In every city or town, there was an ‘official’ Fateh leadership, and in East Jerusalem it included Feisel Husseini and Radwan Abu Ayyash.101 In Ramallah, there was a comparable ‘official’ group.102 Such a division was probably a deliberate attempt to curtail the influence one individual could wield and check power, Nussseibeh suspected:

Maybe it wasn’t conceived of to be like this . . . but eventually this is how it ended up, with the head separated from the body . . . for Fateh . . . The ‘head’ was the people in the forefront, like Hanna Siniora. Other people were in the grass roots, building organizations. Sometimes you had people crossing, coming in and going out, but, basically, the division was there. And, in general, just at the outbreak of the intifada, there were a lot of people who were not happy in Fateh, were not happy with the situation as it was, not happy with how the organization was run.103

Although Nussseibeh was not part of official Fateh, he was closely connected to the organization, such that he became entrusted with some of its funds and could communicate with the diasporan leadership on the local organization’s behalf.104 Nussseibeh granted that,

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100Ibid. As one example, on 7 January 1988, when civil disobedience was proffered by Siniora in response to the deportation of nine Palestinian activists, factional spokespersons immediately undermined the proposal for boycotting Israeli-made cigarettes and soft drinks. A campaign of nonviolence might be effective, said one, but not if led by those ‘who did not get their hands dirty’ in street protests. ‘It’s very important where this idea comes from’, claimed the detractor; ‘there’s a gap between the people who meet the foreign press and the people you see throwing stones or getting killed’. Moffett, ‘Israel Sends Four Palestinians Packing’; idem, ‘Palestinians Try Civil Disobedience to Protest Israeli Deportations’, Christian Science Monitor, 8 January 1988. Regardless, Siniora noted that the boycott of Israeli products was successful, as proved when several Palestinian companies that had benefited from punitive sanctions against Israeli firms went bankrupt as the boycott tapered and Palestinians reverted to purchasing Israeli goods. Siniora, interview (16 December 1997).

101Noted Siniora, ‘The Fateh organization realigned itself behind Feisel when he was released; . . . there was always competition between Feisel and Radwan Abu Ayyash, [later] deputy minister and in charge of the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation. Radwan was part of the organized official intifada leadership. Eventually he carried a dual role. He became a public figure as well as having excellent connexions with the underground party organizations’. Siniora, interview (16 December 1997). On their competitiveness, see Jon Immanuel, ‘Husseini Rival Sets up Group to Promote Alternative Voice’, Jerusalem Post, 19 June 1992.

102Siniora, interview (16 December 1997); Nussseibeh, interview (13 December 1997).

103Nussseibeh, interview (13 December 1997).


Couriers brought funds from the PLO into the territories to help finance the uprising and meet the income needs of striking municipal workers and government employees, subsidies for the unemployed, and
in the ‘channel of Fateh’, he was ‘if not in control, at least in charge or in the know-how of everything’.105 According to Siniora, Nusseibeh ‘supervised’ the intifada. ‘Sari Nusseibeh for a certain period actually managed to have the leadership of the underground in the palm of his hand, and he guided the intifada for the first two years’.106 One of Nusseibeh’s roles was that of oversight for the leaflets, which came out of the ‘body’, although they were guided by the ‘head’.107 ‘I wasn’t actually writing something myself in the leaflets. They often showed them to me and I would react ... and would have to give final approval. I am not sure actually at what point this began ... maybe by the eighth, ninth, or tenth leaflet’.108 Nusseibeh credits Izzat Ghazzawi and a group in Ramallah, which included Samir Shehadeh and Samir Spehat, with the actual writing.109 In sum, says Nusseibeh of his part in the intifada,

I tried, basically, to make use of [the] volcanic eruption. ... [to] give it a form that [was] presentable and understandable. Secondly, to make sure that this [was] the thing that would in fact lead eventually to a settlement with Israel, not to just have [the intifada] for its own sake—a heroic event in the life of Palestinian history— not another sacrifice. It had to lead somewhere. ... 

The only real change, if you like, was only among the élites, in Fateh,

stipends for students and families of martyrs. Israel tried to stanch the flow by limiting the cash that could be brought by visitors to the territories, because most intifada money was carried in small quantities by numerous returning residents. None of these funds were used for weaponry, according to Peretz, in ‘Intifada and Middle East Peace’, p. 391. In February 1988, moves were made to prevent any Palestinian from bringing into Israel or the territories more than $1,000. Joel Greenberg, ‘Goren: Move to Slash PLO Funds to Areas’, Jerusalem Post, 15 February 1988, p. 2; idem, ‘Screws Turned on West Bank Tax Collection’, Jerusalem Post, 18 February 1988, p. 1; Jonathan Randal, ‘Palestinians See Uprising Losing Momentum, but Vow to Continue’, Washington Post, 13 May 1988, p. A30. In March 1988, money-changers who regularly crossed the Allenby Bridge with $36 to $45 million in cash and cheques each way were refused passage. Andrew Whitley and Tony Walker, ‘A Shift from Stones to Sanctions’, Financial Times, 28 March 1988, p. 20. Funds declined as Israel restricted the sum that could be repatriated. ‘In October 1987, incoming funds totalled 3.3 million [Jordanian] dinars and $12 million; in October 1988 this dropped to 1,958,000 dinars and $400,000; and in October 1989, the figures were 262,700 dinars and $7,700’. Aryeh Shalev, ‘The Second Year of the Intifada’, The Middle East Military Balance, 1989–1990, ed. Joseph Alpher, with Ze’ev Eytan and Dov Tamari (Tel Aviv, Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, 1990), p. 148.


107Nusseibeh, interview (13 December 1997); Nusseibeh, communication (16 December 1997).

108Nusseibeh, interview (13 December 1997).

109Nusseibeh, interview (28 January 1996). Izzat Ghazzawi and Radi Jara’i were sentenced to more than two years in prison for writing leaflets. ‘Two Jailed for PLO Activity; Court Finds Nusseibeh Wrote Inciting Leaflets’, Jerusalem Post, 20 April 1990. The judges’ verdict said Nusseibeh had dictated the text.
in the leadership of the *intifada*, who decided and got convinced of the value of using the unarmed tactics specifically because [such tactics] seemed to be better and to get to specific targets and specific solutions. They were in a position actually to show this through the programme that they instilled into the leaflets and the direction of the *intifada*, right up to the second year.\textsuperscript{110}

By May 1989, Nusseibeh was reported to be a ‘paymaster’ of the uprising, so named by an IDF prosecutor, and said to have authored *intifada* leaflets. Court documents from Shin Bet ‘unmasked’ Sari Nusseibeh and Radwan Abu Ayyash, head of the Arab Journalists’ Association in the territories, as running the uprising.\textsuperscript{111}

According to Mahdi ‘Abd al-Hadi, ‘Feisel was the face of the *intifada*; Sari was the brains of the *intifada*.\textsuperscript{112} Although Chapter Four establishes that Husseini affected alterations in Palestinian political thought and symbolism in the territories during the 1980s, it is also true that movements—even if forced by circumstances to be clandestine—help to create their own leadership figures. ‘The whole Fateh organization rallied around Feisel and in a way made Feisel the important leader that he became’, Hanna Siniora noted. \textsuperscript{113} Haj ‘Abd Abu-Diab observed, ‘Feisel Husseini was in every single demonstration, in the lead. He was in

\textsuperscript{110}Nusseibeh, interview (28 January 1996). Another of Nusseibeh’s involvements included establishing at the start of the *intifada* the Holy Land Media Press Centre, in his father’s old private office, along with his wife Lucy and Samir Sbeihat. Recalled Nusseibeh, ‘We thought that the time would come when the newspapers would be shut down, so no one would be able to monitor what was happening, so we started doing it ourselves, with reports from stringers all over the place. ... Later, when we became known, we gave ourselves more respectability, called it the *Monday Report*, and brought it out every Monday. All the journalists would come by to ask for it. Then the *Monday Report* was closed down by the authorities [in June 1989] because, they said, it didn’t have a licence. I think it was closed down because it gave a good idea of what was happening’. Nusseibeh, interview (28 January 1996). See David Makovsky, ‘Police Tell Nusseibeh to Stop Newsletter’, *Jerusalem Post*, 30 May 1989; idem, ‘Police Shut Nusseibeh’s Office as “Planning Centre of Intifada” ‘, *Jerusalem Post*, 16 June 1989.


\textsuperscript{112}Hadi, interview (13 December 1997).

\textsuperscript{113}Siniora, interview (16 December 1997).
every strike when he was out of gaol, and in every hunger strike when he was in gaol. He was there when we had the human chain around the Old City'.

Husseini had spent six months at the start of the uprising in prison, in a cell with Hatem 'Abd al-Qader Eid, at al-Fara’a prison near Tulkarem, which was originally built as a British army camp. Despite Husseini’s gaoling at this crucial stage in the uprising, the Command always had contact with him, Eid asserts, and Husseini never relaxed his obstinacy on the importance of negotiations. Eid noted,

I was in a small cell without anybody else except Feisel Husseini. I was not allowed to see any other prisoners. . . . Feisel told me that the intifada was very important to continue because we needed a political solution. The intifada was not enough on its own. We needed the intifada to pressure the Israelis; but without additional political action, the intifada could not do anything. The intifada was . . . to open the political door and to make contact with Israel.

Husseini’s insistence that the intifada should be nonviolent was so that it would lead to negotiations. He maintained that it was not a military operation, but a movement to change consciousness.

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115 Eid, interview (28 January 1996).

116 Ibid.

117 Ibid.

Relationships with Tunis

The relationship between the Command inside the territories and the PLO in Tunis was characterized by incipient or outright disagreement, restrained by the dogged determination of the Palestinians inside the territories to build up the stature of the PLO. As described by members of the leadership group inside the occupied territories, including the ‘think tank’ and ‘official’ and ‘unofficial’ Fateh, they wanted reciprocity with the PLO. Their strategy, to empower the PLO to help it reach the point of negotiations with the Israelis, was based on a conviction that this was the only way to produce significant and lasting change. A pincers movement developed, based on this group’s limited expectations of any role to be played by Tunis. As envisioned, the intifada would improve the PLO’s stature and, consequently, its position in negotiations for a political settlement. At the same time, it was hoped that the cumulative effect of the uprising would be such that any gains made on the ground could not be undermined by any political concessions the PLO might have to make. Support from the Arab world was omitted from the calculations, and some Palestinians

119 Jadallah, interview (15 December 1997); Nusseibeh, interview (28 January 1996). ‘The PLO is seen [in the occupied territories] as having a supportive role and as the organization that is expected to collect the political fruits of the uprising’. Daoud Kuttab, ‘Who Is Behind the Uprising?’ Jerusalem Post, 17 February 1988, p. 5.

120 To Nusseibeh, meetings with Israelis were ‘a continuing attempt to break the Israeli government’s monopoly over Israeli public opinion’. Talks were part of the intifada programme, he claimed, to increase ‘support in Israel for a peace settlement based on the necessity of ending the occupation, negotiating with the PLO and recognizing the right of the Palestinian people to establish an independent state’. Splits in Israel caused by such meetings were tangible evidence of the need to continue them, according to Nusseibeh. ‘The path taken by most Israelis to the PLO leadership passed through initial meetings with Palestinians in the occupied territories… [T]alks with Feisal Husseini are ultimately no different from dialogue with [PLO officials] Khaled al-Hassan, Nabil Sha’ath, or Yasser Abed Rabo, and whoever talks with the first can talk with the second’. Joel Greenberg, ‘Husseini and Nusseibeh: “Our Talks with Israelis Will Shift Public Opinion”’, Jerusalem Post, 22 February 1989.

In February 1989, in the Notre Dame Hotel at the line dividing East and West Jerusalem, Israelis, including two close aides to Finance Minister Shimon Peres—Deputy Finance Minister Yossi Beilin and Peres adviser Nimrod Novik—met with Palestinians. Also included were Ephraim Sneh, MK Avraham Burg, Yair Hirschfeld of Haifa University, Boaz Carmi, and Arye Ofr, all members of the ‘Mashov Circle’, a left-leaning group within Labour. The Palestinians present were Feisal Husseini, Sari Nusseibeh, Ziad Abu Zayyad, Ghassan Khatib, Mamdouh Aker, Hanan Mikhail Ashrawi, journalist Sam’an Khouri, and Khalil Mahshi, headmaster of the Friends School in Ramallah. Joel Greenberg, ‘Peres Aides Meet Husseini, Nusseibeh’, Jerusalem Post, 16 February 1989; idem, ‘Sari Nusseibeh Dismisses Rabin Elections Proposal’, Jerusalem Post, 6 February 1989.

even maintained, adamantly, that the uprising could succeed only if it remained utterly independent from the PLO.\textsuperscript{122} Dispensing with the notion that the Palestinians in the occupied territories were 'subordinated'—the term used by Cobban, Frisch, and Litvak\textsuperscript{123}—they were determinative, although those actually making judgements may have been out of view or not on the Command. The PLO used the \textit{intifada}, and the \textit{intifada} used the PLO, in a relationship based on a division of labour that became more complex as time went on, in part because the PLO feared that the independence, self-reliance, and world attention focused on the uprising could be turned against it,\textsuperscript{124} a fear accentuated by decades of Israeli efforts to avoid talking with the PLO, beginning with the creation of the Village Leagues. Despite the legitimacy given to the PLO by the uprising, the driving fear in Tunis was that the \textit{intifada} would give birth to a leadership not beholden to the PLO.\textsuperscript{125}

The Command concentrated on sustaining the uprising. In leaflet after leaflet, the strategy was described as one aimed at peace, negotiations in an international conference, and creation of an independent state alongside Israel. 'The overall political ideology of the Unified Leadership could not have been more moderate or pragmatic', Nusseibeh subsequently observes, calling as it did for a two-state solution through 'entirely civilian struggle'.\textsuperscript{126} Not one leaflet bade the destruction of Israel or death to the Jewish people. The

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{122}Awad, communication (26 March 1998).
\item \textsuperscript{123}Cobban, 'PLO and Intifada', p. 97; Frisch, 'Middle Command', pp. 254, 261; Litvak, 'Inside Versus Outside', in Sela and Ma'oz, \textit{PLO and Israel}, p. 181.
\item \textsuperscript{124}See Jonathan C. Randal, 'New, Largely Invisible, Force Seen Guiding Anti-Israeli Protests', \textit{Washington Post}, 28 January 1988, p. A26. A Palestinian intellectual told Randal, 'The problem is not the PLO, but the future of an independent Palestinian state in the territory. If Israel was ready to negotiate on those terms, we would drop the PLO without hesitation'. Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{125}As Raja Shehadeh has shown, the PLO's objective of winning recognition for the organization overrode all other considerations, in part because it was vulnerable to the striking of a bargain between Israel and the Palestinians in the territories that would have rendered the front redundant. On the disjuncture between the preoccupations of the PLO for its own survival versus the potential for progress towards the full negotiated settlement that had been sought by the activist intellectuals considered here, see Raja Shehadeh, \textit{From Occupation to Interim Accords: Israel and the Palestinian Territories}, Cimel Book Series no. 4 (London and The Hague, Kluwer Law International, 1997), especially pp. 103–21, 128–9, and 157–61.
\item \textsuperscript{126}Letter from Sari Nusseibeh to well-wishers, from Nissan gaol in Ramleh, 25 February 1991, East Jerusalem, PCSN files.
\end{itemize}
death of the one Israeli soldier that the Palestinians admit was killed in the first year of the intifada (in Bethlehem and reportedly by another soldier) was never condoned in any leaflet. 127 When a bomb was tossed on the outskirts of Jericho, setting fire to a Jerusalem-bound bus and killing an Israeli rabbi’s daughter, Rachel Weiss, and her three sons, the renegade action was strongly regretted by the local popular committee of the intifada through a special leaflet. 128 Villagers would disarm Israeli soldiers, strip them, and then return their clothes and guns to Israeli military authorities. 129

The object was the military occupation and denial of Palestinian rights: ‘Our uprising is not aimed at the destruction of Israel. It is aimed at establishing freedom for ourselves in our own state’. 130 The ‘outside’ PLO leadership was not needed for this, Nusseibeh asserted.

127 Kuttab, ‘Will Guns Be Used?’ The death of the first Israeli soldier during the intifada was reported in Joel Greenberg, ‘Reservist Slain on Duty in Bethlehem’, Jerusalem Post, 21 March 1988, p. 1. Western diplomats in Jerusalem confided to a Harvard conflict-resolution expert that the death had occurred at Israeli hands. The reservist was shot from the top of a building, something no Palestinian in the heavily patrolled city of Bethlehem could have done, as Israeli sharpshooters were deployed on rooftops. When senior Israeli brass were noticeably absent from the funeral for the deceased, the diplomats deduced that he had been killed by friendly fire. Later, they claim, it was discovered that the motive was retaliation for an extramarital affair. One year later, on 24 February 1989, reservist paratrooper Staff Sergeant Binyamin Meisner died in the casbah of Nablus when a concrete block was dropped on his head from a second-story window, during a chase after stone-throwers. Jon D. Hull, ‘Cat and Mouse in the Casbah’, Time, 11 December 1989, p. 60.

128 According to Israeli chief-of-staff Dan Shomron, the fire-bombing was spontaneous, when boys from the Takruri family got bored and chose to launch Molotov cocktails at Israeli vehicles. The young mother froze in fear, huddling over her children and resisting efforts by a soldier to drag them out. Patrick Bishop, ‘Jericho Walls Tumble Again’, Daily Telegraph, 10 November 1988, p. 21; George D. Moffett III, ‘Israeli Vote May Turn Right in Response to Bus Attack; Palestinian Action Likely to Spur Backlash’, Christian Science Monitor, 1 November 1988.

129 Weapons seized from Israeli soldiers were often returned. In Nablus, a soldier dropped his rifle while dispersing a demonstration, only to have it handed back by a demonstrator. Ya’ari, ‘Runaway Revolution’, p. 28. An Israeli soldier was stripped to his underwear, but allowed to run back to his post. A Palestinian youth took a soldier’s rifle away, broke it in two, and gave it back. Vitullo, ‘Uprising in Gaza’, in Beinin and Lockman, Intifada, p. 47. In Beita, arms were returned to Israeli authorities by Palestinians after an Israeli was killed by another Israeli, who was later disarmed by the villagers. Rashid Khalidi, ‘The Uprising and the Palestine Question’, World Policy Journal 5:3 (Summer 1988): 517 en16. When stones were thrown at a group of Israeli youths bicycling from the Eilon Moreh settlement on the West Bank, their armed guards opened fire, killing a fifteen-year-old Israeli girl, Tirza Porat, and two Palestinians. An army review shifted the blame to Roman Aldubi, one of the settlers guarding the Jewish group. Bermant, ‘The Light that Failed’, p. 14; George D. Moffett III, ‘Palestinians Say Expulsions Were Expected and Won’t Work’, Christian Science Monitor, 13 April 1988. Porat’s death, on 6 April 1988, was the first Israeli civilian death in the intifada.

130 Nusseibeh, ‘Intifada: Personal Perspective’, p. 27. See also Jeff Black, ‘Siniora Tells Peace Now Rally: Uprising Aimed at Occupation—Not against Israel’, Jerusalem Post, 14 February 1988, p. 2. In November 1989, Nusseibeh had called for a provisional state, with ministers from the PLO Executive Committee and the bureaucracy assembled from thousands of Palestinian workers in health, education, and social services—a ‘National Authority’. According to Nusseibeh, Palestinians had been building such an infrastructure for two years through the popular committees, ‘walls for which a roof can be built by declaring a
It was necessary [for them] to say clearly to Israel, ‘This is what we want’, but it wasn’t necessary for them to direct us, give us logistical support, financial support, or spiritual support. . . . There was enough going on here to create its own momentum. There was an interplay between the various circles of power here—intellectual circles, organizational circles—people moved between one and the other. . . . This was basically how I played; I was in this circle, that circle. Most of the leaflets of the intifada, went out to Tunis for endorsement from this office.\(^{131}\)

The faxes went via Abu Tariq in Paris to Khalil al-Wazir, or Abu Jihad, until his assassination by an Israeli commando squad.\(^{132}\) Abu Jihad would then present the issue to Abu Ammar.\(^{133}\) In the occupied territories, Abu Jihad was often viewed as a ‘corrupt-free and humble leader despite the large sums of money that he was personally responsible to dispense’.\(^{134}\) The key Fateh figure behind the Shabiba movement (which was declared illegal by the Israelis in 1987), Abu Jihad’s position as chief on the Palestinian side of the Joint PLO-Jordanian provisional government. Security forces could block unilateral establishment of such an authority, yet he argued that this would only advance the process of ‘state-creation’ in evidence during the intifada, and it was this activity that should be the focus of Palestinian efforts, not escalation of violence. Joel Greenberg, ‘Nusseibeh Wants Provisional Government Now’, Jerusalem Post, 17 November 1989; idem, ‘West Bank; PLO Victory’, 24 November 1989.

\(^{131}\)Nusseibeh, interview (28 January 1996). As Nusseibeh summed up the dynamic, ‘decisions concerning issues in the occupied territories have in general been taken by people here, with the leadership endorsing the recommendations’, and a ‘good deal of democratic interchange’. Abukhater, ‘Towards the Proclamation of the State’, interview of Sari Nusseibeh. The PCP, however, often protested the seeking of ratification from the PLO.

\(^{132}\)Abu Jihad was assassinated on 16 April 1988, in Tunis, by an Israeli naval sabotage unit called Flotilla 13, which dates to 1945 when Zionist commandos sank two British patrol boats in Haifa harbour and Jaffa that were looking for illegal Jewish immigrants. Serge Schmemann, ‘Raiding Party in Lebanon Belonged to Elite Unit’, New York Times, 6 September 1997, p. 8. The mission was planned by Mossad after three Israeli civilians were killed in the March 1988 Fateh operation at Dimona that so dismayed local Fateh adherents, as noted. Colin Smith, Eric Silver, and Mike Theodoulou, ‘Hitting Where It Hurts: How the Israeli Secret Service’s Audacious Killing of Yasser Arafat’s Deputy Repaired the Country’s Battered Ego’, Observer Sunday, 24 April 1988, p. 21. A reconstruction of the operation is found in Bassam Abu-Sharif and Uzi Mahnaimi, Tried by Fire: The Searing True Story of Two Men at the Heart of the Struggle between the Arabs and Jews (London, Little, Brown and Co., 1995), pp. 236–42.

\(^{133}\)Nusseibeh, interview (28 January 1996).

\(^{134}\)Daou’d Kuttab, ‘Abu Jihad and the Occupied Territories’, dispatch to news media, East Jerusalem, April 1988, p. 2, Kuttab private papers. The view of Abu Jihad as a prophetic figure is disputed by Ghassan Khatib: ‘He tried to strengthen Fateh inside, through . . . means that were harmful to the struggle in general. In the 1970s, he . . . caused splits in the trade unions, women’s movement, and voluntary work committees . . . because he was wanted Fateh to be the leading faction. Fateh was not very strong [in the territories] . . . so when [Fateh] moved to give attention to the “inside”, he wanted Fateh to be dominant by any means. Whenever Fateh wasn’t able to do that through elections, they would split the organization’. Khatib, interview (12 December 1997). Claimed the DFLP’s Muhammad Jadallah about Abu Jihad, ‘His interference was limited to Fateh. . . . He was a man that we were happy to work with—responsible and clean’. Jadallah, interview (15 December 1997).
Committee in Amman, and his responsibility for disbursal of funds, cast him as a pivotal figure in academic, journalistic, municipal, professional, and trade union circles in the occupied territories. Daoud Kuttab contends that those in Fateh who were seeking to shift their struggle to wholly political means saw him as a warrior who had accepted the need for compromise with Israel and could persuade the military cadres of that perspective. 135

According to Marwan Barghouti, Abu Jihad may have the only ‘outside’ leader who had studied the situation in the territories. ‘He didn’t just issue directives. . . . He listened to us. . . . When the Israelis killed him, they also killed a concept, a strategy, if you like, that held the two wings [military and political] together’. 136 Israeli officials knew, in the words of Yossi Melman and Dan Raviv, that ‘Abu Jihad was a great conciliator’, who ‘helped hold the organization together, because both Arafat and his violent rivals would listen to him’. 137 Little has surfaced in the intervening years to show that Israeli officials had calculated the effect of Abu Jihad’s death on those who were trying to guide Palestinian resistance away from armed struggle and towards compromise with Israel. It is doubtful that such a factor was weighed at all. 138 Local Fateh people who were trying to promote a change to contemporary, information-based strategies viewed the exploit as causing the loss of one of the few in the diaspora PLO

135Kuttab, ‘Abu Jihad and the Occupied Territories’. At the time of his death, Abu Jihad was said to have ‘urged the Palestinian civilians not to use guns in their fights against Israeli soldiers, and he often expressed pride that the Palestinians were fighting the Israelis with stones, not bullets’. Elaine Sciolino, ‘Abu Jihad: A Strong Right Arm to Arafat Who Lived by the Sword’, New York Times, 17 April 1988.

136Marwan Barghouti, ‘Arafat and the Opposition: An Interview with Marwan Barghouti’, Middle East Report 191, November–December 1994, p. 22. Barghouti headed the student council at Bir Zeit University from 1983 to 1987, when he was deported. He later became vice president of Fateh Higher Council in the West Bank and was, in January 1996, elected to the legislative council from Ramallah. According to Nusseibeh, Marwan Barghouti and Adnan Idris, who wrote the first document on civil disobedience encountered by Nusseibeh, were instrumental in writing the basic by-laws of the Shabiba movement, and Barghouti was long ‘predisposed’ to the use of political tools of struggle. Nusseibeh, interviews (13 December 1997; 16 December 1997).


138According to Melman and Raviv’s analysis of the Israeli intelligence agencies, Israeli authorities wanted to show the PLO that its ‘military side’ could not gain from the intifada and thought a ‘show-off’ expedition would raise morale for Israelis who were suffering from their government’s inability to put down the uprising. Melman and Raviv, Imperfect Spies, p. 26.
who actually comprehended their nonviolent strategies. In Leaflet no. 14, of 20 April 1988, the first after his death, appeared a call for a return to ‘all acts of struggle, using all potentials and means’, declaring ‘the day will come when the Kalashnikov rings out ... its bullets’.  

Before Abu Jihad’s assassination, however, the seeds of the positions espoused by the Command had taken root. Almost two months after Abu Jihad’s assassination, a storm broke over the circulation of a position paper by Arafat adviser Bassam Abu-Sharif at an Arab summit in Algiers, from 7 to 9 June 1988. It called for a two-state solution through bilateral negotiations and a United Nations-sponsored international conference. As a result, Abu-Sharif was denounced as a traitor by Palestinian exiles. Inside the territories, however, his position was viewed positively, as evidence that the uprising had increased the political weight of the West Bankers and Gazans within the diasporan PLO. Husseini and Abu Ayyash applauded Abu-Sharif’s piece, landing Husseini in gaol. What Aziz Shehadeh had been reviled for proposing twenty years earlier was now uttered by someone at Arafat’s side. The paper was distributed by Arafat himself at the summit, one report said, suggesting his readiness for direct negotiations.

The diaspora leadership had to come forward, Nusseibeh noted,

139 Nusseibeh, interview (5 November 1994). Palestinians often construe Abu Jihad’s assassination as an exploit intended to end the intifada by removing the person in the PLO hierarchy who had the closest daily contact with the uprising. Kuttab, ‘Children’s Revolt’, p. 27.


We couldn’t do it all ourselves. The PLO had to come out with very clear calls for recognition, reconciliation, willingness to negotiate. . . . We certainly helped and tried to make them do that as much as possible. A lot of us made statements in public, calling on them to come forward and say something.145

Six months after Abu-Sharif’s paper, Hani al-Hassan, also an adviser to Arafat, spoke at the Royal Commonwealth Society, in London on 11 December 1989, at the invitation of the Radical Society. There he admitted that ever since 1967 the Palestinians had realized that they would have to yield to Israel on land, but were abashed by the scale of the compromise required: ‘For us Palestinians the brutal, heartbreaking truth is that if we want peace and an absolute minimum of justice, we have to pay for it with three-quarters of our homeland’.146

‘We don’t want bodies’, Ramallah newspaper editor Hafid Barghouti told Abu Jihad. Barghouti made a trip outside the territories in the spring of 1988 specifically to register with the PLO’s second-in-command the perturbation of Palestinians in the occupied territories about the PLO’s continuing cross-border raids.147 Mubarak Awad had predicted that ‘if a lot of people get involved with nonviolence, the PLO cannot stay out of it’.148 Indeed, the PLO did become involved, but did not have the skills and knowledge in strategic thinking necessary to respect such resistance, thus it actually compromised the effectiveness of the uprising. The PLO’s ambiguity on the continuation of commando actions became a portentous parameter limiting the force of the uprising. Although the PLO was admittedly being altered by what was occurring in the territories, the public record shows little concern for undermining the political rationales in Israel for extremist policies that played on fear.


147Barghouti, interview (25 January 1996).

148Hurwitz, ‘Nonviolence in the Occupied Territories’, p. 23.
An Infrastructure Grows from Civilian Mobilization

Popular Committees and Self-Rule

While the political configuration of the intifada resulted from the strategies incubated by the East Jerusalem activist intellectuals during the previous decade, the infrastructure for the intifada was provided by popular committees. The popular committees of the intifada developed discretionary autonomy within the general framework coordinated by the Command. Daoud Kuttab writes,

Without having to go back to a central power or authority, local popular committees are deciding and acting on initiatives that are special to their communities. While these initiatives don’t contradict the general guidelines of the Unified Leadership of the Uprising, they do reflect the strength and independence of the committees. 149

While demonstrations drew attention and international media coverage, the more significant development was to be found in the activities of the committees.

The roots of the popular committees go back to 1936. 150 Local strike committees of the Arab National Committee, which sprang into being in April 1936 to run the general strike that lasted for 174 days, possessed individuality within the broad context of nationalist appeals for the limiting of immigration and establishment of self-government in Palestine. 151 The subsequent persistence of the PCP in working through small localized institutions had provided almost twenty years of recent experience. The civilian movements and nonmilitary mobilizations of the 1970s and 1980s broadened the number of Palestinians who had come of age through the organizing of committees. 152 As noted in Chapter Five, Mubarak Awad's


150 Hadi, interview (13 December 1997).

151 Little cognizance of such derivations is found in the literature. Hillel Frisch, for example, contends that such localized structures were conceived only as far back as the 1970s and the National Guidance Committee. Frisch, ‘Diffusion and Consolidation’, p. 50.

152 The DFILP also stresses its organizing efforts, which antedated the intifada by a decade. As noted by Muhammad Jadallah, ‘The DFILP’s women’s committees and health committees founded in the late 1970s were really in the forefront of what later became the popular committees. We started, as the Democratic Front, the formation with others of the popular committees’. Jadallah, interview (15 December 1997).
1983 booklet, *Nonviolence in the Occupied Territories*, reinterprets Gandhi's idea of a constructive programme, with its notion of building a new society while still living under the old order. To this end, Palestinians needed to establish alternative institutions to replace the institution of the occupation. ‘All attempts must be made to utilize existing loopholes and legal opportunities in creating new institutions . . . such as ad hoc popular committees which meet to coordinate, but then proceed to act separately without a recognized legal structure’. The Jerusalem Paper, four years later, pinpoints such groups as vital for civil disobedience: ‘The success of the disobedience plan requires . . . the formation of popular committees in various areas and neighbourhoods’.154

Self-restraint was expressed as committees organized themselves in villages, refugee camps, and towns to carry out appeals from the Command.155 The women’s movement played the critical formative role in organizing the committees.156 The committees were pivotal, Nusseibeh stated, in allowing the Palestinians to ‘disengage from the Israeli system, economically and administratively, and to effect a simultaneous takeover of the control of our

153Awad, *Nonviolence*, pp. 14, 15. Awad’s 1983 booklet envisioned the popular committees as breaking the military occupation: ‘The creation of these institutions obstructs the process of annexation and Judaization and makes possible a political solution built upon Israeli withdrawal and the creation of an independent Palestinian state’. Ibid., p. 14. Joel Greenberg notes that the popular committees of the intifada implemented ideas in Awad’s booklet, where preparation had been advocated for committees to provide for the needs of the populace once punishments were imposed. Greenberg, ‘The Battle Moves from the Streets’. Deena Hurwitz accurately places the committees on the landscape of political action as a recapitulation of the Gandhian concept of ‘constructive work’. ‘Deena Hurwitz Interview of Jonathan Kuttab—The Intifada and Nonviolence’, Fellowship 56: 6 (June 1990): 5.

154See Appendix 5, p. 1.

155Kuttab, ‘Children’s Revolt’, p. 28. In May 1988, the ‘Civil Disobedience Statement’ appeared, which defined the committees’ functions: (1) Services: guard and security committees, popular education; health committees for normal needs and emergencies or ‘nearly a hospital in every quarter’; food supplies for stockpiling and distribution; agriculture; and media and consciousness-raising committees to ‘defeat rumors created by the occupiers’. (2) Support services: supervision of warehouses, reservation of water supplies, saving paraffin oil, supplies of hand-held torches. (3) Direct action: all sectors of the society to ‘carry out actions like closing roads, raising the Palestinian flag, mass popular protest marches and sit-ins’. Command, ‘Civil Disobedience Statement’, 23 May 1988, East Jerusalem, PASSIA Archives. See Appendix 10.

daily activities'. Such bodies are described by Tamari as 'crucial transformations of consciousness', and they were particularly so during the first year of the uprising, when a 'new spirit' emerged as neighbourhoods shared the weight of the occupation through 'creation of organizations, groups, patterns, and economic strategies of sustaining the people'. Muhammad Muslih credits the intifada with establishing 'cooperative action as a recognizable feature of associational life' and notes its political pluralism. Less than one year after the eruption of the uprising in December 1987, an alternative society had developed, the governance of which was Palestinian. By March 1988, the committees were in places functioning like a local government.

The committees were envisioned as building nationhood, and some analysts viewed them as part of the preparation for a future democratic system. According to the Husseini Document, 'The popular committees deployed throughout the territories will gain official status as branches of the new state, helping to continue the growth and development of the state apparatus'. Leaflet no. 18 of 28 May 1988 describes the intifada as 'building the apparatus of the people’s self-govern through the popular committees with their various

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157 Abukhater, 'Towards the Proclamation of the State', interview of Nusseibeh.

158 Tamari, 'Intifada', p. 20. These groups were also the chief instruments for coping with retaliations such as the cutting off of electricity or water—often for protracted periods—as when the Jalazoun camp near Ramallah went for forty-two consecutive days without electricity. Daoud Kuttab, 'Refugee Camps vs. Villages', dispatch to news media, East Jerusalem, June 1988, Kuttab private papers.


161 Greenberg, 'The Battle Moves from the Streets'.


163 Husseini Document', in Cainkar and Goldring, Uprising in Palestine, the First Year, p. 318.
tasks'. Awad's 1983 booklet calls the 'building of an entire infrastructure independently of Israel (universities, factories, institutions, libraries, hospitals, schools, etc.)' the 'nucleus for the coming Palestinian state'. The political statement issued by the November 1988 meeting of the nineteenth PNC in Algiers claims that the Palestinian people, through the popular committees, are now in charge: 'It is the authority of our people, as represented in the Popular Committees, that controls the situation as we challenge the authority of the occupation's crumbling agencies'.

The committees operated through elected leadership which favoured a democratic approach to decision making. The village patriarchs' patronage system was replaced by a leadership associated with service to the community, and the popular committees ran themselves, although they worked best in settled rural communities, where the clan structure was strongest. Some efforts at regional coordination among committees were tried, but did not succeed; as they failed, however, local organizations grew stronger. To give a sense of the magnitude of organization, Israeli authorities disrupted thirty-seven committees in Gaza alone in August 1988. The village of Beit Sahour (pop. 12,000) was organized into thirty-

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164 Mishal and Aharoni, Speaking Stones, p. 98. Leaflet no. 18, although not addressed explicitly to Israelis, was the first to direct a call to Israel. The leaflet made the following demands: 'withdrawal of the Israeli army from the cities, villages, and refugee camps' of the territories, the release of prisoners, and return of deported Palestinians, lifting of the 'state of siege' in the territories, cancellation of special military orders and civil regulations issued in response to the intifada, allowance for 'democratic and free elections' in the territories, and removal of restrictions on the Palestinian 'national economy' to allow the development of industrial, agricultural, and service sectors. It said these steps should be monitored by international observers and would lead to 'the right to return to self-determination and the right to establish our independent state'. Joel Brinkley, 'Ex-Israel Officers Ask Deal on Peace: Former Military Figures Say the Occupation Is Hurting the Nation's Security', New York Times, 31 May 1988.


168 Robinson, Building a Palestinian State, pp. 151–2.

169 Ibid., p. 68.

170 Ha'aretz, 11 November 1988, as cited in Frisch, 'Diffusion and Consolidation', pp. 50, 60 en37.
six committees.\footnote{Barghouti, ‘Popular/Mass Movement’, p. 128.}

Rita Giacaman has written of her view that the popular committees were overtly political, and others have recorded her concern that the committees were ‘bogged down’ in factional disputes.\footnote{Rita Giacaman and Penny Johnson, ‘Palestinian Women: Building Barricades and Breaking Barriers’, in Lockman and Beinin, \textit{Intifada}, p. 412 en9; Philippa Strum, \textit{The Women Are Marching: The Second Sex and the Palestinian Revolution} (Chicago, Lawrence Hill Books, 1992), p. 203.} The popular committees, as opposed to innumerable smaller neighbourhood committees, were clandestine and often heavily composed of activists from the various PLO factions. In Riad al-Malki’s view, the popular committees served little ideological purpose; their consequentiality came from sustaining communities through the ardours of resistance.\footnote{FACTS, pp. vii, 15. The FACTS Information Committee compiled weekly reports on the uprising from January through September 1988. The compilation may be the single most useful resource on the first year of the \textit{intifada}. A second volume, consolidating these reports and adding the committee’s weekly reports through 1989, is Samir Abbé-Rabbo and Doris Safé, \textit{The Palestinian Uprising: FACTS Information Committee} (Belmont, Massachusetts, Association of Arab-American University Graduates, Inc., 1990).} ‘These structures are not explicitly political’, states the FACTS Information Committee, itself one of a network of popular committees concerned with public information.\footnote{Malki, interview (3 May 1995).} Regardless, they were reflective of what Tamari calls ‘a quantum leap ... a qualitative transformation in terms of communal and local solidarities’\footnote{Tamari, ‘Intifada’, p. 20.}. As the principal agency for organization in the \textit{intifada}, popular committees continued the trend towards civil society begun after 1967.

The most important groupings among the committees concerned themselves with agriculture.\footnote{Malki, interview (3 May 1995).} When night fell, fences moved on Palestinian land. An unenunciated Israeli policy of uprooting olive trees and burning crops became evident within the first six months of the \textit{intifada}. Leaflet no. 21 claims that 3,690 olive trees had been destroyed in eighteen
villages, fruit and nut trees uprooted, and wheat fields bulldozed by military equipment.\textsuperscript{177} Agricultural responses to such intrusion are in and of themselves nonviolent means of contention. They are constructive, require planning, and entail nonretaliatory thinking. For the Palestinians, ingenuity manifested itself, as ‘self-sufficiency’ became the watchword.\textsuperscript{178}

In Beit Sahour, The Shed, an agricultural cooperative started by Jad Ishaq, a biologist at Bethlehem University, sold seeds, tools, and insecticide at cost to those who planted ‘victory’ gardens.\textsuperscript{179} Ishaq considered the agricultural endeavours to be a strategy for survival.\textsuperscript{180} ‘It was an act of economic defiance that echoed the non-violent strategy of Mahatma Gandhi, more than half a century ago’.\textsuperscript{181} An estimated 500,000 fruit trees were planted in the West Bank and Gaza during the first two years of the \textit{intifada} as part of this strategy linked to ‘national feeling’ and self-reliance.\textsuperscript{182} In vacant lots, on roofs, in window box gardens, and in city backyards, Palestinian urban dwellers, élites, and professionals learned how to farm. Often neophyte in execution and lacking prerequisite technical and

\textsuperscript{177}Command, ‘\textit{Aqsa Appeal}, Communiqué 21, 6 July 1988, p. 12, East Jerusalem, PASSIA Archives. By December 1988, according to Cainkar and Goldring, more than 100,000 olive and fruit trees had been uprooted (in contrast to 18,000 during 1987, through 8 December). \textit{Uprising in Palestine, the First Year}, table, ‘Human Rights Violations Summary Data’, p. 9. As destruction of Palestinian harvests and fruit and olive trees by Israeli settlers intensified, groups of Palestinian youths set forest fires among Israeli settlements and parks. Leaflet no. 19 of 6 June 1988 calls for ‘destroying and burning the enemy’s industrial and agricultural property’ on 22 June 1988. Lockman and Beinin, \textit{Intifada}, p. 363. According to Daoud Kuttab, sources on the Command said this bid referred to Israeli settlements and was for one day only. Daoud Kuttab, ‘Are the Fires and Firebombs a New Strategy?’, East Jerusalem, June 1988, Kuttab private papers. Mubarak Awad and volunteers from the Centre for the Study of Nonviolence sought out such groups and explained that retaliation against settlements would only result in more damage to Palestinian crops. Mubarak E. Awad, one-hour communication (Washington, D.C., 30 April 1998). Also see David Rudge, ‘Israeli Arab Leaders Decry Those behind Arson Attacks’, \textit{Jerusalem Post}, 27 June 1988, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{178}Kifner, ‘Israelis and Palestinians Change Their Tactics’.


\textsuperscript{180}Jad Ishaq, one-hour interview (Bethlehem, 10 November 1994).


\textsuperscript{182}Isaac, ‘Agriculture in the West Bank and Gaza’, pp. 33, 38, 37. In addition to the farming of vegetables and fruits privately, small-scale animal husbandry included lambs, goats, cows, and chickens. A farmers’ cooperative in Beit Sahour bought twenty milking cows from an Israeli kibbutz in preparation for making the village self-sufficient, but the beasts had to be hidden to evade confiscation by Israeli soldiers. The fugitive cows became ‘the local heroes of the intifada’. Elaine Ruth Fletcher, ‘\textit{Intifada Enters Its Fourth Year}', \textit{Sunday San Francisco Examiner and Chronicle}, 9 December 1990, p. A15.
marketing skills, ‘from these mistakes new confidence emerged as well as political stamina’. Leaflet no. 8 of 19 February 1988 declares, ‘Let us recall that the Vietnamese achieved victory over the United States not through the rifle alone, but also through farming’. The process of developing home gardens helped to politicize the population, political scientist Azmy Bishara noted.

In 1988, a Palestinian journalist, Muhammad Zahaike, accompanied Bob Simon of CBS News and Mubarak Awad to the Bedouin village of Kissan, near Bethlehem. While viewing animal barns and feeding bins demolished by Israeli soldiers, someone suggested that a demonstration should be organized of the now homeless sheep, goats, donkeys, and chickens. Jonathan Kuttab and Awad telephoned the Israeli police for permits for a march to start at the Friday market in Jerusalem, where cattle were weekly bought and sold. It was to be a ‘peaceful animal march’; the beasts would wear signs on their backs in Arabic, Hebrew, and English asking the authorities to ‘stop demolishing our homes’ and ‘allow our barns to be rebuilt’. After several conversations with an Israeli officer, permission was granted, pending final confirmation. When the official asked who would clean up after the animals, he was told that the Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence would do it. Zahaike records,

He rang back to ask: ‘What if the animals become violent, especially the donkeys, and they attack the security forces, who would then be responsible?’ The answer was that the protest was peaceful, nonviolent, and violence was guaranteed not to happen. . . . The officer phoned a third time and stated in a forceful manner that it was forbidden to have the animals demonstrate. As soon as he hung up, we exploded in laughter.

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184 No Voice Is Louder, p. 38.
185 Kuttab, ‘Six-Month Anniversary’. What Shaul Mishal and Reuben Aharoni call ‘communal economic activities’, or agricultural self-sufficiency, appear in twelve leaflets issued by the Command but not at all in Hamas leaflets. They explain this absence of home-economy or agricultural directives by asserting that the density of Gaza, stronghold of Hamas, precluded the use of space for agriculture. Mishal and Aharoni, Speaking Stones, table 5, pp. 288–9. The more likely explanation may lie in Hamas’s Weltanschauung, in which religious reclamation ranked foremost. I have seen window box or rooftop gardening work in squalid urban settings in New York City, Latin America, and South East Asia; rabbit hutch or chicken coops can be set up in the most woeful of refugee camps.
On 1 July 1988, the senior Israeli military commander, General Amram Mitzna, declared on Israel Television that the popular committees were illegal and that the civil administration ‘is the only authority’ in the occupied territories.\(^{187}\) Membership in the popular committees was made punishable by up to ten years in prison.\(^{188}\) Deportation orders against twenty-five heads of popular committees made it ‘hard to miss the paradox of Israel’s quickness to deport anyone who showed signs of genuine leadership while complaining there were no Palestinians of stature with whom to negotiate.’\(^{189}\) As waves of popular committee members were swept into prisons, their prestige and importance within the community rose, and fresh participants replaced them. These prisoners themselves became symbols of Israel’s inability to defeat the intifada. Not only did such reprisals not quell the uprising, they intensified the spirit of resistance.\(^{190}\)

Inadvertent Results from Israeli Curfews and the Closure of Schools

The curfews imposed by Israel reminded older Palestinians of the ‘great revolt’: ‘We held out for six months in 1936, and now we can hold out longer, for months, even years’, a villager said.\(^{191}\) In the intifada, outside curfewed areas, committees collected food

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\(^{188}\)After outlawing the committees, the Israeli army crushed thirty-seven committees in Gaza, gaoling their members. ‘Israel Says It Seized 200 Arabs in Crackdown’, New York Times, 10 September 1988, p. 28. Another 200 Palestinians were arrested in the West Bank for membership in the committees, the ‘organizational backbone of the uprising’. Kenneth Kaplan, ‘Paratrooper’s Killers Convicted; Mass Arrest of Intifada Leaders’, Jerusalem Post, 5 July 1989. Regarding the extreme ten-year penalties, Reuven Gal noted, ‘For the Israelis, especially in the beginning of the intifada, the first two or three years, this was seen as a military uprising, a violent uprising. So even though the committees talked about distributing food, [the Israelis] took them to be distributing propaganda and fueling . . . violence. For the Israelis, the humanistic aspects—distributing foodstuffs and so on—were considered only a cover story for the real aims of propaganda’. Gal, interview (16 March 1997).

\(^{189}\)Schiff and Ya’ari, Intifada, pp. 146, 147.


\(^{191}\)Joel Greenberg, ‘After a Month of Siege, Kabatiya Faces a Grim Life; Village Closed after Lynching, Shows Defiance and No Remorse’, Jerusalem Post, 30 March 1988.
donations, while inside the curfewed areas they took responsibility for distribution. Health teams based their work on the assumption that residents would have to be prepared to withstand the self-imposed strains for a long period of time. In early morning, groups of women sneaked out of refugee camp blockades and hid in nearby villages. During the day, they purchased scarce meats and vegetables; at night they slipped back into the camps to feed their families. Elsewhere, butchers and grocers sold provisions from their homes. Farmers’ crops rotted because their cultivators could not plough or tend them, yet the small home gardens, rabbit hutches, chicken cooperatives, bread baking, and bee-keeping, noted in Muhammad Muslih’s study of civil society, were intensified by the strategy of self-reliance and vital to the uprising. In the words of one committee member, ‘We can live for a long time just on bread and olive oil’; the baking of bread acquired novel status, as wealthy matrons kneaded dough to be part of the action.

Within the first month of the start of the intifada, Israel placed 200,000 Palestinians under curfew throughout the West Bank and Gaza; by the second anniversary of the start of the uprising in December 1989, one million of them were under curfew. The curfews, ‘Israel’s main weapon’, were applied on an ‘unparalleled scale’ in an attempt to contain the

192 Kuttab, ‘Profile of the Stonethrowers’, p. 21. Muhammad Jadallah noted, ‘We organized medical teams to break the curfews, to avoid checkpoints, and to go through mountains so as to reach Palestinian communities under siege, under curfew with sick people—whether ill from normal diseases or sick from being injured in the continuous confrontations’. Jadallah, interview (15 December 1997).


196 Bennis, Stones to Statehood, p. 71; Daoud Kuttab, ‘Palestinians Decentralize’, dispatch to news media, East Jerusalem, April 1988, Kuttab private papers.

uprising. Yet the curfews enhanced local organizing efforts and provided the spark that had led to the setting up of local support committees. In the words of MKs Yossi Sarid and Dedi Zucker of the Citizens Rights (Ratz) faction of Meretz, ‘A continuous curfew, and the hardships it creates, has had one effect . . . the degree of solidarity among the residents is immeasurably greater today than it was on the eve of the curfew’. 199

As an exercise of will, the leadership of the uprising had initially called for school attendance until noon only. In response, on 3 February 1988, Israeli military authorities closed 900 schools by military fiat, to prevent their being used to foment rebellion. The closure affected 300,000 students.200 When the six major universities in the territories were closed, 14,500 university students were sent home,201 not to mention the faculties whose members have contributed to this study. All sixteen community colleges were shut by January 1988 (and not allowed to reopen until March 1990, and then only on a gradual basis). A military order in April 1988 broadened the decree to cover all educational institutions, including governmental, private, and UNRWA schools for an indefinite period. For seventeen out of twenty-eight months, 1,174 schools in the West Bank (excluding East Jerusalem) were

199F. Robert Hunter, The Palestinian Uprising: A War by Other Means (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1993), p. 96; Aryeh Shalev, The Intifada: Causes and Effects, originally published as Study no. 16 by the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, Tel Aviv (Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1991), p. 87. Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin explained the policy early in the uprising: 'There will be a curfew where a riot takes place. The first goal is to strike the violent demonstrations off the agenda. The second goal is to guarantee free traffic access. The third is to guarantee that the population that wants to leave for work . . . will have the conditions to do so. The fourth is to encourage the opening of business, but not with too much force. If they want to strike, at least this is not violence'. Israel Radio interview with Rabin by Yoram Ronen, Moshe Shlonsky, and Ehud Ya'ari, 13 January 1988, FBIS, 14 January 1988, reprinted in Journal of Palestine Studies 67 (Spring 1988): 153-4.

200Joe I. Brinkley, 'Hard Lessons from the Arab Unrest', New York Times, 22 May 1988, p. 3; Moorehead, 'Israel's Censors under Scrutiny', p. 11; Marwan Darweish, 'The Intifada: Social Change', Race and Class 31:2 (October–December 1989): 55. On 6 July 1988, a leaflet ran the item, 'School's Out', which states that 'the military's justifications for these closures were that school children had been demonstrating and abiding by the call of the [Command], to attend classes until 12 noon only'. 'Aqsa Appeal', p. 14.

201Struck, 'Palestinian University Is Reopened', p. 8A. According to Struck, 'Israel's closure of the Palestinian universities came under increasing censure from human rights groups and international educators' organizations. The United States also pressured Israel to reopen the schools'. Ibid. For Israeli criticism of the policy, see the opinion piece by a criminologist at Hebrew University: 'Neither respect for law nor sensitivity to international declarations of human rights have disturbed Israeli governments during the last 21 years and certainly not during the intifada'. Stanley Cohen, 'Education as Crime', Jerusalem Post, 18 May 1989, p. 4.
forbidden to operate. Bir Zeit University alone, with its 3,500 students, was closed sixteen
times under occupation, and the seventeenth time lasted four and a half years.

While Palestinian educators decried any halt to education, the Israeli measures had a
definitive unforeseen effect on the political framework of the uprising. The IDF termed the
school closings and curfews ‘environmental punishments’. Meant to quash the rebellion
through collective punishment of entire communities, and although condemned by the
Command in Leaflet no. 9, in retrospect they help to explain why a movement benefiting
from the insights of sophisticated academicians and activists so effectively was unified with
rural community members, including refugee camp residents in Gaza. The powerful and
inadvertent result was that when students and faculty went home to their families, they
became integrated in village life, a causative factor in the breadth of the uprising. Entire
communities communicated across generations and neighbourhoods, as all strata of the
society solidified. As the doors of the universities shut, theoreticians joined with the
youths, families, popular committees, and children of the uprising. If nothing else, said one

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The first reaction to events in the West Bank and Gaza often occurred at Bir Zeit, as students moved off
campus to create roadblocks of rocks and burning tyres to await the Israeli army. Its students and faculty,
according to Izzat Ghazzawi, ‘thought they were responsible for ending the occupation. . . [They] knew how
many prisoners there were in Israeli prisons, . . . how much in taxes Israel got from the occupied territories, . .
about al-Haq [and] . . . the Geneva convention[s], . . . The Israelis were afraid of the information’. Struck,
‘Palestinian University Is Reopened’, p. 8A.
204 Hirsh Goodman, ‘Army Meets a New Palestinian: They Are Different from the Clearly Defined
206 One study concluded that there was ‘no evidence that the closure of schools led to a reduction in
demonstrations’. Palestinian Education: A Threat to Israel’s Security? The Israeli Policy of School Closures in
the Occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, December 1987–January 1989 (East Jerusalem, Jerusalem Media and
207 Bishara, interview (17 June 1995); Jonathan Kuttab, interview (17 June 1995).
208 From 20 villages that openly participated in the intifada in December 1987, the number rose to 200
Continues’, p. 28.
resident of Beit Sahour, ‘availability of more leisure time’ increased political participation.\textsuperscript{209}

The physics professor worked with the baker to plan food distribution. The presence of university professors and students at home helped to eliminate any disjuncture between the thinkers in the \textit{intifada} and the proverbial masses, as the \textit{intifada} differentiated itself from the ‘great revolt’ through activating entire communities and avoidance of internal dissension.

As Chapter Three noted, the Palestinian \textit{loci} of power had shifted during the early 1980s, particularly as students resisting Military Order 854 relied on Israel’s closing of universities for maximum effect. Collective punishment that at other times might have been burdensome could also broaden and deepen the struggle throughout the territories, rousing whole communities to involvement.\textsuperscript{210} ‘In the early 1980s, we used to work consciously to get Israel to close us down so that we could go back home, which would make the students intermingle. This time, when things broke out, they broke out truly as a whole population. . . .

Nobody asked anybody anything’.\textsuperscript{211} Nusseibeh pointed out,

The students were not on campus . . . one of the reasons why [the \textit{intifada}] happened—[the students] were already in the towns. . . . Everyone will tell you that we’d been preparing in a strategic sense . . . yet the proof of what I’m saying is that even the local leadership (the local national leadership) took some time to see . . . it took time for the PLO to seize on what was happening . . . [but] the local leadership also was caught by surprise. . . . Everything was happening by itself. It was just as it should be . . . a true example of a people’s revolution. It was everyone, not just student activists . . . but the carpenter . . . all were leaders. No one was waiting to be told what to do.\textsuperscript{212}

Virtually every analyst of the \textit{intifada} has missed the crucial element of both students and teachers being at home. The recondite effect of Israel’s policy created an environment in which the uprising could spread across class divisions. The presence of both pupils and pedagogues at home distributed informed activists throughout the villages, towns, hamlets,

\textsuperscript{209}Robinson, ‘Creating Space’, p. 150.

\textsuperscript{210}Nusseibeh, interviews (5 November 1994; 28 January 1996).

\textsuperscript{211}Nusseibeh, interview (5 November 1994).

\textsuperscript{212}Nusseibeh, interview (5 July 1994).
and refugee camps of the West Bank and Gaza, where they could mobilize their families and friends.

When on 5 May 1988 an Israeli decision to extend school closings for another month was announced, it modified the Palestinian educational system, as alternative popular education, or al-ta’lim al-sha’bi, taught by volunteers and admired by the students, began in neighbourhood experiments. A Palestinian educational publication notes, ‘community-based education presented a grave threat to the Israeli authorities since they were no longer in control of the process and contents of Palestinian education’. With the approach of October 1988, as the schools remained closed and plans were reinvigorated for alternative education, a special committee on education was formed within the Command. Leaflet no. 24 bids

all teachers, high school pupils and students, and especially elementary school pupils, to mobilize for the success of the popular education operation . . . in order to foil the authorities’ policy of closing the schools and inculcating ignorance in our children. Popular education is a national responsibility.

Not only did the Israelis oppose the reopening of schools, fearing that students would demonstrate, Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin initiated a policy against popular education by outlawing it with ten-year gaol terms and fines equivalent to £3,000 for any teacher involved in it. ‘If you are a teacher and you teach your neighbor’s children’, an UNRWA educator

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214 Alternative education was coeducational, with boys and girls attending class together in mosques, churches, and clubhouses. Between the popular committees and alternative education, ‘new and creative ideas’ were being tested, Kuttab notes; ‘in this sense, Israeli policy has, ironically, served the Palestinians’. Daoud Kuttab, ‘The Palestinian Uprising: The Second Phase, Self-Sufficiency’, Journal of Palestine Studies 68 (Summer 1988): 42, 43.

215 Education during the Intifada’, p. 1. The Israeli policy banning alternative education was paradoxical. Closures represented a form of Israeli relinquishment of control over Palestinian education, and would give way to ‘a battle over the “facts” of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict’. Sarah Helm, ‘Palestinians in a Class of Their Own’, Independent, 2 September 1994.

216 Mishal and Aharoni, Speaking Stones, p. 121.

told UPI, 'they will treat them as terrorists'. A 'teaching-at-a-distance' approach was organized by UNRWA and private schools in October 1988, with study packets for home use to be distributed; this, too, was deemed illegal. After four months of closures, Israeli officials were forced to reopen some schools with the belated realization that shutting them encouraged the alternative education (and interpretation of history) they had forbidden.

Underground education on the university level deepened the immersion of the élite in the mêlée. Shuttered universities managed some stipends for improvising professors, despite the absence of tuition normally paid by students. For want of laboratories, science professors suffered the most. Students lacking a few credits were quietly graduated as, without ceremonies, hundreds of Palestinian students received degrees. Underground leaflets announced no academic events for fear that the Israelis would be tipped off; word of mouth was instead used. The political content of alternative courses fortified the uprising, and homebound intellectuals spoke directly to the international news media from their parlours, despite Israeli prohibitions, and to the uprising as well. While academicians and writers helped the intifada proceed, the uprising also modified their outlooks, and they harmonized their writings with the revolt.

In an atmosphere in which leadership arose from action and service, unrelated to status, with everyone at home the efforts of women were clearly visible. It has been asserted

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219 'Education during the Intifada', p. 1.

220 Bishara, interview (17 June 1995); Palestinian Education, pp. 18–20, 37; Daoud Kuttab, 'School Year Gets Off to a Slow Start', dispatch to news media, East Jerusalem, September 1988, Kuttab private papers. At a Palestinian academic conference in East Jerusalem, the headmaster of the Friends Boys School in Ramallah, Khalil Mahshi, said students liked the voluntary and semi-secret methods. Kuttab, 'Palestinian Uprising: Second Phase, Self-Sufficiency', pp. 42, 43. See also Learning the Hard Way: Palestinian Education in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and Israel, ed. Sally Ramsden and Cath Senker (London, World University Service, 1993).

221 Daoud Kuttab, 'Underground Education', dispatch to news media, East Jerusalem, September 1988, Kuttab private papers.

that ‘the women’s movement stemmed from the Palestinian national movement’ and women’s political participation was ‘dependent on the national movement’. Yet the participation of women in the intifada tellingly rebuts this presumption. Rather, women’s groups lent ‘infrastructure, experience and leadership to help the national movement’. Not only were women the backbone of the organizing for the popular committees, between December 1987 and March 1988 more than one hundred demonstrations of women were reported, such as one in Ramallah on 8 March where five hundred women, ranging from teen-agers to grandmothers, marched in silence with no stones thrown. It is true that although women were vital to the popular committees, meetings often took place in mosques or coffee shops where women did not go. Role changes were nonetheless reported, such as women participating in political discussions with outsiders. Women ‘confronted Israeli (male) troops; they shared in decision-making; they . . . did what the men did, without fear or complexes. Perhaps it would be still more accurate to say that because of the intifada, the role of men was altered, from being dominant to becoming equal’. As this study has shown, Palestinian women’s organizing antedated the development of a Palestinian national movement. In Chapter Two, women were at the forefront in the national movement as it


223 Hiltermann, Behind the Intifada, p. 205.


226 Bennis, Stones to Statehood, p. 34.

developed in the 1920s and 1930s, not dependent on it. In Chapter Three, women developed an entire movement composed of committees. In the words of one scholar, 'The uprising has been possible because of women's political agenda'.

Knowledge and Techniques of Nonviolent Resistance

Non-Traditional Transmission: Graffiti, Games, Poetry, and Sparklers

As worshippers prostrated themselves to their prayer mats, hands reached into pockets to pull out bunches of underground leaflets and pass them to the next person. Marches often began at a mosque after Friday prayers or after church on Sunday with the perusal of instructions from the latest leaflet. The flyers frequently made reference to mosques and churches and designated Sundays and Fridays as demonstration days. Appeals to Christians, Jews, and Muslims were common. The multi-religious perspective of the intifada—a form of political inclusivity rather than inter-faith activity—was shown by frequent references to the three great revealed religions in the leaflets. Following the usual prolix rhetoric, Leaflet no. 21 states:

Our people are invited to escalate and amplify the uprising, thus bringing us closer to total civil disobedience. The [Command] salutes those Jewish progressives, democratic, and peace forces which support our national cause, and calls upon them to intensify their activities. . . . We call upon the Organization of Islamic States, the Vatican, the United Nations and all friendly forces to stop the desecration of our Islamic and Christian holy places.

Opening with turgid exhortations, the leaflets gave concise lists of action. More poetry than programme, 'you could see people skipping the verbiage and going straight to

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230 The role of mosques as anything other than points of distribution is vehemently denied: 'It is not true that the mosques are the centers of inflammatory activity. We use their loudspeakers, that's all', a Gaza intifada leader told a Palestinian journalist. Machool, 'This Isn't Rebellion', p. 15.

231 Aqsa Appeal', p. 4.
the end of the leaflet to read the instructions'. Couriers went from village to village carrying the leaflets, often in school bags or back-packs. The rote learning to which the Palestinians had been exposed became in the uprising an asset in transmission. Long passages were committed to memory and dictated to other youths; if intercepted by Israeli soldiers, it was beneficial not to have leaflets in one's possession. Recalled one youth,

I memorized the leaflets in order to be able to take them from one village to another without paper, although sometimes I would take the leaflets from village to village in my school bag. In the villages, I would get the young people out at nighttime to discuss them. At night, we had more freedom.

The leaflets took on totemic proportions, and they comprise a folklore of their own about the intifada. Parents and schools found themselves helpless to ask children to go against the leaflets. Said one father, 'the leaflets are the only authority the children respond to'.

Aired from southern Syria over the al-Quds radio station and from Baghdad on the Voice of the PLO, with time radio replaced printed leaflets because broadcasts could reach hamlets unimpeded, a trend encouraged by the counterfeit versions of leaflets disseminated by Israel.

Directives in the leaflets were backed up by graffiti. Writing on walls announced

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232Jonathan Kuttab, interview (5 November 1994). According to Nusseibeh, behind the flow of leaflets, there developed 'a new genre of uprising literature'. Nusseibeh, 'Two-Year Perspective', p. 44.


234Name withheld, interview (East Jerusalem, 13 December 1997).

235Children from six to fourteen years of age comprised 35 per cent of the total population in the West Bank and Gaza. 'Appeal to the Director General of UNESCO concerning Education', 8 November 1988 letter from the Association of Women's Committees for Social Work in the Occupied Territories, in Cainkar and Goldring, Uprising in Palestine, The First Year, p. 451.

236Kate Rouhana, 'Children and the Intifada', Journal of Palestine Studies 72 (Summer 1989).

237Source affected content. See Kirsten Nakjavani Bookmiller and Robert J. Bookmiller, 'Palestinian Radio and the Intifada', Journal of Palestine Studies 76 (Summer 1990): 96–105, based on monitored broadcasts in FBIS-Near East and South Asia, from December 1987 through April 1990, the first twenty-eight months of the intifada. The Damascus station sometimes altered the leaflets to make them consistent with Syria's known hostility towards the PLO, whereas the Baghdad broadcasts were exactly as issued by the Command. Lockman and Beinin, Intifada, p. 327. See also Louis Toscano, 'Clandestine Radio Station Aiding Palestinian Protests', UPI, 16 February 1988.


strike days and the rudiments of leaflets, and various political tendencies prescribed their political positions there.\textsuperscript{240} The graffiti of the \textit{intifada} was not unlike the position papers, manifestos, and \textit{samizdat} plastered on the walls and kiosks of Prague during the Velvet Revolution, to be copied or memorized for transmission to other Czech and Slovak cities.\textsuperscript{241} Leaflet no. 20 of 22 June 1988 says that the leadership ‘stresses the need to ignore the [Israeli] authorities’ instructions to remove national slogans from walls’.\textsuperscript{242} ‘Any car that leaves for work [in Israel] tomorrow will be burned’, read a dire warning on a wall.\textsuperscript{243} Emblazoning graffiti was, however, dangerous. Kuttab notes that an activist was killed by Israeli soldiers because the youth was scribbling graffiti on a Nablus wall.\textsuperscript{244} The significance of graffiti was also shown by an incident in the Qalandia camp after Abu Jihad’s death, when the camp was placed under curfew because large numbers of Palestinians had demonstrated. Israeli soldiers angered by the graffiti there painted over it, replacing it with a Star of David. In short order, a Palestinian flag was dabbed in its place, even though soldiers had purportedly been stationed at the site around the clock.\textsuperscript{245}

Children’s games were also part of the transmission process, including one called Golani and the \textit{Intifada}, in which children between six and ten years of age divided into two groups, with one playing the Golani Unit of the Israeli army, said by a leaflet to be the first to implement Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin’s break-their-bones directive,\textsuperscript{246} and the other

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{240}Infighting between Islamic organizations and the more inclusive nationalist factions was traceable through a graffiti war. Steinberg and Oliver, \textit{Graffiti}, p. 10.
\item \textsuperscript{241}Josten, ‘Czechoslovakia: From 1968 to Charter 77’, p. 11.
\item \textsuperscript{242}Loclanan and Beinin, \textit{Intifada}, p. 367.
\item \textsuperscript{243}Kifner, ‘Wave of Palestinian Unrest’. Despite the Palestinians’ boycotts of Israeli goods, alternative factories had not developed, and, as Nusseibeh noted, ‘If someone wants to write political graffiti, he has to use Israeli wall paint’. Geraldine Brooks, ‘Israelis and the Arabs of Occupied Regions Share Uneasy Reliance’, \textit{Wall Street Journal}, 22 January 1988, p. 1.
\item \textsuperscript{244}Daoud Kuttab, ‘Wanted’, dispatch to news media, East Jerusalem, 1988, Kuttab private papers.
\item \textsuperscript{245}Kuttab, ‘Refugee Camps vs. Villages’, p. 2; Kuttab, ‘Wanted’.
\item \textsuperscript{246}‘Aqsa Appeal’, p. 11.
\end{itemize}
playing Palestinians. The Golani group carried sticks as guns and wore aluminum saucepans to mimic helmets, while the Palestinian group wore keffiyehs and carried slingshots. The rules called for the second group always to win, while the children sang a song:

O Golani shout shout  
Send your soldiers for repair  
O Golani run run  
Burqa has become Beirut.

Poetry and music were employed, such as a song by Ibn al-Jabal called ‘O Negev’, composed in Ansar. Although innumerable poems were penned, one is recalled as encompassing the meaning of the uprising. ‘Draw a Mustache for Antar’ was addressed to the children of the intifada by a Palestinian living in Australia. It says that they were the ones who put a mustache on Antar—the legendary Arab hero, a black slave who came to express courage, bravery, and chivalry. ‘What the poem meant was that all these Arab leaders talk like Antar, but it took children to bring about manliness [the mustache]; it spoke to the contrast between the Arab regimes and the Palestinian children’. Meanwhile, an ‘artistic intifada’ took root in East Jerusalem. Artists in theatre, dance, and puppetry worked with comparative immunity and less fear of army raids and military censorship. Concerts and exhibits of art were held.

Leaflet no. 28 of 30 October 1988 announces a general strike on the seventy-first anniversary of the Balfour Declaration, and asks that at 4:00 o’clock on Palestinian

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247 In the intifada, the chequered head-dress, or keffiyeh, wrapped to the eyes to protect the identification of the wearer from Israeli intelligence cameras, became a symbol of its unity. During the ‘great revolt’ of 1936–9, the Ottoman tarbush, or fez, identified moderates, and the keffiyeh betokened nationalists.

248 Burqa, a village north of Nablus, overlooks an Israeli settlement called Homesh, counted by Palestinians to be on confiscated land. Expropriation of Palestinian land recurrently prompted demonstrations.


Independence Day, 15 November 1988, everyone will ‘sing Biladi, Biladi—my homeland’, and take part in scout parades, parties, dancing in the streets, and fireworks. On that day, darkness fell early, the electric current having been severed by Israeli authorities. The refugee camp residents therefore made their own light shows. Steel wool for scrubbing saucepans substituted for fireworks; when pads of steel wool were ignited, twirled, and thrown in the air, theysparkled.252

Noncooperation and Civil Disobedience

Total civil disobedience had been a stated goal early in the intifada. It was the course urged by Mubarak Awad and had been advocated in the Jerusalem Paper. The degree of adherence by East Jerusalem businesses to calls for strikes showed how powerful was the concept of noncooperation in the intifada and how influential the secret Command. The shops closed. The Israeli army responded by ‘breaking open shops and forcing the owners to stand inside’, a measure that failed to prevent strikes, as the soldiers ‘could not compel customers to buy from the shops’.253 As a struggle to force businesses to remain open ensued, the army began breaking into shops and leaving them open. This had no impact, Jonathan Kuttab said:

There was no looting after the Israeli soldiers broke locks, so strong was the solidarity. The Israelis thought there would be riots and looting if they broke the locks on shops that had voluntarily closed in accord with the intifada’s call. Instead, Palestinian volunteer welders fixed the broken locks, and youths carried the new keys to the houses of the shopkeepers.254

‘In the end the shopkeepers did not bother to lock their shops at all, so that the army could not even break them open every day; they were simply left permanently open’, as street


254 Kuttab, interview (5 November 1994).
committees kept watch over them. After several weeks, Israeli officials simply ordered the opposite of whatever appeals the Command was issuing. By May 1988, as Israeli authorities ordered the shops closed for three days, in an excess of zeal the merchants instead closed shop for more than twenty-four consecutive days and more than fifty days intermittently. As a result, the Command, in its fifth communiqué, asked shopkeepers to open for two or three hours a day, usually in the morning, except when a complete strike was called. Momentum gained with demonstrations almost unbroken during the first three months of the intifada. The request from the Command to stay open for three hours a day was instituted because Palestinians were, otherwise, purchasing goods from Israeli shops in West Jerusalem, Lucy Austin Nusseibeh noted. ‘Everyone wanted to participate, and there was no question of going against it; any shop that stayed open was outlawed’. Seven brothers in the Balata refugee camp near Nablus came up with the idea of alternating the hours of strikes, to defy the ordered hours:

The change from total strikes to intermittent strikes first occurred in Balata. . . . You had to have some time in which people worked. . . . This camp was the source of many acts of innovation and organization which, in the early days, caught on simply by virtue of the fact that they made sense. People in Balata would do it, and soon it would become widespread. . . . There was a group of very enlightened and strategic thinking people there.

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256 Ibid. Other FACTs reviews on the merchants’ struggle appear on pp. 139–42.


260 Sari Nusseibeh, interview (28 January 1996). As noted in Chapter Three, it was in Balata that demonstrators in the West Bank first responded to the outpouring of thousands in Gaza that launched the intifada. In fact, a ‘mini-intifada’ of nonviolent direct action in Balata had preceded the mass uprising by
The shop closings were ‘about demonstrating who is in charge’—an assertion of Palestinian determination against Israeli orders to stay open, meant to break compliance with strikes and challenge the potency of the Palestinian leadership. Joel Greenberg notes that they represented ‘a battle in all spheres of life to determine who really controls the territories’, as the activists tried to ‘sever contact’ between the Palestinian populace and the Israeli authorities.

Merchants were intrinsic to the nonviolent strategy. This was shown early in the uprising when shopkeepers from Ramallah and al-Bireh called a news conference, on 2 February 1988, to announce six demands, including an international conference with PLO participation, an end to deportations, the freeing of those arrested in the uprising, and abolishment of the taxes that the Israeli government had sought since their enterprises had been closed, saying, ‘You can’t tax someone if he’s not selling anything’. It had become evident that unusual unanimity prevailed, with little expectation of outside help. Radwan Abu Ayyash recalled, ‘it was everybody: intellectuals, merchants, shopkeepers, nurses, every part

several months. ‘The Israeli authorities were so alarmed by [Balata’s mid-1987] symptoms of civil disobedience that their crackdown was particularly harsh. ... Little did anyone know then that the [Israeli] army behaviour in Balata was to become the rule, or that the Balata tremor was to develop into a full-scale eruption’. Nusseibeh, ‘Two-Year Perspective’, p. 43. Glenn Frankel cites the Balata Shabiba organization of youths aged fourteen to seventeen as indicative of the local control exerted in the intifada. Glenn Frankel, ‘PLO Asserting Control of Palestinian Uprising: Violence Shifts to Organized Campaign’, Washington Post, 20 February 1988, p. A1. In the intifada, Balata was declared a ‘liberated zone’ by Palestinian youths.


261Whitley and Walker, ‘From Stones to Sanctions’; see also Cowell, ‘Israeli Army Tries New Tactic’.

262Greenberg, ‘Battle Moves from the Streets’.

263The solidarity of merchants was crucial to the early success of the uprising. On the day that Feisel Husseini was released from custody, 29 January 1989, Mustapha Abu Zahra, one of sixteen wholesale merchants who had defied an Israeli military order, was freed from six months of administrative detention. General Amram Mitzna had used 1945 British regulations as the basis of a decree to East Jerusalem shop owners to remain open all day. Abu Zahra and fifteen other merchants not only closed shop, but served prison terms rather than pay fines. They told the chief judge of the Israeli High Court, ‘Yes, we understood the order of the Israeli general, but we don’t take orders from him, we only follow orders from our leaders’. Daoud Kuttab, ‘Palestinian Chooses Prison Term Rather Than Paying Fine’, dispatch to news media, East Jerusalem, 31 January 1989, Kuttab private papers.

264Court, ‘Respite for East Jerusalem Merchants’.
of the society, and everybody was involved'. Any who rejected such immersion were 'parasitical elements—real estate agents and labour agents supplying Israeli customers, and major importers of Israeli goods'.

The clandestine leadership sought to spread the uprising’s activities to as many locales as possible, syncing actions so that the Israeli response was dispersed, and arranging for the uprising to show itself in many forms. Leaflets urged the writing of poetry, songs, and slogans, and taking part in information campaigns. Nullifying earlier norms of authority, they stressed 'democratic emergent leadership from the people'. Prison became a rite of initiation, so much so that if one had not been imprisoned, his or her patriotism might be questioned, as the stature once enjoyed by the elders was supplanted by prison records earned by the young in asserting their identity. Intricate role distribution generated leadership with its own legitimacy, and a new status system meted out prestige based on action. According to Salim Tamari,

Parents of activists are often chosen to head relief committees that are entrusted with donations... The older Palestinians are chosen for this job because of the delicacy of handling money. But instead of traditional community leaders, the parents of the stone throwers become entrusted by the nationalist leadership with the job of fairly distributing food and other donations.

Normal divides between the élites of East Jerusalem and rural farmers were

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265Abu Ayyash, interview (29 January 1996). Abu Ayyash was subjected to administrative detention in November 1990, having helped run the intifada as a leading Fateh operative in the West Bank and allegedly being engaged in 'incitement to terror and organization of terror'. He had repeatedly called for a negotiated peace and a Palestinian state next to Israel. Abu Ayyash had come under attack by Palestinian radicals as the 'darling of the Israelis', in a leaflet published earlier during the intifada, because of his apparent immunity to arrest. Ziad Abu Zayyad, the lawyer, publisher, and writer, was also arrested, the first time ever. Jon Immanuel, 'Two Leading West Bank Figures Placed in Administrative Detention', Jerusalem Post, 14 November 1990. For more on Abu Ayyash, a refugee and someone younger than the other activist intellectuals considered here, see idem, 'A Man for All Parties?', Jerusalem Post, 12 April 1991.

266Sayigh, 'Intifadah Continues', p. 29.

267Mishal and Aharoni, Speaking Stones, p. 62.

268Ashrawi, 'Intifada: Political Analysis', p. 11.

269Tamari, 'Intifada', p. 19.

270Ibid., p. 4.
minimized; no division existed between dwellers of refugee camps and the retailers and business owners, whose counterparts during the ‘great revolt’ of 1936–9 had become its victims. Geographic and cultural differences were forgotten between ‘cool’ East Jerusalem—the ‘brains’ of the uprising—and a ‘hot’ city like Nablus, the ‘heart’ of the intifada. Political unity became a defining feature. Commonality of interest was shared by Palestinians of competing nationalist movements and parties who worked together, across the age spectrum and from both rural and urban settings. Such unification was essential to separating the Palestinians from Israel, Tamari claims:

New sectors of society, until that time largely marginal, participated in the political struggle. These strikes were voluntary and brought to the fore the idea of the impossibility of controlling the West Bank and Gaza Strip through military force. The call to boycott Israeli products was also successful, despite the Israeli military strength against it. Now there is a complete division between us and the Israeli authorities.

Differences between the nationalists and the religious movements were suspended; no one was allowed ‘to act independently, to claim credit for the intifadah, to publish their own leaflets’.

On 12 May 1988, the Command noted success in boycotting taxes, forgoing Israeli products, quitting jobs in the civil administration, curtailing consumer spending, undertaking community teaching, and creating committees on health, education, agriculture, food supplies, and information. Leaflet no. 16 says that the popular committees were ‘making the day of full civil disobedience much nearer’. Eleven days later, the statement on civil disobedience appeared in which it was claimed that the uprising was ‘proceeding on its steps

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271It will be recalled that Nablus had been the centre for the student militance in 1931.


274Tamari, ‘Time to Converse Calmly’.


towards full civil disobedience in all the occupied territories'—said to be the most effective way to weaken the occupation and speed establishment of the right of return, self-determination, and establishment of an independent state.\textsuperscript{277} The Command called for the boycotting of all dealings with occupation authorities, replacement of its services by those who possessed 'popular authority', boycotts of Israeli products, abstention from paying taxes, and the burning of Israeli identity cards during a later stage. Apart from declining to call for withholding payment of electric and water bills, the appeal exactly followed the programme laid out by the Jerusalem Paper. The Command did not call for nonpayment on water and electricity accounts, but noted that such delinquency would be the most difficult aspect of civil disobedience, because it would result in the termination of services. The 23 May statement reiterates the chance of worse retaliation from the Israelis in the form of severed electricity, fuel, and water, while warning 'civil disobedience is not a magic wand'.\textsuperscript{278}

A breach inside the Command about noncooperation disclosed itself when two versions of Leaflet no. 17 appeared in late May 1988. The first advocates a one-day strike in memory of Abu Jihad; the second appeared two days later and calls for an eight-day strike and preparations for the civil disobedience campaign. According to Ian Black, Fateh's representative on the Command initially argued for a strike that would be long in duration, but he was opposed by the representatives of the DFLP and PCP, who held that the bulk of the Palestinians were unable to sever all connexions to the occupying authorities. Fateh capitulated, so the first leaflet calls for the limited action. The appearance of the second edition suggests that other Fateh activists had wanted full civil disobedience but lacked the final say. The major divergence is that the second, the PFLP version, calls for opening

\textsuperscript{277}Command, 'Civil Disobedience Statement'. See Appendix 10.

\textsuperscript{278}Ibid.
Resignation by twenty-two Palestinian officials from their jobs in the traffic and motor vehicles department of Ramallah, on 31 May 1988, was extolled as the first wedge of the civil disobedience programme. The rapid response of department heads and employees to the calls in the leaflets may have been related to increasing Israeli harassment through the bureaucratic rejection of licences and registrations. The partial strikes that had characterized the first part of the uprising, with merchants keeping their shops open for only a few hours daily, were reaching their limits in the battle over who would be heeded—the intifada Command or Israeli military authorities. Hardships were being imposed on families trying to shop for necessities under conditions of curfews and limited shopping hours. The ‘pinnacle’ of this phase was the resignation of six hundred police officers from their jobs. Resignation by half the local Palestinian police force and other municipal employees of the civil administration was notably successful, as was the refusal of 120,000 Palestinian labourers to cross the Green Line for daily subsistence work. This was notable, Reuven Gal observed, because noncooperation added severe strains on a populace already in need of earnings.

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279 Ian Black, ‘Confusion Spreads as West Bank Leaders Squabble over Strike’, Guardian, 26 May 1988, p. 9; Legrain, Les Voix du Soulèvement Palestinien, pp. 102–3. Legrain concurs with Black and suggests that the DFLP was divided according to whether its members allied themselves with Nayef Hawatmeh or DFLP reformer Yasir ‘Abd Rabbo. Ibid., p. 102. According to Daoud Kuttab, Fateh leaders whose perspective had expressed itself in the more limited call believed that in order for 100,000 or more Palestinians to cease working in Israel, there would need to be a jobs alternative. Their voice would carry, if only because Fateh would have access to sufficient funds to sustain a civil disobedience campaign where thousands of Palestinians resigned from their jobs. Daoud Kuttab, ‘Next Phase, Civil Disobedience’, Middle East International, 11 June 1988, p. 6; Black, ‘Confusion’, p. 9. PLO officials asserted that $30 to $50 million per month might be needed were Palestinians to stop working in Israel. Randal, ‘Uprisings Invigorate PLO Leaders’, p. A39.


282 Ibid.; Gal, interview (12 March 1997). Gal observed, ‘Throughout the entire six years of the intifada, paradoxically, Palestinians in the tens of thousands kept coming every morning into Israel for jobs. This is not noncooperation; in fact, it is yielding to cooperation. If I were an outsider, it would only add to my admiration that they continued with the intifada on the one hand, but had to keep the bread on the table on the other hand. Perhaps this is one of the hidden, unspoken reasons that kept the intifada nonviolent for such a long time—because every time there was any deviance from nonviolence, the Israeli reaction was to retaliate . . . not just with reprisals, but with closures. . . . That for the Palestinians was the worst sanction—even worse than firing or shooting’. Ibid.
Leaflet no. 20, the ‘Jerusalem Leaflet’, of 22 June 1988, suggests that progress had resumed towards the civil disobedience programme. It recognizes the merchants’ withholding of taxes: ‘Despite the tax raids being carried out by the Israelis … we affirm the essentiality of not paying taxes, and … ask our merchants to organize sit-ins’. It calls for the renaming of schools and buildings with Palestinian names, along with further resignations as a step towards the comprehensive boycotting of Israeli institutions.\(^{283}\) The Israeli reaction to the noncooperation techniques was as intense as it was broad, ranging from nighttime tax raids, a special tax on cars and olive presses, the linkage of permits such as drivers licences and birth certificates to the payment of taxes, the cutting of telephone links,\(^{284}\) curbs on internal and foreign travel, the closing down of wholesale markets, a partial ban on exports to Jordan and Israel, a two-week ban on supplies of fuel oil and petrol to Palestinian distributors—all designed to make civil disobedience impossible.\(^{285}\) Leaflet no. 21 of 6 July 1988 reiterates the goal of total civil disobedience and lauds hunger strikes and noncooperation methods in use by five hundred prisoners in the Dhahiriyeh detention centre near Hebron. It affirms boycotts, the withholding of fines and bail, withdrawal of funds from Israeli banks, increased output from local Palestinian industries, labour unions contracting with local enterprises, warns against collaborators, and urges that popular committees be contacted in emergencies, instead of Israeli authorities.\(^{286}\)


\(^{284}\)&quot;Lines were cut ostensibly to stop contacts between local activists and the PLO. Joel Greenberg, ‘International Phone Links Severed to Areas’, Jerusalem Post, 17 March 1988, p. 2. Later, after distribution of a leaflet calling for a five-day strike, stepped-up demonstrations, and civil disobedience, lines were cut for five days. Idem, ‘Telephone Lines Silenced in Ramallah, Bethlehem’, Jerusalem Post, 11 October 1989, p. 2.

\(^{285}\)&#203;Whitley and Walker, ‘From Stones to Sanctions’, p. 20; Moffett, ‘Uprising’s Other Toll’. Mubarak Awad said about the Israeli measures, ‘The cut-off of electricity, phones, fuel and perhaps even water means that Israel is doing the job of separation for us. … If we start collecting wood for fuel and build our own water system, we will be working on survival, and resistance will then have a double meaning and purpose: to survive and to achieve our political aims’. Greenberg, ‘Battle Moves from the Streets’. Also see idem, ‘Government Clamps Down Ban on Fuel Supplies to West Bank’, Jerusalem Post, 14 March 1988, p.1.

\(^{286}\)&quot;Aqsa Appeal’, pp. 4, 13.
Rather than viewing the leaflets as dicta, or edicts from a subordinated middle command, this study suggests that they should be viewed as revelatory of an ongoing strategic debate in a covert movement in which virtually all dimensions of activity were illegal. In this light, it is significant that civil disobedience was debated for the entire first year of the uprising and well into its second. Palestinian strategists had two options at the start of the second year, according to Kuttab: They could escalate nonviolent struggle to total civil disobedience, or they could turn to armed struggle, neither of which he viewed as practicable.

The Palestinian community which would have had to bear the brunt of a campaign of civil disobedience was not willing to go along with it, especially as the people saw that little progress had been made after the first year of the uprising. At the same time it was almost unanimously agreed that armed action was simply not feasible. There are few weapons, almost no opportunity to train and a strong possibility that armed action would be crushed very quickly and brutally.\(^\text{207}\)

Employment of the full spectrum of noncooperation techniques would require substantial preparation, training, depth in popular support, and readiness by the Palestinians to cut their ties to Israeli authorities.\(^\text{208}\) Lively disputations arose on whether the declaration of independence, in the Husseini Document, should follow or be complementary to the civil disobedience programme.\(^\text{209}\) Preparation of the populace had been much discussed, as leaflet after leaflet broached the suffering that civil disobedience would exact, including the need to give up automobiles. Supporters of civil disobedience expected their fellow Palestinians to use animals for travel and were unconcerned about factories closing, because they believed this would prompt the establishment of small family-owned businesses that would be almost impossible to crush.\(^\text{209}\)

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\(^\text{209}\)Daoud Kuttab, ‘Crossing Point’, dispatch to news media, East Jerusalem, 1988, p. 1, Kuttab private papers. Meron Benvenisti told the Financial Times that the economies of the West Bank and Gaza were ‘mere appendages’ of the Israeli economy. The total industrial output of the territories was $80 million, comparable
Leaflet no. 32 appeared early in 1989, and urges the stocking up on food and necessities in case of long sieges or strikes. Yet, ultimately, the population was wary of full-scale civil disobedience. It would never be implemented, Haj ‘Abd Abu-Diab said, since ‘the people didn’t understand it and agree to it’.\(^{291}\) One reason for this was the enormity of the burden it would impose and the likelihood of reprisals more severe than those already experienced.\(^{292}\) Extensive infrastructure would have been needed.\(^{293}\) Perhaps the paramount reason for the failure of total civil disobedience was the role of the PLO in Tunis. In a refrain voiced by a number of the key local leaders of the intifada, Muhammad Jadallah recalled,

1988 and 1989 were two pure years organized by local leadership, but when the interference of the [PLO] leadership took place, things started to suffer: . . .

The interrelations among the [factions were] great, very good, with high responsibility, good cooperation, coordination, and there was space and place for everyone to operate separately. There was room for joint work, and there was room for individual work, so everybody was involved, everybody was busy. This was the case until the [PLO] leadership took over. . . . By 1990, it was their intifada. This is when the intifada was aborted. The intifada was strangulated Palestinian-wise, before it was strangulated by the Israelis.\(^{294}\)

Until March 1990, the leaflets, with their deliberations on the merits of civil disobedience, were written in East Jerusalem—if polished via fax to Tunis—but after March, when the last autonomous Command was arrested, the leaflets were written in Tunis.\(^{295}\) At that point, the extensive calls for preparation for civil disobedience were suddenly dropped.\(^{296}\)

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\(^{291}\) Abu-Diab, interview (11 December 1997).


\(^{293}\) Hiltermann, Behind the Intifada, p. 237 en6.

\(^{294}\) Jadallah, interview (15 December 1997).

\(^{295}\) Notwithstanding clear evidence to the contrary, any number of PLO staff who were based in Tunis now take credit for writing the leaflets of the intifada. For example, Nabil Abu Irdeineh, an adviser to Yasir Arafat, told me in Gaza, on 24 January 1996, ‘I was the one writing the leaflets’ and faxing them back from Tunis. Perhaps he meant after March 1990. If so, this only compounds the perceptual problems, because major political change came within the first year of the uprising.

\(^{296}\) Robinson, Building a Palestinian State, pp. 88–9. The PLO rationale for minimizing civil disobedience is often explained by pleading the difficulty of asking further sacrifices from Palestinians in the territories. See for example Walid Ayyad, ‘The Palestinian Uprising of 1987–1988 and Its Implications for
The Siege of Beit Sahour

Although the withholding of taxes during the British Mandate because of Britain’s support for Zionism had been discussed by Palestinians as early as 1923, it was not until the intifada that such a measure was implemented successfully. Tax resistance by the village of Beit Sahour represented a highly coordinated strategy. Its emblematic value is noted by Scott Atran:

Because most taxes collected in the West Bank and Gaza go to paying the costs of occupation with little reinvested in social services to the Occupied Territories, Palestinians began refusing to pay the costs of their own repression. The hallowed principle of ‘no taxation without representation’ would carry a special appeal for western democracies. So fearful was the Israeli administration of the economic and symbolic value of nonpayment of taxes that it went to extraordinary measures to crush the ‘tax rebellion’. . . . [T]roops cut telephone lines, rounded up scores of people, ransacked village homes and stores, seized and proceeded to auction off personal goods worth many times the value of the taxes ostensibly owed. Foreign diplomats . . . were told the area was closed for reasons of ‘military security’. Beit Sahour’s effective and nonviolent programme produced a public relations fiasco when it was harshly suppressed and ‘an existential crisis of sorts in a nation [Israel] more comfortable responding to acts of violence than to peaceful acts of civil disobedience’.

The determination of Beit Sahour to engage in sophisticated noncooperation with the Israeli tax collection system began in mid-1988 and had been implemented by the summer of 1989. Israeli authorities cracked down hard on the ‘almost perfect’ nonviolent campaign by a ‘valiant village’, and reprisals were swift and harsh, with impromptu tax collections, a succession of curfews, including one of ten days’ duration, and incarceration of more than

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War and Peace in the Middle East, M.A. thesis (Fresno, California State University, 1988), p. 67. The more plausible explanation would be a failure to comprehend this measure as a means of wielding power.

297 Tamari, ‘The Intifada’, p. 20. More than 150 ‘prolonged sieges’ of seven days or more occurred during the first year of the intifada, according to Caimkar and Goldring, Uprising in Palestine, the First Year, table, ‘Human Rights Violations Summary Data’, p. 9.


300 Siniora, interview (16 December 1997).
one hundred of the village’s citizens during the first year of the uprising.\textsuperscript{301}

The period from 22 September to 31 October 1989 is known as the ‘siege of Beit Sahour’. The town was placed under twenty-four-hour curfews during the first five days of the siege and considered a closed military zone, meaning that the village was forced to rely solely on its own resources, since the residents could not leave. Subsequent curfews lasted from five o’clock in the afternoon to five o’clock in the morning. Telephone lines were severed, armed Israeli soldiers maintained surveillance from rooftops, and the news media were barred, along with the consuls-general of Belgium, France, Greece, Italy, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.\textsuperscript{302} Tax authorities seized furniture and furnishings. One of the key organizers, Jad Ishaq, was gaoled in Ansar 3 for six months, uncharged, for organizing the agricultural supply and technical centre called The Shed.\textsuperscript{303} Feisel Husseini told reporters that the village had ‘raised the flag of nonviolence’, even though the Israeli administration was trying to force it to ‘abandon this flag’, and that Beit Sahour represented ‘the beginning of the end of the occupation’.\textsuperscript{304} Refusing to finance their own occupation, some of Beit Sahour’s citizens had been refusing to pay taxes to Israel for twenty-two years.\textsuperscript{305} More than NIS 1 million in confiscated goods were put to auction, as tax raids followed ‘a civil disobedience campaign that has been uniquely successful’, Joel Greenberg writes. Video cameras, television sets, and appliances were among the items ‘seized and

\textsuperscript{301}Bhatia, ‘Uprising Comes of Age’, p. 27. He cites the baker’s son being forced by an army patrol to move stones from the road and put them in his father’s oven, after which the boy was obliged to turn on the oven so he could be taught how to bake stones instead of bread. Ibid.


carted off in army trucks'. Not one of the merchants in the village capitulated to the paying of taxes. When the siege was finally lifted by Israeli authorities, Israeli peace proponents who had been coming to the village in solidarity were invited to an ecumenical service at the Beit Sahour Roman Catholic Church in the mostly Christian village. In attendance was the mufti of Jerusalem. On 12 November 1989, a truckload of trees and saplings arrived from Israeli sympathizers. Under international condemnation, the Israeli government changed its tactic. Thereafter tax raids were conducted in discrete lightning strikes against individual villages, which did not have time to organize resistance.

Conclusion

The Palestinian activist intellectuals who were trying to teach their compatriots to press for entitlements in a way different from the past and to instil political, nonmilitary methods of struggle were able for almost three years to overcome the nearly insuperable problem of factional disunity, while moving Palestinian resistance towards a 'white revolution'. Their pursuit was not for thawra, but negotiations with Israel and the ending of armed struggle. Unlimited opportunities were presented by the intifada for Israel to


307Shalev, 'Second Year of the Intifada', p. 149. B’Tselem one year later issued a study of tax collection in the occupied territories charging that collection methods violated Israeli civil and military law, its having become a form of collective punishment to oppose the intifada. Exorbitant assessments were alleged, and since they were usually not paid, massive attachment of property occurred, usually worth twice the sum originally assessed. As cited in Joel Greenberg, 'Rights Body Raps Tax Policy in the Areas', Jerusalem Post, 27 February 1990. Israel seemed to have been threatened not by the throwing of stones or burning of tyres in the intifada, but by the 'development of an autonomous Palestinian economic and social fabric'. Martin and Manney, 'Tax Strike for Justice', p. 37.


309Rogers, 'Peaceful Tax Resistance', p. 3.

310Ibid.

311Dajani, Eyes without Country, p. 65.
encourage the forces working within the Palestinian polity towards acceptance of Israel and
the lasting repudiation of guerrilla operations. Yet Israel, Yaron Ezrahi writes, was paralysed
by its 'alternative narratives' of power—a 'hidden narrative of murder beneath the higher
narrative of liberation' and a vision of the military that blinded many to the 'counter-
narratives of colonization and subordination'. 312

Not only did the happenstance of Israeli curfews and closures compound Palestinian
resistance, it contributed to an historic instance of popular struggle in which intellectuals,
academicians, and élite activists were linked directly to savvy young street organizers.
Through the intifada, the majority of the population took power into their own hands, with
studied avoidance of retaliation and eschewal of arms. Underground literature emphasized
mutual acceptance as its end and civil resistance, nonviolent sanctions, and information
strategies as its means, rather than the bloody retaliation of the past. Building on the civilian
mobilization of the previous twenty years, tens of thousands of small, self-empowering
popular committees and professional associations rooted in villages, towns, and refugee
camps achieved a de facto form of self-governance. A think tank of activist intellectuals
generated ideas and symbols. The programmatic ambiguity that had long typified the PLO's
strategies, or lack thereof, on the world scene, was replaced by a counterpart reality visible in
the occupied territories. There, articulate spokespersons explained the new developments with
centrality of purpose and specific political goals that could be accomplished by negotiations.

Moments arise, Afsaneh Najmabadi observes, when,

People actually take a chance on having a new beginning. What brings
millions of people to take on such a risky business? Surely not absolute or
relative deprivation, low wages, inflation, or even repression. Repression may
lead to protest movements; bad working conditions and low wages may lead
to strikes; high prices may lead to riots. None, however, will set off a
revolution, unless through a much more complicated process the population
has come to the political conclusion that it is desirable, necessary, and possible

312 Ezrahi, Rubber Bullets, pp. 275, 234.
to radically change the shape of power itself.\textsuperscript{313}

The intifada presented Israel and the world community with an opportunity to influence the Palestinian commando movements into making permanent changes, reinforced by their continual failure to make any progress. Only with difficulty had the use of political tools and nonviolent strategies begun to replace armed struggle. Instead of seizing on this headway and neutralizing the enticement of guerrilla tactics, Israel gave preference to perpetuating the status quo, characterized by its brutal suppression of the uprising and a seeming pattern of Israeli encouragement of the methods favoured by the Qassamite cells of Islamic resistance groups. Eventually—although it took much longer than it should have, as Reuven Gal stated—the realization sunk in that it would be impossible for the Israeli government to crush the uprising through military means. Israel would have to negotiate the way out of the situation, as it was not confronting a military rebellion, but one based fundamentally on nonviolent resistance.

Chapter Seven

UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES, UNCERTAINTIES, AND COLLAPSE

The choice of a nonviolent strategy had unpredicted results for all parties. Among the Palestinians, there was disagreement on what constituted a nonviolent approach. Was the throwing of stones included, or not? Representatives on the Command vacillated. The Islamist blocs, while disagreeing on the overall plan, used some of its tactics. Israeli officials refused to differentiate anything new about the nonviolent methods. The PLO was quick to seize the benefits of the positive international response to the display of political tools, while simultaneously contradicting its own declared support. In the end, ambivalence about the use of nonviolent struggle destroyed the intifada.

Mixing Violent with Nonviolent Strategies

A two-part analysis of the first thirty-nine leaflets of the Command suggests that more than 90 per cent of the appeals in the initial eighteen months of the intifada called for explicitly nonviolent actions, such as strikes, demonstrations, marches, the withholding of taxes, and the boycotting of Israeli products. Leaflets no. 1 to 17 contain an overwhelming majority of appeals for nonviolent measures, including general strikes, local strikes, the raising of Palestinian flags, defiance of school closures, symbolic funerals, the ringing of church bells, and the renaming of streets and schools. Of these appeals, 4.9 per cent are bids for throwing stones or using petrol-filled bottles. A general strike was called on thirty-two occasions, approximately one-fifth of all bidden techniques. Of the twenty-seven different methods of struggle counselled in the first six months, twenty-six are explicitly nonviolent. Of these, seventeen (or roughly 10 per cent) fall into the category of solidarity, such as

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visiting the families and graves of martyrs, financially assisting Palestinian institutions, and agricultural or land-reclamation projects.

Leaflets no. 18 to 39 place substantially more emphasis on economic measures, with 99 appeals that might be classified as economic—an effort to raise the financial costs of the occupation to Israel. Political defiance and classic noncooperation methods comprise the bulk of the remaining appeals: 63 calls for strikes, 28 appeals for noncooperation, 13 bids for consumer boycotts, 21 measures pertaining to popular committees, 21 calls for demonstrations, and 8 appeals for the resignation of all Palestinians from jobs in Israeli institutions. Protest activities called for by the leaflets include the cancellation of holiday celebrations, applying pressure for prisoner releases, appeals for family reunion, and fasting and prayers. Of the 263 appeals in the second group of leaflets, 22 ask for stones to be thrown and 6 call for attacks on traitors. In other words, 90.4 per cent of Leaflets no. 18 to 39 entail specifically nonviolent measures, while 9.6 per cent of the appeals are for violent actions, such as throwing stones or petrol bottles, and measures against collaborators. Of the fifteen methods of nonviolent struggle that were employed by Gandhi (analysed by Johan Galtung), the Palestinians employed fourteen—the exception being *hijra.*

A predisposal of Palestinian communities to protracted and essentially nonviolent struggle can be seen in their restraint despite the thousands of Israeli soldiers in their midst.

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2Galtung, *The Way Is the Goal,* pp. 108–23. On *hijra,* see Muhammad Khalid Masud, "The Obligation to Migrate: The Doctrine of Hijra in Islamic Law", ed. Dale F. Eickelman and James Piscatori, *Muslim Travellers: Pilgrimage, Migration, and the Religious Imagination* (London, Routledge, 1990), pp. 29–49. *Hijra* derives from the Prophet’s migration from Mecca to Medina. For the Palestinians, *samud,* or remaining steadfast, was a nonviolent method preferable to *hijra,* an extreme form of noncooperation involving mass migration to deny the adversary the ability to accomplish his goals. Obviously, to emigrate would not thwart the territorial maximization sought by Likud and the Israeli right. *Hijra* was notably used in East Germany in the 1980s, where it was called ‘exit’. See Roland Bleiker, *Nonviolent Struggle and the Revolution in East Germany,* Monograph Series no. 6 (Cambridge, Massachusetts, Albert Einstein Institution, 1993).

3Israeli soldiers were everywhere, although exact numbers are uncertain. Shyam Bhatia cites 70,000 soldiers deployed in the occupied territories in the spring of 1988. Bhatia, *Uprising Comes of Age,* p. 27. By 1989, perhaps 10,000 soldiers were involved in ‘anti-intifada’ military activities in the territories. Alpher, Eytan, and Tamari, *Middle East Military Balance,* p. 243. According to Israeli analyst Aryeh Shalev, by the second year of the *intifada,* through March 1990, ‘violent activity was perpetrated in the main only by small groups of youths’, to the extent that the IDF reduced its numbers stationed in the West Bank and Gaza by one-third from the previous year. Shalev, ‘Second Year of Intifada’, p. 128.
They would otherwise not have been so disciplined. Gene Sharp notes,

> [G]iven the severity of Israeli repression in the form of beatings, shootings, killings, house demolitions, uprooting of trees, deportations, extended imprisonments and detention without trial ... the Palestinians during the intifadah have shown impressive restraint. Specific instructions ... [were] issued by the ... [PLO] and the leadership in the territories not to use firearms; with few exceptions, the order has been respected. The 15 percent or so of the uprising that is constituted by low-level violence involves chiefly stone throwing.

Examples of self-restraint abound, some as modest as women raising their voices to confuse Israeli soldiers, banging on pots and pans, and blowing whistles. Families wanting to visit their loved ones detained in Ansar 3 went through the Red Cross—as the Command asked—rather than cooperate with Israeli authorities, and the numbers travelling to the infamous detention centre in the Negev declined. On the eve of Yom Kippur in 1988, no violence occurred against persons when youths from the Qalandia camp stopped traffic on the main north-south highway connecting Jerusalem with Ramallah and Nablus. For thirty minutes, beginning at 8:15 P.M., the youths used large boulders and burning tyres to block the road. When an outside light went on at a nearby house, 'a member of the Palestinian team approached the family and politely asked if they could turn the light off'. Daoud Kuttab

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4According to Efraim Inbar, who gives no supporting data for his estimate, 'Only 5 percent of Palestinian activity included the use of firearms'. Efraim Inbar, 'Israel's Small War: The Military Response to the Intifada', *Armed Forces and Society* 18:1 (Autumn 1991): 30. Considering the extremely broad popular participation in the uprising by the Palestinians as noted, such a percentage appears unsupportably high. It is impossible to know what Inbar constitutes as 'Palestinian activity', particularly if held up against the IDF’s own figures for the number of soldiers killed—a clear indication of restraint. As cited in Chapter One, the IDF spokesperson reports that four Israeli soldiers were killed in the West Bank and none in Gaza in 1988; two Israeli soldiers were killed in the West Bank and two in Gaza in 1989; two Israeli soldiers were killed in the West Bank and one in Gaza in 1990; and one Israeli soldier was killed in the West Bank and none in Gaza in 1991. During the same period, 706 Palestinians were killed by Israelis. Lieutenant Colonel Yehuda Weinraub, communication, 18 March 1997.


7This example of finding a way to visit loved ones without interaction with the occupation authorities is recounted in an essay by a reserve IDF officer who is scathingly critical of Israeli policy—one of the earliest descriptions of the intifada published in the Hebrew news media. It first appeared in the monthly *Monitir* in spring 1988, reprinted in 'Gaza Hell-Hole', *Jerusalem Quarterly* 53 (Winter 1990): 62–3.
reports the action was ‘well planned’ and ‘disciplined and organised’. 8

Indeed, the evidence shows conspicuous control of violence for the first two years of the intifada, and well into the third, and even after that, the uprising did not exhibit organized violence. Yet Frisch labels the uprising as ‘prolonged violence’, and interprets the ‘proliferation of diffuse, small-scale organizations’ as necessary support for this intended battery. 9 Compelling Israeli evidence on the restraint of arms notwithstanding, and despite the contrast with the anarchic Qassamite armed resistance of the late 1930s, such reductionism persists. Perhaps it is because, as Edy Kaufman commented, when stones were thrown, Israelis saw them as rocks—by which he meant that Israelis apprehended them as large, hard projectiles thrown with harmful intent. 10 Since Israeli political leaders often found it expedient to underscore what they regarded as the ‘violent nature’ of the Palestinians, Kaufman writes, the stones reinforced the ‘already acute perceptions of fear in large sections of the population’. 11 Sharp concedes that the throwing of stones was mild compared to the beatings and shootings of Palestinians by Israeli soldiers. Israeli settlers in the West Bank and Gaza would later take licence and be provided with guns to use against the Palestinians, yet he agrees with Kaufman in that the stones were not merely symbolic as the Palestinians allege, because rocks had killed Israelis: ‘Israelis can almost never see a stone thrown at them as a relatively nonviolent expression of rage and a cry for justice’, because it invokes memories of the Nazi Holocaust, ‘triggering highly disproportionate and irrational responses’. 12 Additionally, Sharp argues, throwing stones guaranteed high Palestinian

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10 Edy Kaufman, one-hour interview (Jerusalem, 15 December 1997).


casualties, thus it is ‘extremely difficult to find a Palestinian justification of this heavy price in terms of the instrumental effectiveness of that form of action’. Haj ‘Abd observed, ‘With Mubarak’s way, we did not lose people. With the intifada, we lost people, because of the stones’. The throwing of stones must thus be assessed more fully.

**Throwing Stones**

Readings of the stones range from the romantic to the hyperbolic to the absurd. Residents of the West Bank and Gaza say that their use is traditional and at the outbreak of the intifada was spontaneous. Stones appear in biblical narratives as punitive actions and had been thrown during the 1920s and 1930s Palestinian resistance. During the intifada, the throwing of stones was part of almost any demonstration—impromptu or planned—and could be provoked by Israeli soldiers closing the entrance to a camp or an Israeli-inflicted injury. Fateh, the DFLP, and the PFLP never repudiated their use. Rarely was the throwing of stones isolated. It was usually organized and undertaken, Daoud Kuttab writes, by a large group including children, youths, and adults, both women and men.

Most Palestinians interviewed see the practice as hard evidence that they were not

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13 Ibid. Italics in original.

14 Abu-Diab, interview (11 December 1997).

15 Ian Lustick’s view of the uprising as a revolt of violence is misleading, but his analysis of ‘solipsistic’ violence may be germane. Invoking the view that Self is the only real Knowledge, he suggests that the main purpose of inflicting destruction or death by both Zionists and Palestinians has been to alter the mind set of one’s own group—rather than to affect the other. Zionist terrorism and Palestinian armed struggle were not intended to change the opponent, he claims, but to boost internal group psychology. A shift has occurred in which both sides are now trying to alter the behaviour of the opposite side when violence is used. Lustick alleges that ‘high levels of national self-esteem’ resulted from ‘decades of the use of solipsistic violence by Palestinians inside and outside’. Lustick, ‘Changing Rationales for Political Violence’, pp. 75, 76.

16 ‘The youngest category ... the 7–10 age group ... are seen rolling the tyres to the middle of the road, pouring some gasoline on them and [striking] a match to light them. ... The burning of the tyre will keep cars from traveling that particular road and at the same time would attract soldiers. ... The 11–14 age group is involved in putting up large stones in the road to slow down or stop traffic ... [or] using home-made slingshots. ... The 15–19 group are the veteran stone throwers. Normally masked with keffiyehs ... to hide their identity, this group can leave the worst damage on a passing car. ... They are sought after most by the Israelis. ... Speed and knowledge of their turf gives them a big advantage over the soldiers who are loaded with equipment and who have to travel in units so they will not be trapped. Young Palestinians over 19 take key positions in order to lead the entire team. They are in contact with onlookers on the hills and high houses [who] ... direct the stone throwers’. Kuttab, original draft of ‘Profile of the Stonethrowers’, p. 6.
using weapons. Stones may have been weapons during the Stone Age, a Palestinian political scientist granted; but in the intifada they were concrete symbols of the absence of weaponry: ‘This is neither a weapon nor a guerrilla strike. . . . It symbolizes that these people are naked against an occupier. . . . It symbolized nonviolence, it symbolized the nonaccessability—no presence—of weapons in the hands of the people’. 17 ‘Stones—in place of the Kalashnikov—became the prime weapon. If the outside world did not at first grasp its significance, the Israeli leadership positively refused to do so’. 18 Daoud Kuttab ascribed two aims to the stones:

One, it was a weapon that was widely available, everywhere, and it left no traces. Two, it was influenced by the Israeli settlements process. Everywhere, they [settlers] were driving daily from their houses, commuting; therefore, the roads through Palestinian land became very important. In other words, the people were there, and the non-lethal weapon was there. The intifada was a protest against the occupation, not against Israel. What it said was that this is our land; if you trespass without a visa or permission, you will be harassed. 19

Two geographers who reduce the intifada to a long event of unadulterated violence, nonetheless confirm Kuttab’s image of contested territory by concluding that centres of violence were adjacent to the main roads, where friction between Palestinians and Israeli settlers was most intense. 20 Middle East analyst Joe Stork observes that the same stones used

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17 Bishara, interview (17 June 1995). This view is expressed by a Bangladeshi analyst who notes that unarmed Palestinians were ‘confronting the regular army of Israel with mere stones and pebbles’. Abul Kalam Azad, Intifada—The New Dimension to Palestinian Struggle, BIIIS Papers 11 (Dhaka, Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies, 1990), p. 71.


by the Palestinians had been quarried to build ‘fortress suburbs’ for the Israeli settlements.21 If nothing else, Chaim Bermant notes, the stones showed that occupation has its price and pushed the issue to the forefront of the national Israeli agenda.22 The 1967 boundaries were redrawn by the stones, as, apart from armed settlers, Israelis increasingly choose not to venture beyond the Green Line.23 During the uprising, Bermant points out that arguments were taking place in the Knesset between Labour and Likud on territorial concessions in return for peace over the heads of the Palestinians, as if they were not involved; ‘The Arabs have now shown that it is very much their business and, in the absence of a ballot, they have voted with stones’.24

Little hard evidence can be found that the stones were intended to be murderous.25 Rabbi David Hartman, who on the Israeli spectrum falls in the binational tradition of Martin Buber and Judah Magnes, was hit in the face by a stone that could have killed him. Not surprisingly, he considers the stones not as symbolic instruments of protest, but of murder.26 Mubarak Awad viewed the throwing of stones as violent:

It upset many Palestinians who attended Mubarak’s workshops in the autumn of 1983 that he declared stone throwing to be violence. But he also said that the children were courageous. In their own small way, he maintained—then, and during the *intifada*—the children were doing something about the occupation, while their elders were often doing nothing to end the occupation. He often made this point in his early lectures, but he always classified stone-throwing as violent.27


22 Chaim Bermant, ‘Struggle for Israel’s Soul: Arab Question That Is Crucial to This Week’s Election’, *Observer Sunday*, 30 October 1988, p. 25.


25 By mid-1988, not one Israeli soldier had died from thrown stones. The soldiers were under orders to shoot only when their lives were in danger, therefore Daoud Kuttab contends ‘in the case of the hundreds of Palestinians killed or badly wounded in the upper parts of the body, soldiers’ lives were not in danger’. Daoud Kuttab, ‘Shooting at Demonstrators, What Is the Israeli Policy?’ dispatch to news media, East Jerusalem, mid-1988, Kuttab private papers. By mid-January 1988, Israeli soldiers had been given orders to fire low-calibre rifles at the legs of leaders. Goodman, ‘Army Meets a New Palestinian’.


27 Nancy Nye, personal communication (Washington, D.C., 3 July 1995).
To the Palestinians of the occupied territories, the hurled stones were meant to impede and harass—not to kill—the occupying Israeli military forces and the Israeli settlers in the West Bank and Gaza. Hafid Barghouti, editor of al-Hayat al-Jadida, sought to sum up the issue when he declared, 'No Israeli was killed by stones', and there were no lethal injuries from 'stones in the face'. A hunger striker commented, 'It is not a hobby for us to throw stones or Molotov cocktails. We are normal people', but oppression accumulates until 'it will express itself'. According to a strategic studies group in Tel Aviv,

Not even the most brilliant public relations campaign could have nullified or even moderated the powerful message generated worldwide by television images of the disturbances, and primarily violent behavior by IDF soldiers against stone-throwing youths and against women and children. The result was to drive home the point that the IDF was an occupation army facing a civilian population fighting for its political right of self-determination. The fact of having mounted physical resistance, despite the occupying army’s military might and external backing, cut across generations and broke the stigma of narrowly defined traditional sexual roles, as grandmothers cracked rocks and mothers stood sentry. ‘The family pecking order has been turned on its head. . . . Children are on the front lines, the women are backing them up, the wage earner is in all likelihood jailed or unemployed’. With the whole population engaged, social relations within the family structure were redrawn in favour of youth, who gained newfound respect. Also, class status had little bearing, as shown when two hundred Palestinian lawyers joined a Gaza protest early in the

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30 Shalev, Intifada: Causes and Effects, p. 41.

31 Daoud Kuttab’s original draft of ‘A Profile of the Stonethrowers’ notes a triple-team formation that includes women: ‘The first team is composed of lookouts, whose job it is from their positions on rooftops to indicate when and from where the army is coming. This team often includes women, who use their own homes as observation points. The second team is basically defensive in nature: its main task is to cover the offensive team [the third] when it takes on a particular mission’.

32 Rouhana, ‘Children and the Intifada’, p. 117.

33 Tamari, ‘Time to Converse Calmly’.
intifada. 'Hoary heads and dozens of men in suits, ties, and polished shoes' were added to the ranks within minutes of arriving at a hospital where, surrounded by soldiers, they were reported as throwing stones.³⁴

The stones contributed to a widely held image of 'stone-throwing children in the role of "David" confronting the gigantic military might of the Israeli "Goliath"'.³⁵ The fearlessness of the young caught the eye of some Israelis, according to Israeli Brigadier General (Res.) Giora Forman: 'Some top IDF officers admire the bravery shown by the Palestinian youth . . . [who] have demonstrated unusual courage.' 'Their actions aren't terrorism—but rather the actions of a national movement'.³⁶ A journalist notes,

Demonstrators chose targets carefully, setting afire military vehicles and Israeli busses [sic], attacking police stations, smashing Israeli bank windows and even storming an Israeli army outpost in the middle of Jabalya. On days of total strike, when transportation was also supposed to halt, even cars bearing Gaza's distinctive grey license plates might come under a hail of stones. Yet there were no attacks on any of a dozen Israeli resort settlements and no Israeli fatalities or even serious injuries from the several million stones that must have been tossed.³⁷

Israeli officials claimed that any non-use of weaponry by Palestinians was due to the success of the Israeli policy of preventing arms from reaching them, but circumstantial evidence supports the Palestinian claim that Palestinians had elected not to use the few weapons they possessed.³⁸ By early February 1988, as fifty-one Arabs had died, 'most shot

³⁴Machool, 'This Isn't Rebellion', p. 15. 'The Israelis more than once stormed the Shifa hospital in the Gaza Strip and arrested, against the advice and the warning of the physicians, . . . a number of people who were receiving treatment in the hospital'. Abu-Amr, 'Social Conditions in the Refugee Camps', p. 15 1.


³⁶Peretz, Intifada, p. 87.


³⁸Although Ze'ev Schiff and Ehud Ya'ari come to a false conclusion in asserting that the restraint of arms was 'instinctive', they are correct in observing that 'bona fide weapons were never to be found in the hands of the insurgents' and in judging that a fundamental decision to dispense with armed struggle had been
dead by Israeli soldiers’, Israeli military sources were reportedly concerned that ‘the rising
death toll was now putting pressure on Palestinians with access to firearms to open up their
weapons caches’. Restrained was willful:

Protesters have relied on slingshots, catapults, stones, ball-bearings, bottles
and primitive petrol bombs in confronting armed Israeli soldiers. . . . Since the
unrest flared on December 9, security forces had found Soviet-made AK-47 rifiles, explosives and hand grenades in the territories.

‘Crude home-made handguns’ might be found in refugee camps and handguns be seized by
demonstrators from Israeli police or settlers during confrontations, but, the Jerusalem Post
concludes, ‘all the weapons were later returned or found during searches’. ‘The army and
Palestinians said this restraint was both deliberate policy to avoid escalating the conflict too
soon and common sense as the rebellion depended on mobilizing civilians’. To Salim
Tamari,

The side that has always been known about Palestinian resistance is the
military side, but during the intifada, another form of resistance emerged with
the formation of popular committees, strikes, and civil disobedience. This is
significant . . . because it gave the Palestinian individual faith in his ability to

made. Schiff and Ya’ari, Intifada, p. 120. The first Israeli-Palestinian gun battle in the intifada did not occur
until 19 May 1989, seventeen months after the start of the uprising, in a village fifteen miles southwest of
Jerusalem. Trapped after a car chase with three military vehicles, a squad of local Palestinians fired with stolen
IDF-issued automatic weapons, killing one soldier and wounding seven others. All of the Palestinians were
killed. Glenn Frankel, ‘Clashes Kill Eight Palestinians, Israeli Soldier; Uprising Produces First Major
Killed; Soldier among Dead; Another Five Palestinians Slain in Gaza Strip’, Los Angeles Times, 20 May 1989,
p. 10. IDF chief of staff Dan Shomron stated, ‘This is not intifada. In this intifada, which is basically a popular
uprising, there are armed terrorist squads who primarily terrorize the local population’. The operation was
carried out by the Syrian-backed Abu Musa faction, Fateh-Uprising led by Col. Sa’id Musa, which had tried to
unseat Arafat in 1983. Arafat used the occasion of the gun battle to reiterate, ‘There is always a limit for
patience . . . but until this moment we have not yet decided on the use of arms by our Palestinian people, and
our masses are fully committed to this position’. Joel Greenberg, ‘Arafat: No Guns, but Limit to Patience;
Armed Clash Not Seen as Intifada “Turning Point”’, Jerusalem Post, 21 May 1989.

Sixty days after the start of the uprising, the Jerusalem Post and Reuters confirmed from Gaza the
conscious repudiation of weaponry: ‘In two months of unrest, Palestinian protesters have not fired a single
bullet or used explosives other than petrol bombs’. Smerdon, Israeli Army Fears’.  

Smerdon, ‘Israeli Army Fears’. Don Peretz notes, ‘caches of small arms believed to have been
secreted by some PLO factions [were] strictly forbidden by the leaders of the uprising’. Peretz, ‘Intifada and
Middle East Peace’, p. 392. Stockpiles of guns in the West Bank and Gaza had remained unused. Yehuda

Smerdon, ‘Israeli Army Fears’. Even three years into the uprising, a report by London’s
International Institute for Strategic Studies notes that the intifada ‘continues unabated but without the
anticipated rise in the use by the Palestinians of firearms and explosives which remains at a very low level’.
stand against one of the most important military authorities in the world. The Palestinian individual stood against this force with his body unarmed.\textsuperscript{42}

Opposition to the use of weaponry sprang from the ‘power and popular nature of the unarmed uprising’, as well as the realization that the Palestinians faced ‘huge human loss if they started shooting instead of throwing stones’.\textsuperscript{43}

The effect of the uprising on the mastery of fear should be neither romanticized nor exaggerated, yet it should be noted. ‘Paralyzing fear, which led Palestinians to regulate and censor themselves, was shattered by the children in the streets’, who neutralized the military prowess of Israel by ‘showing that they were ready to die. They so radically turned the tables that the soldiers became afraid of them’.\textsuperscript{44} Overcoming fear is an essential point of embarkation for nonviolent direct action, particularly where the adversaries of the civilian protagonists possess a vastly superior military apparatus.\textsuperscript{45} ‘Fear is the greatest weapon in the hands of the authorities’, Deena Hurwitz writes, noting that ‘nonviolence … engenders a high degree of self-empowerment’.\textsuperscript{46} Daoud Kuttab states,

For twenty years the Israeli army was able to control the occupied territories using only 600 soldiers. The population was kept under control because they

\textsuperscript{42}Tamari, ‘Time to Converse Calmly’.

\textsuperscript{43}Kuttab, ‘Crossing Point’, p. 2. Having largely ended cross-border attacks from Lebanon, in late 1988 and early 1989 Fateh created an underground Popular Army—also known as Assault Groups—to carry out armed operations inside Israel and the occupied territories. David B. Ottaway, ‘Arafat Faction of PLO Linked to Terrorism, Israelis Charge’, \textit{Washington Post}, 2 February 1989. The unilateral proposal of Fateh in the diaspora to set up such a Palestinian clandestine force came as a blow inside the territories—to Fateh, factions on the left, and the communists—and was opposed by all three.\textsuperscript{41}—Anba, Kuwait, 19 January 1989, as cited in Frisch, ‘Diffusion and Consolidation’, pp. 51, 61 en 43.

\textsuperscript{44}Kuttab, ‘Children’s Revolt’, p. 27.

\textsuperscript{45}Sharp assisted by Jenkins, \textit{Civilian-Based Defense}, p. 50.

\textsuperscript{46}Hurwitz, ‘Nonviolence in the Occupied Territories’, p. 23. The development of a body of intifada humour substantiates the abandonment of fear and is indicative of the Palestinians’ “attitude toward the self”. Bir Zeit anthropology professor Sharif Kanaana’s analysis of two hundred jokes from the uprising found the largest category to involve competition with the Israelis. He found no ethnic humour, nor slurs against the Jewish people. The lampooned were neither Israeli civilians nor even settlers, but solely the Israeli army. In the jests, ‘when Palestinians manage to get hold of an Israeli soldier and overpower him, they never harm him. What they usually do in these stories is to try to humiliate the army to which he belongs’. Kanaana’s badinage reflects a mood, in which whenever a Palestinian confronted an Israeli, the Palestinian was depicted as superior, or, at a minimum, equal. Sharif Kanaana, ‘Encounters with Folklore: Humor of the Palestinian Intifada’, \textit{Journal of Folklore Research} 27:3 (1990): 233, 234, 235.
feared the army. Since the beginning of the intifada, this fear has evaporated, and even with ten times as many soldiers, Palestinians have not shown any sign of fear.\[^{47}\]

Rejecting fear, Palestinians in West Bank villages exhibited a pattern of great persistence during the intifada, where conviction on the need for civil resistance, as opposed to armed actions, was more strongly and deeply rooted than it was in refugee camps and cities or in Gaza.\[^{48}\] According to Sharp, the success of nonviolent methods often hinges on discipline despite repression:

> A shift to violence would alter the conflict from an asymmetrical one of nonviolent against violent weapons (which has great advantages for the civilian defenders) to a symmetrical one in which both sides are using violent weapons (which generally accords greater advantage to the better-equipped attackers).\[^{49}\]

Although the Palestinians were outweighed by Israel's modern army, intelligence services, and machinery of occupation, behaviour such as throwing stones or Molotov cocktails—classified as violent—constituted perhaps 15 per cent of the intifada.\[^{50}\] Towards the end of the second year of the uprising Sharp estimates, 'The intifadah has thus far been

\[^{47}\]Daoud Kuttab, 'Israeli Military Campaign to Restore Fear among Palestinians', dispatch to news media, East Jerusalem, August 1988, Kuttab private papers. Ian Lustick rightly notes that overcoming fear was an objective in the Palestinian intifada, yet nothing uncovered by this research suggests, as does Lustick, that it was through the throwing of stones or Molotov cocktails that this objective was attained. Lustick is correct in noting that the uprising took 'national self-confidence strong enough to organize suffering as an act of courage, not humiliation' and 'moderate enough for Israelis to contemplate'. Ian S. Lustick, 'Changing Rationales for Political Violence in the Arab-Israeli Conflict', Journal of Palestine Studies 77 (Autumn 1990): 75, 76. This study suggests that far more important in the Palestinian mastery of fear evidenced by the intifada was the realization that the Palestinians could withdraw submission to occupation and substitute self-reliance.

\[^{48}\]According to Ziad Abu Zayyad, the popular Palestinian consciousness of gains from the disavowal of violence was 'very deep', and the conviction was widespread that achievements had resulted 'because we did not use arms'. Lewis and Cygielman, 'Only the Intifada Ensures the Political Process', p. 29.

\[^{49}\]Sharp, Civilian-Based Defense, p. 95.

\[^{50}\]Sharp, 'Intifadah and Nonviolent Struggle', p. 7.
distinguished on the Palestinian side by predominantly nonviolent forms of struggle—
perhaps 85 percent of the total resistance—along with certain types of “limited violence,”
such as stone throwing and petrol bombs, and occasionally more serious violence. 51

Israeli political scientist Yaron Ezrahi concludes that the ‘most significant fact’ about
the uprising was the ‘Palestinian discovery that stones can be much more eloquent than
bullets’. 52 In Ezrahi’s analysis, the stones had a definitive effect on Israeli self-perceptions:

By eschewing firearms in favour of stones and broken bottles, the demonstrating
Palestinians defined the use of firearms by Israeli soldiers as illegitimate surplus
force. . . . The Intifada dramatized the ambiguities between the roles of Israeli
military force as an instrument of defense and as a means of domination. As such,
the Intifada was a powerful attack on the Israeli defense ethos. . . . [It] reminded
all concerned that incorporating the occupied territories would in fact commit
Israel to the perpetual use of its military to control and repress not ‘Arab
refugees’ but the whole Palestinian nation living on these lands. 53

Regardless, the stones—no matter their symbolism or availability in the rocky
soil—let antagonists to criticize the uprising as violent, thus diminishing its political results.

Islamic Groups Flout Nonviolent Resistance

Five days after Gazan funerals exploded into the intifada, the Islamic Resistance
Movement, or Hamas, was officially established on 14 December 1987 and issued its
first leaflet. 54 Hamas demonstrators in Gaza lived in the refugee camps, and Israeli military
chiefs were quoted observing that the Islamic ‘fundamentalists’ were ‘inciting more
intensively and more effectively than the PLO activists’. 55 While the Muslim Brotherhood, of
which Hamas is an offshoot, remained outside the nationalist consensus that identified with

51 Ibid., p. 3.

52 Ezrahi, Rubber Bullets, p. 204.

53 Ibid., pp. 204–5, 275.

54 Jamil Hamami, one-hour interview (East Jerusalem, 15 December 1997). Hamami was a leader of
Hamas at the time. Nissim Rejwan, ‘Hamas: “From the Sea to the River”’, Jerusalem Post, 19 December
1990.

the PLO, in choosing the name Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas was seeking a more militant stance capable of resuscitating the Brotherhood in the supercharged atmosphere of the uprising. On 18 August 1988 Hamas circulated a ‘covenant’ on the West Bank laying out its rejection of compromise on the question of Palestine. Before the covenant’s issuance, Hamas had all but stopped dissemination of its own separate leaflets, as a result of informal coordination between Islamic revivalists and the Command. The covenant’s publication by a professional print shop was seen as a turning point, as was the first-time use by a Palestinian Islamic movement of the term ‘covenant’, or mithaq, as employed in the PLO’s 1968 charter. In this avowedly political document, Hamas calls itself for the first time a part of the Palestinian nationalist movement, having traced its origins to Shaykh ‘Izz al-Din al-Qassam, whom it claims as a member of the Muslim Brotherhood. It speaks mollifyingly about the national movement, calling the PLO ‘the closest to the heart of the Islamic Resistance Movement, father and brother, next of kin and friend’.

In its covenant, Hamas views all of historic Palestine as waqf, or Islamic trust; no

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[56] The organizations comprising the PLO never chose to ‘Islamize’ the broad front politically, in part because of the prominence of Christians such as George Habash and Nayef Hawatmeh, and because of the historical contributions made by Palestinian Christians to the liberation movement.


[61] Covenant of Hamas, Article Seven, p. 7.

[62] Ibid., Article Twenty-seven, p. 25.
portion of Palestine may be relinquished, because it ‘should be consecrated to Muslim
generations’ until Judgement Day. Inherent in this position is rejection of a Palestinian state
based on territorial compromise. Article Thirteen says ‘there is no solution for the Palestinian
question except through Jihad’; thus, ‘initiatives, and so-called peaceful solutions and
international conferences’ are not ‘capable of realising the demands, restoring the rights or
doing justice to the oppressed’, their being ‘a waste of time and vain endeavours’. As
Beverley Milton-Edwards notes,

The application of the concept [of jihad] to the Palestinian context and to the
popular and non-violent campaign of the uprising is a reflection of the Hamas
agenda for political control of the intifada and its competition with the
nationalist movement. In essence, the organization appears to be striving to
straddle... nationalist and Islamic approaches to the nature of the Palestinian
uprising.

The Hamas view of jihad was both ‘fluid’ and ‘prosaic’, and nationalism was declared to be
‘part of the religious creed’. Although from its inception Hamas represented a powerful
rejection of the underlying principles that were with difficulty being delineated in the
intifada, it saw fit to cooperate with the nationalists. Hamas was never part of the Command,
according to Hatem ‘Abd al-Qader Eid, but maintained a personal contact with the
cooperative. When large demonstrations were planned for Jerusalem and the West Bank, ‘we
asked Hamas to cooperate with us’; ‘it was very easy with them, but not with Islamic Jihad’.

After the massive Gazan funerals that signalled the start of the intifada, one of the
earliest contacts by Shaykh Ahmad Yasin, symbolic spiritual leader of the Muslim
Brotherhood and founder of Hamas, was with Shaykh Jamil Hamami, an earnest young
Jerusalem preacher at al-Aqsa mosque. Shaykh Jamil would become Shaykh Ahmad’s key

63Ibid., Article Eleven, pp. 9–10.
64Ibid., Article Thirteen, pp. 11, 12.
65Beverley Milton-Edwards, ‘The Concept of Jihad and the Palestinian Islamic Movement: A
66Ibid., p. 52; Covenant of Hamas, Article Twelve, p. 10.
67Eid, interview (28 January 1996).
contact with the West Bank, the main link between the West Bank and Gaza Brotherhoods, and on a Jordanian salary. Eventually, he became the senior Hamas official in the West Bank and the ‘liaison officer’ between Hamas and the Command:

There was no formal connexion between the Command and Hamas, but there was communication under the table. When speaking of the leadership of Hamas in the West Bank, Hamas was a part of the Muslim Brotherhood, but it became independent after one year of the intifada, although the Muslim Brotherhood continued to help Hamas with the news media.

Al-Jihad al-Islami, or Islamic Jihad, distinguished itself from Hamas by its more revolutionary style, emphasis on Palestine rather than a broad Muslim vision with transnational aspirations, indifference to Arab regimes, and sympathy with the Iranian Revolution.

Fourteen months prior to the intifada, militants from Jihad had instigated spectacular strikes against Israel; indeed, Islamic Jihad is still convinced that it was their daring exploits that ignited the intifada. On 15 October 1986, Jihad mounted a grenade attack on the elite Israeli Giv'ati Brigade during a graduation ceremony in front of the Western Wall of the Temple Mount, or al-Haram al-Sharif. In this notorious Gate of Moors operation, seventy soldiers were wounded and the father of a conscript killed. Later, a gaolbreak from a Gaza prison in May 1987 freed six Jihad leaders. In August, an Israeli was shot at a Gaza intersection by an individual ostensibly linked to Jihad. In response, a series of

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69 Hamami, interview (15 December 1997).

70 Though Sunni, Jihad admired the achievements of the Iranian Revolution, but received no instructions from abroad. Hamas saw the victory of Islam as paramount and the first step in the resolution of the Palestinian problem, but Jihad gave the struggle against Zionism and elimination of Israel priority over religious education. Armed struggle, initially rejected by the Muslim Brotherhood, was part of Jihad’s strategy. Michal Sela, ‘The Islamic Factor’, *Jerusalem Post*, 25 October 1989. See also IDF spokesman, ‘Jihad’s Affinity to Fatah’, tr. Denise Ben-Dor, *Jerusalem Post*, 3 February 1988, p. 5.


72 Ibid., p. 96. Israeli claims are not disputed by Ziad Abu-Amr that the Jihad cell which carried out the Gate of Moors, or Dung Gate, attack was trained by Fateh. He cites the difficulty of discerning whether the connexion was with Fateh itself or a smaller group associated with it, and notes the Jihad claim that Fateh and others were clinging to Jihad’s coat-tails. Abu-Amr, *Islamic Fundamentalism*, pp. 96, 110–12. Also see IDF spokesman, ‘Jihad’s Affinity to Fatah’, p. 5; Sela, ‘Islamic Factor’.
ambushes and strikes by Israeli security forces in Gaza resulted in the death of three Jihad members on 1 October 1987, plus four more a few days later. In November, Israel arrested (and later deported) Shaykh 'Abd al-‘Aziz ‘Awda, who taught at the Islamic University in Gaza and is considered a founder of Jihad. Although the actions of Islamic Jihad were never more than nuisances to Israel, their exploits provoked feelings of self-reproach among those Palestinians who had taken no action against the worsening conditions of occupation: 'More than any other political group, Jihad was responsible for breaking the cognitive barrier of fatalism and demonstrating that Palestinian empowerment against Israel was possible'.

Jihad’s leaflets and graffiti avoided open confrontation with the nationalist groups and did not preclude allusions to a Palestinian state—despite its bid for a jihad to liberate all of Palestine. Its efforts to destabilize the Israeli military apparatus and its paramilitary operations during the otherwise nonviolent intifada involved individual isolated attacks.

While the Command in the intifada had no formal representation from Islamic Jihad, Lisa Taraki asserts that a reciprocal relationship between Jihad and the Command became evident soon after the Command developed a structure. Islamic Jihad was more compatible than Hamas with the secular orientation of the four major groups on the Command and more

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72 Robinson, 'Creating Space', p. 276. Said Aburish writes that when a group 'with the ominous name of Islamic Jihad' called a strike day on 6 September 1990, his family in Bethany and other Palestinian folk were afraid; it was 'the first time this underground religious group had advocated any overt protest', and they could not decide if the call was serious. The Command said nothing. The fear resulted not from association with a group of the same name in Lebanon; rather, 'everybody admitted that they . . . did not want to run foul of an unknown group that might resort to violence. . . . Islamic Jihad didn't frighten people because it had a specific history or identity, but because it was an unknown quantity with an implicit commitment to violence'. After it had carried out several armed attacks, however, including a suicide mission against Israeli soldiers, no one questioned Jihad's right to call strikes. Said K. Aburish, Cry Palestine: Inside the West Bank (Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1991), pp. 30, 37-8.


75 On contacts between the two groups, see Taraki, 'Islamic Resistance Movement', p. 32. Hatem 'Abd al-Qader Eid disputes whether Islamic Jihad was in close contact with the Command: 'I didn't know anyone from Jihad. I had heard about the Jihad, but I personally didn't know anybody from Jihad, but [representatives on the Command] knew lots of Hamas people'. Eid, interview (28 January 1996).
inclined to action than Hamas. Many local committees had representatives from Jihad, as well as from Hamas, despite the eventual policy of opposition to both the goals and strategies of the intifada by Hamas. Yet the intifada provoked a 'fatal blow' to Jihad, whose leaders were killed or arrested; without 'bench players', Sela notes, Jihad almost disappeared from the political map.

Fateh and Hamas together were thought to have the support of approximately two-thirds of the Palestinian population, but they had clashed more often than any other Palestinian political entities in the territories. In 1988, when the Command proffered the possibility of a formal seat for a Hamas representative, Hamas leaders made acceptance contingent on the expulsion of the PCP, a proposition instantly rejected by the Command. Tension rose two years later, when in 1990 the PLO rejected Hamas's demands that 40 or 50 per cent of the seats in the PNC be allocated to Hamas. Indeed, and not for the last time, armed clashes occurred between Hamas and Fateh in Tulkarem and Gaza in September 1990; however, shared opposition to a foreign presence in the Persian Gulf, a result of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, brought Fateh and Hamas together, and their respective leaders met outside the occupied territories. A thirteen-point 'Charter of Honour' between Fateh and Hamas resulted and was jointly signed on 18 September 1990. Shaykh Jamil explained:

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78 Islamic Jihad was ideologically close to Fateh. The Abu Jihad 'Western Front Command' of Fateh had tried to encourage Jihad as a fighting arm against the occupation as early as 1982. Sela, 'Islamic Factor'.

79 Even though some popular committees had both Islamic blocs represented, they did not include the military tendencies that were knowingly resuscitating the thinking of Shaykh Izz al-Din al-Qassam. Hamas and Islamic Jihad each have Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades. Graham Usher, 'Israel Burns the Palestinian Haystack', Middle East International, 15 March 1996, pp. 3–5; David Hoffman, 'The Making of a "Martyr" ', Washington Post, 12 March 1996, p. A1. Hamas created the Qassam Brigades for suicide missions, although the number of actual fighting personnel may not have exceeded one hundred. Ibrahim, 'Many Faces of Hamas'. See also William Drozdiak, 'Steadily, Hamas Fills a Social Void', International Herald Tribune, 18 August 1997, p. 1.

80 The crushing of Jihad by Israeli security forces at the end of 1987 had been a factor in mobilizing the entire Gazan populace to take to the streets in mass demonstrations. Sela, 'Islamic Factor'.


82 Frankel, 'Hardline Arab Group', p. 20.

83 Rejwan, 'Hamas: "From the Sea to the River" '. See also Jon Immanuel, 'Kill Sellers of Jerusalem Property, Leaflet Urges', Jerusalem Post, 3 September 1991.
There were primary differences between the Command and Hamas; we never agreed on any issue. This continued for two or three years with no formal coordination. After three years, the situation made it imperative to develop new mechanisms. At the time, the Israeli occupation had started playing on the differences between the various groups.\(^4\) This led to the 'pact of honour'. Feisel Husseini signed for Fateh, and I signed for Hamas.\(^5\)

The statement called for cooperation based on 'mutual respect'. Among the issues faced were clashes between Fateh and Hamas groups in Israeli gaols, where the prisoners' movement had not until then been accepting Hamas members. By September 1990, the situation had changed with the rising number of Hamas prisoners gaol ed by Israel, and this reality was reflected in the Charter of Honour.\(^6\) After Hamas and the Command agreed to respect each others' protest activities, joint parades and demonstrations followed in Nablus.\(^7\) In late 1991, however, forty persons were wounded in clashes between Hamas and Fateh supporters in Gaza.\(^8\)

In December 1992, Qassamites from Hamas stepped up armed forays against Israeli security forces. Hamas members ambushed an Israeli military patrol, raking it with machine gun fire and killing three soldiers in what was considered an unprecedented blow to the record of unarmed struggle during the previous five years of the intifada.\(^9\) Prior to the attack, fewer than twenty Israeli soldiers had died in the intifada.\(^10\) Prime Minister Yitzhak

\(^{4}\)Prior to the intifada, the Israeli government may have believed that Islamic groups would siphon off Palestinian nationalist sentiment into more benign channels, a view expressed as 'divide the opponents and keep the territories'. 'Violent Islam Outlawed'. Michal Sela writes that the Israeli security forces found tension between Hamas and the Command useful. Sela, ""Resistance Is a Moslem Duty"", p. 9. 'Israel even went so far as to arm the Islamic organizations'. Idem, 'The Islamic Factor', Jerusalem Post, 25 October 1989.

\(^{5}\)Hamami, interview (15 December 1997).

\(^{6}\)Ibid. Hamas had obtained representation in the higher committee of the prisoners' movement by autumn 1990 and become fully accepted in the movement. By 1997, the leader of the movement, elected by prisoners in all Israeli gaols, was from Hamas. Ibid. As New Outlook notes, Israel's incarcerations in effect assisted the recruitment efforts of the Gazan Islamic blocs, whose inmates were able to give lessons and proselytize. 'Islamic Groups', p. 32.


Rabin reacted by ordering the arrest of 1,200 Palestinians and the deportation of some 400 members of Hamas and Islamic Jihad. As rioting broke out in the curfewed West Bank and Gaza, Israel bussed 415 hooded and handcuffed Islamists to a bleak valley in the 'no-man's land' between Lebanon proper and the Israeli self-declared 'security zone' in southern Lebanon. The action had the stunning effect of unifying the Palestinian nationalist factions and the Islamic revivalists. Television coverage of freezing but defiant Palestinian professionals, academicians, and scholars in green parkas in a snow-bound encampment resulted in worldwide condemnation of Israel.

Near Rabin's residence in Jerusalem on 17 December, fifty Yesh G'vul demonstrators protested the deportations. For the first time, Fateh and Hamas united in the issuance of a joint leaflet, co-authored by Sari Nusseibeh and Shaykh Jamil. The shared flyer cancelled the general strikes that had been planned, on the supposition that the streets would be crowded in the absence of strikes, making it simpler to spark demonstrations. The leaflet read in part, 'We are coordinating together to escalate the jihad [struggle] in all its forms in order to bring back the deportees and resist the occupation. . . . We call on the striking forces of both Hamas and the unified Command to coordinate in the field and burn the ground from under the feet of the occupiers'. The combined leaflet also called for commercial strikes, a sit-in, and marches in front of the International Committee of the Red Cross in East Jerusalem. Nusseibeh's ire

93 The deported were theoreticians, fund raisers, and heads of Islamic institutions, 'not gunmen'. 'Israel Expels 400 Palestinians as Threat', St. Petersburg Times, 18 December 1992, p. 1A.
95 Hamami, interview (15 December 1997); Nusseibeh, interview (16 December 1997); Bill Hutman, 'Joint Hamas, PLO Handbill Calls for "Jihad" against Israel', Jerusalem Post, 21 December 1992.
96 Walker, 'Rabin Expulsions'.
apparently led him to suspend his customary strategic thinking, as the handout called for ‘all forms of struggle’. He was quoted as being in shock and said that the deportations would only strengthen the position of Hamas in the territories’. Israeli officials, having helped to strengthen the Islamic trend, now harboured hopes that their negotiations with the Palestinians might be accelerated by the removal of Hamas and Jihad as rivals to the PLO.

The intifada allowed the Muslim Brotherhood, through Hamas, to substantiate its nationalist credentials, which had been questionable until the uprising. While rejecting in theory the loss of any Palestinian land, a softening of its position became perceptible. The goal of Hamas was slowly being redefined to that of lifting the occupation, rather than reversing the partition of Palestine, or, for that matter, restoring the caliphate in Muslim countries. Shaykh Jamil would later state, ‘It is the duty of Hamas and duty of the people of Palestine to go against the occupation—not against Jewishness or Judaism—but against the military occupation’. This reevaluation accompanied reconsideration of violence, as


99Collusion between the government of Israel and Hamas was, by 1994, acknowledged by Israeli Foreign Ministry officials, who admitted that the government of Israel had helped the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt to develop a Palestinian arm in the territories: ‘The Israeli government was anti-PLO. We tried ten to fifteen years ago to encourage the Islamic movements. . . . We helped this reaction establish a power base in the West Bank and Gaza. In retrospect, we should have talked to the PLO in 1964, when it was first established. But fifteen years ago, we were trying to destroy the power base of the PLO’. Caspi, interview (10 November 1994). To Susan Hattis Rolef, this policy was one of Israel’s ‘gravest mistakes’. Susan Hattis Rolef, ‘Israel’s Policy toward the PLO: From Rejection to Recognition’, in Sela and Ma’oz, PLO and Israel, p. 259. See also Hareven, ‘Eyeless in Gaza’, p. 17; Yehuda Litani, ‘Militant Islam in the West Bank and Gaza’, New Outlook, November–December 1989, p. 42. In 1991, at a time when the United States government had no formal dialogue with the PLO, it was revealed that American diplomats had covertly opened a dialogue with Hamas in Amman. Douglas Roberts, ‘U.S.-Palestinians’, Voice of America, 2 March 1993. ‘It was the Americans who approached us’, Imad Falouji of Hamas told journalist Mary Ann Weaver. Mary Anne Weaver, ‘The Quandary: Report from Gaza’, New Yorker, 19 August 1996, p. 26.


102Hamami, interview (15 December 1997).

103Hamami, interview (15 December 1997). Despite Shaykh Jamil’s own personal universalism, Don Peretz asserts that one of the key differences between the leaflets of the Command and those of Hamas is that the Command’s communiqués did not attack Jews. Peretz, ‘The Intifada and Middle East Peace’, pp. 390–91.
within Hamas splits and counter-splits occurred with regularity. In 1989, Shaykh Ahmad told Michal Sela that he rejected the use of violence as a means of pursuing goals: ‘There is no point. . . . Persuasion is the way’, he said, utilizing Qur’anic verses as substantiation, although he allowed that other options were at the individual’s initiative. Shaykh Jamil ultimately left Hamas because of his disagreement with both its ends and its means.

The evidence suggests that a commitment to political struggle was making inroads in the Islamic trend, although not entirely supplanting a jumbled mass of ‘everything goes’ thinking nor replacing the obstinance of tendencies that pursued individualistic paramilitary operations.

Major differences between the Islamist blocs and the nationalists guiding the intifada thus involved the ends and the means. The parameters of the uprising, as defined by the

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104 Sela, ‘“Resistance Is a Moslem Duty”’, p. 9.

105 Islam is a religion of mercy and justice for all people, but what happened after 1967 with the military occupation justifies the resistance of Hamas against the occupation. Hamas did not differ [with the PLO] on methods of resistance until after Oslo. The PLO before Oslo had used armed struggle—which Israel calls terrorism. Hamas continued armed struggle after Oslo, because Oslo did not fulfill the rights of the Palestinians. I personally believe the situation was different after Oslo and had differences with Hamas on this point, and after this I broke away. It is known that I had differences with Hamas on the continuation of armed struggle’. Hamami, interview (15 December 1997). Shaykh Jamil severed his connexion with Hamas because he believed that the peace process and the Palestinian Authority should be given a chance to succeed. Mustafa Abu Sway, communication (East Jerusalem, 15 December 1997). Abu Sway is a professor of Shaykh Jamil’s who teaches Islamic philosophy at al-Quds University. Despite Shaykh Jamil’s dissociation from Hamas over the use of violence, Israeli security forces came to the village of Bir Nabala, north of Jerusalem, and arrested him at his home on 20 February 1995. ‘Israel Police Wound Arab Near Jerusalem Old City’, Reuters North American Wire, 21 February 1995.

106 Comparative analysis of underground leaflets from the Command and Hamas by Shaul Mishal and Reuben Aharoni supports this view. Yet their methodology is flawed by their pooling of both nonviolent and violent directives into absolute numbers of textual references. Thus, they fail to differentiate the discipline and preparation required for collective nonviolent struggle versus the more reactive and individualistic action of violent commando tactics. In a typical sentence, they write, ‘The population was called on to cooperate in both violent and nonviolent actions’. Mishal and Aharoni, Speaking Stones, p. 37. Never do they attribute this to internal disagreements on the Command. After August 1988, Mishal and Aharoni judge, violent appeals from the Command neared the level of that of Hamas; but since they are using crude tallies without proportional weighting, they miss the uneven, back and forth creep to the violent calls in the intifada, so often contradictory and occurring more slowly than they discern.

107 Hamas leaflets appealed directly to the populace, but the Command emphasized popular committees. In twenty of the Command’s leaflets studied by Shaul and Aharoni, or two-thirds of those studied, popular committees were assigned tasks; they are not mentioned by Hamas. Nor is civil disobedience mentioned in twenty-five Hamas leaflets studied. During the same period, this method appeared in fifteen, or more than one-half, of the Command’s leaflets. General strikes appear in Hamas handouts—although not as often as in those of the Command—while sit-ins and resignation from jobs do not appear in the Hamas flyers analysed. Strikes or resignations from the Israeli civil administration were suggested by ten of the Command’s leaflets, more than one-third of those studied. Rallies or demonstrations are called for in thirteen of the

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activist intellectuals, were posited on three political aims involving post-1967 reality: acceptance of Israel in its pre-1967 borders, removal of Israeli authorities from the occupied territories, and establishment of a Palestinian state. Both Hamas and the more purist Islamic Jihad refused to accept the events of 1948 and 1949, yet survival in the euphoria of a mass uprising meant that both groups needed to assert their influence in a political context that was incompatible with their fundamental rejection of accommodation with Israel. This included standing for election, even when drastically outnumbered by nationalists who were working in coalitions: 'We're not running to win', a member of Islamic Jihad told a reporter, describing his faction's participation in Bir Zeit University elections, 'we're running to show that we exist'. Political scientist Lisa Taraki contends that Hamas joined the uprising 'to shore up its image in preparation for carving itself a niche in the very state for whose establishment it is not prepared to struggle'; in doing so, it relied on the strategy for which the Muslim Brotherhood became known in Egypt—promoting aspects of coexistence with the prevailing authorities in order not to sustain a total loss.

Knowing that it could not impede a political settlement once underway, Hamas sought to preserve a presence 'on the streets' as the process built towards an agreement. Hence, as Taraki notes, Hamas's participation in the intifada should be interpreted as the

Command's leaflets reviewed; in only two Hamas leaflets studied does this elementary form of nonviolent direct action appear. Mishal and Aharoni, Speaking Stones, passim.

9Jarbawi, interview (16 June 1995).


9Taraki, 'Islamic Resistance Movement', p. 32. This view would be openly expressed as the territories moved towards the January 1996 elections for the Palestinian Legislative Council. According to Imad Falouji, editor of al-Watan and a Hamas leader who broke ranks to announce his bid for office, 'We cannot let Fatah win all the seats in the council'. Jon Immanuel, 'The Bet Is On: Democracy vs. Police State', Jerusalem Post, 15 December 1995, p. 8. Notes Immanuel, Hamas understood that if it did not make a deal with Arafat, it would be outside the mainstream of organized Palestinian society, be forced to choose the route of violence, and risk being crushed by an uninhibited newly elected Fatah government—or it could choose passivity, charitable work, and hope that the entire process would collapse. Ibid. Falouji was elected to the council. Although no longer a member of Hamas, he from time to time serves as a conduit between the Palestinian Authority and the Islamic group on the issue of armed struggle. 'Palestinian Mediators Call for Dialogue', Reuters, 26 March 1996.

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campaign of a prospective opposition Islamist party in the future Palestinian state'. By 1994, Hamas spokespersons had begun to mention Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories and the establishment there of an independent Palestinian state, a departure from previous bids for a unified Muslim state in the region. A 'truce' with Israel was remarked upon. Such moves indicate a desire to be 'a future moderate political partner, rather than a fundamentalist rejectionist group'. As Taraki judges, the leadership of the intifada 'far outstripped Hamas in the clarity of its political vision and in the concreteness of its aims'.

A 'Workshop' for the Tunis-Based PLO and an Israeli Seminar

Gene Sharp: Encouraging a New Phase

In 1986, with the eruption of the intifada still a year away, Gail Pressburg, director of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) for the Middle East, visited the Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence in East Jerusalem. Expressing interest in its activities, she asked of Mubarak Awad permission to take photographs. Awad let Pressburg take snapshots. Although he safeguarded his independence from the PLO, he said she was free to show them to anyone, including the PLO in Tunis. There, according to Pressburg,

Some in the Palestinian leadership knew about the civil society sector in the occupied territories—including vaguely about the work of the Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence—but many knew nothing. . . . Abu Jihad, Khaled al-Hassan, and Abu Ammar, . . . didn't really know of the work of the medical relief committees, professional associations, women's organizations. They knew about al-Haq, but they didn't understand the emergence of


113 Taraki, 'Islamic Resistance Movement', p. 32.

114 The AFSC assisted the formation of local institutions and the strengthening of preexisting groups. Pressburg used photos to spread the word about the growth of 'a new politics in Israel and an emerging civil society among the Palestinians, [who] had become very realistic about Israel and the fact that they would live next to Israel, and not replace it'. Gail Pressburg, thirty-minute interview (Washington, D.C., 12 June 1998).

115 Yet, Raja Shehadeh concludes, the Palestinian political establishment in the diaspora 'showed little interest' in al-Haq's approach. Shehadeh, From Occupation to Interim Accords, p. 160.
political people who were not factionally involved. Abu Jihad was intrigued about the centre for the study of nonviolence, probably because this was another arena in which he could play.\footnote{Pressburg, interview (12 June 1998). The development during the 1980s of decentralized, non-factionalized organizations and institutions, with a local, professionally trained leadership, is noted by Pressburg, in ‘The Uprising: Causes and Consequences’, \textit{Journal of Palestine Studies} 67 (Spring 1988): 38–50.}

Awad’s desire for independence had led him to spurn Abu Jihad’s emissaries, who sometimes appeared at the centre with envelopes containing money, and reject offers of staff, with the exception of two low-level volunteers who said they came with Abu Jihad’s blessings.\footnote{Awad, interview (14 February 1995). In 1988, Israeli official Ronni Milo, former Likud minister of police, alleged that the centre was financed by ‘terrorist organizations’, and that Awad favoured ‘armed PLO action’ and had ‘close contacts’ with the PLO. Getzler, ‘No-Confidence Motion’. \textit{The Jerusalem Post} referred to Awad as ‘a PLO agent’, ‘The U.S. Picks a Fight’, \textit{Jerusalem Post}, 9 May 1988. As Israeli journalist Amnon Kapeliouk writes, from the mid-1970s onwards Israel had adopted a policy in which all references to the Palestinians by official Israeli agencies and the news media routinely used the word \textit{terrorism}. Israeli authorities refused, Kapeliouk notes, to make distinctions between the different Palestinian organizations, classifying them all as terrorist. Amnon Kapeliouk, \textit{Le Monde Diplomatique}, February 1986, p. 22.}

Awad believed that any PLO assent to nonviolent resistance would be superficial and tactical.\footnote{Grossman, ‘Palestinian Pacifist’.}

After Abu Jihad’s assassination and Awad’s deportation from Israel, in March 1989, Awad assembled a delegation to go to North Africa to introduce the PLO formally to nonviolent resistance, in effect, another workshop. In addition to Awad, the delegation was composed of Gene Sharp and Sharp’s assistant, Bruce Jenkins; the London-based Iraqi scholar Khalid Kishtainy; ‘Abd al-Aziz Said, a professor at the American University in Washington, D.C.; Father Dennis Madden, representative of the Vatican in Jerusalem; Jack O’Dell, policy adviser to the Reverend Jesse Jackson; and Nancy Nye.\footnote{Sharp, interview (19 October 1995).} In Tunis for one week, they discussed nonviolent struggle with PLO officials and others. According to Awad, he told them that what the PLO was doing was meaningless, that it was not organizing in the villages, and the occupation was worsening.\footnote{Awad, lecture, 26 March 1998.} In each session we explained the strategy and tactics of nonviolence, underscoring the distinction between nonviolence as strategy and
pacifism', Said recalled. Meetings took place with Yasir Arafat, Abu Iyad, Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen), Farouk Khadourmi, Khaled al-Hassan, Bassam Abu-Sharif, Abu Jihad's widow Umm Jihad, Sami Musallam (Arafat's administrator), Ahmed al-Qure'i (Abu Alaa, later an Oslo negotiator and Palestinian Legislative Council speaker), members of the security forces, and Palestinians deported from the territories.

Sharp explained how nonviolent struggle was a means of wielding nonviolent war—power 'designed for use against opponents who cannot be defeated by violence'. He alluded to struggles underway in Burma, Brazil, Chile, China, Eastern Europe, Korea, Mexico, the Philippines, and South Africa. He explained how such methods could produce a situation in which no alternative remained for the opponent but to capitulate, and how repression against nonviolent resistance is evidence of its power, not reason for its abandonment. He stated that limited violence—even if only by a minority, as in the intifada—if mixed with nonviolent strategies could be 'catastrophic'.

When Arafat raised the matter of scant resources, it was pointed out that nonviolent struggle provides for the mobilization of all persons, because people are the resource. On one issue there was agreement between the visitors and the PLO: the intifada had succeeded where Arab diplomacy had failed in communicating the reality of Israel as a military

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122 Gene Sharp, 'Basic Presentation to Palestinian Leaders', Tunis, March 1989, pp. 2–4. In his remarks to seven high-ranking PLO officials, Sharp urged that the Palestinians pursue six strategic objectives in the intifada, in order of priority: 1) continue development of parallel institutions, i.e., 'de facto independence'; 2) continue nonviolent protest, noncooperation, and intervention 'so that the people are "unrulable" by the occupiers'; 3) further split Israeli public opinion on the occupation, repression, and recognition of an independent Palestinian state, including finding ways of dealing with extremist settlers; 4) contribute to splits in the Israeli establishment and undermine the reliability of the Israeli army's repression; 5) contribute to a split between the United States and Israel on the 'problem of the Palestinians'; 6) encourage world opinion and diplomacy to settle the conflict and assist in de jure recognition of Palestinian independence. Ibid., pp. 5–6.

123 Abd al-Aziz Said condensed Sharp's initial encounter with Arafat: How long have you been involved in Palestinian politics, Sharp asked Arafat. All my life, responded Arafat. Sharp asked his goals. To get the Americans to understand our struggle, Arafat replied. Had it worked, Sharp questioned. No, Arafat said. Sharp asked if there were examples of any time when the Americans had listened to the Arabs. During the oil embargo of 1973 and the intifada, Arafat replied. Sharp asked if these two examples had anything in common. Arafat nodded, 'nonviolent methods'. Arafat acknowledged that his perspective had changed after the PLO defeat in Beirut in 1982 and that the armed option was not working. Said, interview (19 June 1995).
occupier. Mention of linking the intifada with the struggle of Israeli Arabs for their civil rights, raised by Jack O’Dell, was flatly rejected by the PLO officers, who said they wished to avoid any suggestion that the uprising would be carried directly into Israel.  

'Abd al-Aziz Said recalled discussion to the effect that if stones, slings, and petrol bombs had not been used, the mechanism of disintegration might have ensued due to political jiu-jitsu.  

According to four of the visitors, in Sharp’s conversations, Abu Mazen, Hassan, and Abu-Sharif reacted positively; Abu Iyad was particularly intrigued; Arafat and Sharp debated whether nonviolent sanctions could be effective against Israeli settlers. The visitors were told that Abu Jihad had possessed a copy of Sharp’s trilogy. The visit, however, is not remembered as successful. According to Bruce Jenkins,

There is much scepticism, it appears, in the PLO ranks about the utility of nonviolent methods. Arafat stated that his military staff was encouraging military actions. Also, several leaders spoke of the necessity of continuing the struggle ‘at all levels’. Another top official declared that armed struggle could not be dropped until material gains were achieved through the Intifada.

U.S. ambassador to Tunis Robert Pellitreau met with the delegation at the embassy.

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125Said, interview (19 June 1995). In theory, by persistence despite repression, nonviolent protagonists throw an opponent off balance. As participants in a nonviolent struggle refuse to reciprocate their adversary's violence, the attacker becomes shaken by the sight of the suffering that has been caused. The target group becomes unsure of how to respond to the nonretaliation, and the sympathies of the police or soldiers may flow toward the nonviolent protagonists. As cruelties increase, the opposition may split. Disagreement by the populace with the brutal measures being witnessed 'turns on itself', and the conflict shifts, becoming, instead, an internal dispute within the adversary over its infliction of violence on unarmed peaceful protesters. The more violent the opponent, the less likely it is that its security forces will be able to deal with the type of power exercised by the nonviolent group. The 'conduct is new, unexpected, and unpredictable to the person habituated by violence'. Self-control conserves energy. 'To be willing to suffer and die for a cause is an incontestable proof of sincere belief' The victim's refusal to use violence 'gradually tends to put his attacker to shame' and enhances the respect of onlookers toward the nonviolent resister. Gregg, Power of Nonviolence, pp. 46, 47. Also see Sharp, Methods of Nonviolent Action, p. 113.

126Awad, interview (14 February 1995); Nye, communication (6 October 1992); Said, interview (19 June 1995); Sharp, interview (19 October 1995).

127Sharp records that Arafat suggested that this assessment failed to address serious violence by extremist Israeli settlers. Sharp, 'Basic Presentation to Palestinian Leaders', p. 6.


129Jenkins, 'Meetings with PLO Representatives’, p. 8.
on 23 March 1989, having the day before opened the second round of the U.S.-PLO
dialogue. On 24 March, the visitors were invited to meet with fourteen Foreign Service
officers who were involved in the dialogue, and they discussed the importance of the
Palestinians’ using strictly nonviolent means in the intifada.130 ‘This was new to the Foreign
Service officers’, recalled the official who set up the meeting.131 Indeed, they may have
understood less about nonviolent strategies than did the PLO132 and the Israeli establishment.

A year before the Tunis trip, on 9 February 1988, two months after the outbreak of
the intifada, Gene Sharp had travelled to Israel and the occupied territories. It had been two
years since his last visit. At the behest of Eugene Weiner, a sociologist at Haifa University,
he spoke at the Israeli Institute of Military Affairs, at Zichron Ya’akov on Mount Carmel, to
a seminar organized by Reuven Gal, the institute’s head. Weiner, a founding director of the
institute, had met Sharp at the home of psychoanalyst Robert K. Lifton, in Wellfleet,
Massachusetts, where Sharp had described his research.133 The purpose of the session on
Mount Carmel, on nonviolent resistance, was to introduce Sharp to key Israeli strategists and
analysts: ‘There was something they had not yet grasped [about the intifada], and Gene
might help them understand it from other precedents in the world, such as Burma, India,

130Bruce Jenkins, ‘Report on Meetings with U.S. Ambassador and Embassy Staff’, Tunis, 23–24

131Richard Undeland, who arranged the 24 March 1989 session, recalled, ‘Mubarak Awad made a
very strong case that the only way the intifada could succeed was through nonviolent strategies, which could
move both Israelis and Palestinians in a way that would not lead to force—because in any question involving
brute force, Israel had all the cards. . . . With the exception of Robert Pellitreau and Edmund Hull, the Foreign
Service officers were less interested than I had expected. I was disappointed. Some could not figure out why
they were there, including the political officers. Pellitreau and I were very taken with the discussions’. Richard
E. Undeland, one-hour interview (Washington, D.C., 27 May 1998). Undeland was director of the U.S.
Information Service for Tunisia.

132Awad, interview (14 February 1995); Nye, communication (6 October 1992); Said, interview (19
June 1995); Sharp, interview (19 October 1995). Seven years later, Arafat would deny that any impact had
been made by the delegation. Arafat, interview (24 January 1996).

133Eugene Weiner, thirty-minute telephone interview (San Francisco, 4 November 1997). Weiner is
co-founder of the Abraham Fund, a charitable and educational U.S. organization that promotes coexistence
projects among Jewish, Arab, and Druze Israelis and is editor of the Handbook of Intereasth Coexistence
(New York, Abraham Fund and Continuum, 1998). The handbook, developed with the participation of Gene
Sharp, addresses coexistence, and is intended for worldwide use. Ibid.
South Africa'. General (Ret.) Aharon Yariv, former head of Mossad, attended, along with Israeli luminaries from the social sciences and military studies. Sharp argued that limited options were available to Israel: 1) heightening repression; 2) tightening administrative controls; 3) maintaining repression at current levels; or 4) 'Israel might openly, or while claiming it was not doing so, increasingly recognize elements of Palestinian independence and progressively reduce Israeli repression in extent and type'. A fifth option was the purview of the Palestinians: the pursuit of an intensifying but strictly nonviolent intifada. Detailing how the first three alternatives would be 'disastrous for everyone concerned', Sharp explained that the fourth and fifth options offered hope for both peoples, particularly if facilitated by Israeli reparations for lost Palestinian land, which would cost far less than decades of continuing military build-ups. As Gal recalled, Sharp's projections stemmed not from specific study of the intifada, but from analyses of prototypical nonviolent struggles, and had led Sharp to conclude that the fourth option was the most likely to occur:

Gene foresaw the end result, ... in much the same way that it is inevitable that there will be a Palestinian state. Many Israelis still do not think it is possible. For many, it is still a nightmare to think of such a possibility, but anybody who has their mind in the right place can see it happening, ... as Gene Sharp said in his fourth corollary or option. Gene had a big advantage [with his] cases to show that it was almost an inevitable process. Most of us Israelis ... did not recognize the power of nonviolent struggle. ... When you deal with nonviolent strugglers, one of their powers is that they gain sympathy. They certainly gain sympathy from third parties, but they may also gain sympathy from their opponent.

Sharp asserted that the Palestinians' grasp of nonviolent resistance was thin and lacked depth, and Israel thus had to be very careful about the way it reacted. If reprisals against the intifada

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134 Gal, interview (12 March 1997).
135 Seven weeks later, General Yariv would state that Israel had less to fear from the creation of a Palestinian state than from a continuation of its efforts to quell the unrest in the territories. Bradley Burston, 'Status Quo More Frightening than a Palestinian State—Aharon Yariv', Jerusalem Post, 30 March 1988, p. 1.
137 Ibid., pp. 11–19.
138 Gal, interview (16 March 1997).
were harsh, he said, it could affect the ability of Israelis to bring an end to terrorism. 139

Neither Weiner nor Gal recall the meeting as productive. Sharp’s presentation was ‘rejected by those who were present’, according to Weiner:

They thought that the Arabs couldn’t develop such techniques. They thought that the Arabs were so inherently violent that they would never be able to adopt such strategies. They basically rejected the scenario expressed by Gene. They regarded his research as interesting, but not in line with the cultures of the Middle East. 140

A few weeks later, Gal sought out General Natan Vilnai, who was responsible for the Gaza Strip as the chief commander of what the Israelis called the Southern Command. Gal considered Vilnai powerful, influential at high levels in Israeli military circles, and a personal friend. Surmising that Vilnai might be interested in the substance of the February seminar, Gal contacted him. In March or April 1988, he met General Vilnai at the Eretz entrance to Gaza, early in the morning.

I joined him for a half day on his rounds, and attended all the meetings he had with his troops and commanders. During the hours, I talked to him about—lectured him about—[Sharp’s] ideas of nonviolent struggles, the principles, the strengths, the perspectives, and, most importantly, the incapability of military forces to put it down—[how it can make the nonviolent protagonist stronger], . . . that when you have struggle like this, there is no way that the military can put it down because it is not a military issue.

That afternoon, Vilnai gathered all of his chief commanders—thirty or forty of them—high rank, brigadiers, all the senior ranks that were dealing with the intifada. He gave me the floor, . . . ‘Tell them what you told me’. I spoke for a long time. They were very attentive. I think it was the first time that any serious [group in] the military was . . . learning [of] nonviolent

139Sharp, interview (19 October 1995); Weiner, interview (4 November 1997). An Israeli preference for Palestinians to use violent means of contention is often suggested by West Bankers and Gazans—a view that holds that everything the Israelis did in response to the Palestinian intifada was designed to push the Palestinians towards violent retaliation, since Israeli authorities felt more at home subjugating violence with violence. Ian Black later corroborates this idea, in his report that Israeli officials privately confided to him that fighting the Palestinians with guns would be preferable. Ian Black, ‘Tension High as Arabs Wait for Security Council Verdict; Israeli Police Vigilant as PLO Debates Resumption of Armed Struggle’, Guardian, 12 October 1990, p. 8. Sharp agrees, ‘Despite Israeli rhetoric against Palestinian violence, there are various signs that the Israeli officials prefer to deal with Palestinian violence rather than with nonviolent struggle’. Sharp, ‘Intifadhah and Nonviolent Struggle’, p. 12. Regarding this point in an earlier period, see Geoffrey Aronson, ‘Israel’s Policy of Military Occupation’, Journal of Palestine Studies 28 (Summer 1978): 80. Mubarak Awad’s deportation is held up as evidence for this point of view. Among Israeli peace activists who share this judgement, Amos Gvirtz and his fellow activists identify their purpose as ‘preventive nonviolence’, meaning that they sought to stop their own government from acts that would encourage a Palestinian violent response. Amos Gvirtz, ‘Nonviolence: The Best Promise’, Fellowship 56:6 (June 1990): 9–10.

140Weiner, interview (4 November 1997).
struggle as a... socio-political phenomenon. This should be granted to Gene Sharp. This is his contribution, even though not directly.\textsuperscript{141}

In Gal’s view, even this indirect exposure to Sharpian analysis eventually resulted in minimization of Israel’s military engagement with the Palestinians, as, by 1991, Gal noted,

\begin{quote}
[Israeli] instructions had moved 180 degrees to become, ‘Try to minimize contact with the Arabs. If they set fires in tyres, let them do that. If they throw rocks or stones, move back. Try to avoid physical contact’... The military started to understand that the uprising was not a military affair—where the one who has the most offensive, is the one who wins—but, really, the other way around... But as I say, it took the Israelis three or four years to digest this, ... until 1991.\textsuperscript{142}
\end{quote}

Weiner persuaded Gal to invite Sharp back to the institute in 1989—now the Carmel Institute for Social Sciences\textsuperscript{143}—as guest speaker for a seminar on the impact of the intifada.\textsuperscript{144}

Weiner recalled that he was eager for the second discussion in 1989, because, he believed,

\begin{quote}
Gene’s predictions had been close enough to the truth for it to have been an impressive analysis... Despite the rejection of Gene’s concepts [in 1988], his comments had been borne out. He had claimed that the Arabs had become more sophisticated and more capable.

The response from my fellow Israelis was that the intifada was violent, that it was anything but nonviolent struggle, and that the Arabs were using whatever weapons were available. Much of the discussion the second time was over whether the intifada was violent insurrection or civil disobedience.\textsuperscript{145}
\end{quote}

Noting that Israeli control measures had failed to end the intifada, Sharp, on 10 July 1989, called attention to statements by Israeli military commanders conceding that no military

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext[141]{Gal, interview (16 March 1997).}
\footnotetext[142]{Ibid.}
\footnotetext[143]{Carmel Institute is a new name for the IIMA. You may call this one of the outcomes of the intifada. We felt uncomfortable being identified as an institute for military studies’. Gal, interview (16 March 1997).}
\footnotetext[144]{The Impact of the Intifada on Israeli Society: Facts, Assessments, and Predictions’ was attended by professor of sociology Elihu Katz of the Gutman Institute for Applied Research; Motti Kirshenbaum, director of Israel Television; social psychologist Ayala Pines of Tel Aviv University; Yoram Perri of the Center for Strategic Studies, Tel Aviv University; professor of criminology Simha Landau of the Hebrew University; and CISS staff Ofra Maysless and Reuven Gal. The papers presented appear in The Seventh War: The Effects of the Intifada on Israeli Society, Hebrew, ed. Reuven Gal (Hak Hukabutz Hamuhud Publishing House, Ltd., 1990).}
\footnotetext[145]{Weiner, interview (4 November 1997).}
\end{footnotes}

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response could suppress the uprising. 146 He called for reconsideration of reality by both sides, and noted that the Israelis would not be packing their bags. He told of hearing in a Palestinian refugee camp that the young had been and were willing to live peacefully in an independent Palestine alongside Israel, long before it became PLO policy. He said that the Palestinians were not going away either, but would continue to struggle until they won the independence and respect that Israel had gained. He noted that some Israeli policies had hurt the long-term goal of a free Israel and discussed options. 147 Although among the Israelis neither Weiner nor Gal remember their colleagues as having been persuaded, Sharp’s analysis found more attentive listening than in the first seminar. Weiner recalled, ‘there was an aura. Sharp had been vindicated because the sympathies of the world [judged] the intifada less violent than were the Israelis; therefore, the uprising was, comparatively speaking, nonviolent’. 148

Sharp’s various encounters with Palestinians in the occupied territories and Tunis, and his contacts with Israelis, reinforce the identification of external influences as the third major focus of this study, in its continuing explanation of the forces at work encouraging the adoption of nonviolent resistance. Sharp also spent time with Palestinians during his July 1989 visit and found that the situation had deteriorated. The few fatalities on the Israeli side contrasted with the high ratio of Palestinian deaths. His written notes indicate chagrin that what had been one Palestinian killed a day was now four or five dead; whereas five might have been injured earlier, forty would be wounded; where one hundred olive or citrus trees might have been uprooted daily, the number was now in the hundreds. He was concerned that

146 By 1989, army commanders conceded to reporters that quashing the uprising in the West Bank and Gaza Strip was a ‘hopeless task’; no matter what tactics they tried, as military leaders, including Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin, granted that the uprising would end only through a political solution. Joel Brinkley, ‘P.L.O. Shift on Violence “Irrelevant”, Arens Says’, New York Times, 4 February 1989, p. 4. Also see Ian Black, ‘Job the Generals Don’t Want’, Guardian, 14 June 1989, p. 12.


148 Weiner, interview (4 November 1997).
increased Israeli repression would lead the Palestinians to abandon nonviolent means. He perceived disarray in the Israeli peace camp, along with an increase in fear and hatred towards Arabs by Israelis, often accompanied by the belief that greater repression should be used against the Palestinians. These circumstances convinced Sharp that the situation was dangerous and unstable.

Along with the lack of concrete gains from the uprising went increasing calls for violence in the leaflets, especially after Leaflet no. 40, of 22 May 1989. The intifada was being undermined by actions ostensibly to 'help' the intifada, or sabotage the nonviolent struggle.

Three such operations are detailed by Patrick Seale; other commando missions by PLO

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150 As attacks by extremist settlers increased, journalists circulated reports on a secret group called Dov, or Bear, that was passing out instructions on how to treat guns so that ballistics tests could not trace them. An Israeli 'death squad' for killing Palestinians named on lists was reported, an undercover detachment known as Duvedevan, or Cherry. Daoud Kuttab notes that it was seen in action by an American television crew. Daoud Kuttab, ‘Death Squads’, dispatch filed with news media, East Jerusalem, 1988, Kuttab private papers. On 21 June 1991, Israel Television showed film of such units donning Palestinian women’s dresses, prior to infiltrating Palestinian villages to shoot those on their lists. Shin Beit agents ‘frequently masqueraded’ as Arab tourists or journalists, as ‘death squads’ moved about in villages. Wendy Kristianasen and Lania Lahoud, ‘Waking Up from Dreamland: The Intifada’, Middle East 202 (August 1991): 5. See also Ian Black, ‘Secret Israeli Units Are Old News to Palestinians’, Guardian, 24 June 1991; Michael Sheridan, ‘Rules of Engagement’, Independent on Sunday, 20 October 1991, pp. 8–9. Elia Zureik, Anita Vitullo, and Mohammad Abu Harthiyeh analyze twenty-nine killings by Israeli undercover units, in Targeting to Kill: Israel’s Undercover Units (East Jerusalem and Washington, D.C., Palestine Human Rights Information Center and the Center for Policy Analysis on Palestine, 1992). The report claims that seventy-five Palestinians were killed by undercover units in the first four years of the intifada and details forty-six such killings. Ibid., pp. 28–9. According to B’Tselem, over ten years following the start of the intifada, undercover units of the IDF, border police, and Israeli police force killed 162 Palestinians. ‘1987–1997: Ten Years’, p. 4.


groups are still secret.\footnote{153} Sharp urged a ‘dramatic shift of strategy’ to the Palestinians.\footnote{154} He suggested that a new approach be publicly announced, in which a different direction of the uprising would be explained, one not so likely to ignite Israeli fear and fury and thus brutality, instead appealing to human qualities, ‘which Jews have often demonstrated elsewhere and in which they have believed’.\footnote{155} This approach could ‘make it more possible for sympathetic Israelis both to oppose the repression of nonviolent Palestinians and support the Palestinians’ right to independence’.\footnote{156} Pointing to the Chinese students’ hunger strikes prior to Tiananmen Square earlier that same year, and citing hunger strikes by Palestinians in 1936–9, Sharp suggested that such a phase could start with fasting, during which time no stones would be thrown. Large numbers of people undertaking twenty-one-day hunger strikes could produce a ‘significant impact without bringing death’ and return the Palestinians to the front pages of the world’s newspapers.\footnote{157} This second phase of the intifada should be ‘strictly nonviolent’, he warned, and it should be declared that the Palestinians were strong enough to dispense with stones. Commercial strikes could cease, to allow economic recovery and to ‘diffuse the responsibility and price of resistance’.\footnote{158} Voluntary curfews by Palestinians and other methods should emphasize ‘a disciplined quiet transition’ to ‘institution-building and development of self-reliance’, with a goal of living in peace alongside Israel.\footnote{159}

\footnote{153}{\textit{Late in 1988, a Dabur, Hebrew for ‘desert hornet’, or a 35-tonne patrol vessel, was hit by machine gun and RPG-7 fire. It blew the attacking vessel out of the water, killing eight PLO commandos and taking one prisoner; no Israeli sailors were injured, as shelling continued from Amal, Hizbollah, Palestinian, and Druze shore positions. Al Venter, ‘Stopping Infiltrators—On Patrol with the Israeli Navy’, \textit{International Defense Review} 22: 10 (1 October 1989): 10.}}

\footnote{154}{Sharp, ‘Notes on Strategic Problems’, p. 11.}

\footnote{155}{Ibid., p. 13.}

\footnote{156}{Ibid., p. 16.}

\footnote{157}{Ibid., pp. 12, 16.}

\footnote{158}{Ibid., p. 15.}

\footnote{159}{Ibid., pp. 12–13; Sharp, ‘Intifadah and Nonviolent Struggle’, pp. 8–11. Sharp regarded as fundamental for the Palestinians a shift to a more balanced power relationship with the Israelis and believed this to be dependent on a strategy of building institutions and nonviolent struggle. He believed that any effort to ‘cool down’ or ‘settle’ the conflict before needed changes took place in the power relationships would be premature and ultimately ‘counterproductive to a peaceful settlement’. He reported having heard that the}
The 1990 Palestinian Hunger Strike

In January 1990, responding to a call from Feisel Husseini to reach out to Israelis, Radwan Abu Ayyash, Ziad Abu Zayyad, Ghassan Khatib, and Hanan Mikhail Ashrawi did so, and exchanged views with sixteen members of the Knesset. Among them were Dedi Zucker of Citizens’ Rights, Arie Lova Eliav and Avraham Burg of Labour, Yair Tsaban of Mapam, and Amnon Rubinstein of Shinui. As a result, in April, all sixteen agreed to work for peace with Palestinians who openly supported the PLO, the furthest that any group of elected Israeli officials had trod towards recognition of the PLO.\textsuperscript{160} Khatib explained, ‘We have concentrated on the American position long enough when the decision will be made in Israel’.\textsuperscript{161} The Palestinian activist intellectuals said that they wanted to convince Israeli voters to press their own leaders to enter talks with the PLO. Husseini, banned from leaving Israel or entering the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, set an example by visiting in hospital an Israeli crippled by a lone Palestinian’s attack on an Israeli bus in June 1990, in which sixteen Jews died. In addition to addressing Peace Now rallies, Husseini also held discussions with a well-known Jewish settler rabbi living on the West Bank.\textsuperscript{162} Such dialogue reinforced the convictions of those involved, but had little impact on Israelis who believed that they had a God-given right to acquire Palestinian lands by force, if need be, or on Palestinians who considered it their duty to retrieve all of Palestine through any means necessary. Even if the greatly disproportionate deaths of Palestinians to Israelis seemed not to penetrate the psychological defence mechanisms of the majority of Israelis, there is suggestive evidence that Israeli sensitivities were affected by a 1990 Palestinian hunger strike.

Israelis had taken steps to provoke the Palestinians to use violence, which he regarded as sufficient rationale for the Palestinians to resist all provocations to violence. Gene Sharp, ‘The Intifada and Nonviolent Struggle: An Assessment and Notes on Strategic Problems’, unpublished paper, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Albert Einstein Institution, March 1989, p. 7.

\textsuperscript{160}Sharmine Narwani, ‘Israeli Legislators Enter Talks with Pro-PLO Palestinians’, Reuters, 5 April 1990; Aboudi, ‘Palestinians to Reach Out’.

\textsuperscript{161}Aboudi, ‘Palestinians to Reach Out’.

\textsuperscript{162}Ibid.
On 20 May 1990, a reportedly deranged lone Israeli gunman, Ami Popper, murdered seven Palestinian labourers waiting for a bus and wounded scores of others near the Tel Aviv suburb of 'Iyun Fara'a, or Rishon Le Zion. At least fifteen Palestinians were subsequently killed by Israeli security forces who opened fire on Israeli Arabs and on Palestinians in Gaza who were protesting the Popper 'massacre'. The occurrence sparked a two-week hunger strike by forty-four Palestinians among the leadership of the uprising. Committees were organized for handling the news media, drafting statements, making diplomatic contacts, arranging security, and procuring supplies. The hunger strike had a 'profound impact on Israeli sensibilities', according to Edy Kaufman; 'I went there myself, and fasted with them for twenty-four hours'. Jonathan Kuttab, one of the original eight strikers, recalled,

We had to fax Mubarak [Awad] to ask him for the guidelines on conducting hunger strikes. We were taking no food, and only water. It was a turning point. Feisel Husseini prophetically said, 'This is the last chance to keep the intifada nonviolent'. He felt that people were beginning to lose faith in the nonviolent message, and it is true that, after that, we started seeing knifings. Until then, there were no knifings.

On the grounds of the International Red Cross in Jerusalem, inside a 'billowing green tent', the well-disciplined action brought some strikers to the point of collapse. Radwan Abu Ayyash, Mahdi 'Abd al-Hadi, Hanan Mikhail Ashrawi, and others spoke with reporters and called for an emergency session of the UN General Assembly to discuss the killings. Secretary of State James Baker III indicated that the United States would be willing to discuss at a Security Council meeting the placement of UN observers in the territories to

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165 Ashrawi, This Side of Peace, pp. 64–8.

166 Ibid., p. 66.

167 Kaufman, communication (17 March 1997).

168 Kuttab, interview (18 March 1997).
help protect Palestinians. The full dimension of the intifada as a struggle within a struggle was soon revealed.

In the midst of the hunger strike, a bomb exploded in Jerusalem, killing a seventy-two-year-old Israeli man and wounding nine others. Two days later, Muhammad Abu’l Abbas led an abortive raid on a Tel Aviv beach. This led to the U.S. suspension of its fledgeling dialogue with the PLO and a U.S. veto of a Security Council resolution calling for a delegation to be sent to observe conditions in the occupied territories—a key demand of the strikers. Sitting on his mattress under the tent shaded by pine trees and weakened from fasting, Husseini told a reporter that the veto of the United States, instead of reinforcing nonviolent approaches, had punished its advocates. Overwhelmed by the bad publicity associated with the Abu’l Abbas operation, the strikers called off their thirteen-day fast. ‘Just 12 days before, when the hunger strike began’, writes Timothy M. Phelps, ‘Israel had been on the defensive, not just for the massacre itself, but for its handling of the unrest that followed, in which more than 15 Palestinians were killed’. With complete predictability, the Abu’l Abbas operation had the effect of unifying the Israelis against the Palestinians and dissipating international support for the delegation of observers. Husseini called the Abu’l Abbas group’s attempted armed attack against Israelis a stab in the back more painful than the ‘frontal wounds delivered by enemy arrows’.

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171 Abu’l Abbas is infamous as head of the Iraqi-backed extremist splinter group, the Palestine Liberation Front (PLF), which was responsible for the October 1985 Achillo Lauro cruise ship hijacking and murder of Leon Klinghoffer, a sixty-nine-year-old disabled American Jew on board, whose body was thrown into the sea. Patrick Seale contends that Arafat could not control the Abu’l Abbas group. Seale, Abu Nidal, pp. 50, 77, 238.


173 Ibid.

174 Ashrawi, This Side of Peace, p. 67.
The Israeli Left Stirs

Extraparliamentary peace groups reactivated or were formed anew in response to the intifada. High school students who refused to perform military service in the occupied territories had organized themselves in 1978 under the name of the Group of 27. Yesh G’vul had been established in 1975 to protest the war in Lebanon. As a result of the intifada, eighty-six new Israeli peace groups came into being, according to Israeli sociologist and MK Naomi Chazan. An estimated 40 per cent of all Israeli protest activity after the start of the intifada came from newly formed groups. Existing and moribund protest movements were emboldened. Numerous organizations pleaded for revised government policies.

Some groups were outrightly condemnatory of Israel’s position, such as Dai L’Kibbush, or Down with the Occupation. Within two months of the start of the uprising, 160 Israeli army reservists signed a declaration refusing to ‘take part in suppressing the uprising in the occupied territories’; among their ranks were three majors and five captains; one reservist, from Yesh G’vul, spent more than a month in prison. Several dozen distinguished


retired senior Israeli military officers formed the Council for Peace and Security in March 1988, and urged an end to the occupation by pressing the idea that Israelis must compromise to gain real security. Arguing publicly that the territories were no longer worth holding, they said the Gaza Strip alone was requiring more troops to be deployed than were needed to occupy all of the territories in 1967. In January 1989, by which time 350 Palestinians and fifteen Israelis had been killed, the generals spoke openly of the psychological damage being caused to those in military service by being forced to fill the role of riot police, rather than soldier. An élite paratrooper unit assigned to Nablus had angrily confronted Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir in January 1989, complaining that they had been forced to brutalize Palestinians. When General Amram Mitzna led a discussion of the Kibbutz Arizi movement, a coalition of eighty-six kibbutzim, reserve officer Eli Ben-Gal protested, ‘The Palestinians are making us kill them, and faced with this the Jewish people have become morally paralyzed. We won’t last. We won’t be able to. They are destroying us by making us the guilty ones’. The uprising ‘broke the I.D.F.’, an Israeli military historian notes.

territories, see Andy Court, ‘Red Line March Ends with Call for Youths Not to Serve in Areas’, Jerusalem Post, 3 March 1988, p. 2.

179Josef Geva, interview (8 June 1988). Major General (Ret.) Geva commanded the Central Area and in 1988 became Chairman of the Council for Peace and Security. Menachem Meron, interview (8 June 1988). Major General Meron was also a member of the council. Amirav, interview (8 June 1988). It will be recalled from Chapter Four that Moshe Amirav, another member of the council, had in 1987 as a member of the Likud Central Committee held discussions on behalf of then Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir with Feisel Husseini and Sari Nusseibeh. Also see Brinkley, ‘Ex-Israel Officers Ask Deal on Peace’.


181Glenn Frankel, ‘Israeli Army Suffers Casualty: Confidence; “We Are Losing, Palestinians Winning”’, Washington Post, 30 January 1989. A senior IDF officer told the Middle East editor of the Jerusalem Post, Yehuda Litani, ‘It is very bad that we, the IDF, have got into this mess. We trained our soldiers to fight wars, to defend the borders, and now we are doing the work of policemen—or more accurately, we are riot squads’. Yehuda Litani, ‘No Bypassing Palestinians and PLO’, Jerusalem Post, 12 February 1988, p. 20.

182The Uprising’s Hidden Toll’, transcript of February 1989 Tel Aviv discussion by Israeli reserve officers, tr. Willis Johnson, Harper’s, August 1989, pp. 20–21. To Ze’ev Schiff, the intifada resulted in the ‘brutalization of an entire generation of soldiers’, eroding the ‘moral high ground’ claimed by Israel. Ze’ev Schiff, ‘What Has Happened to the IDF during the Intifada?’ Ha’aretz, 16 June 1989, as cited in Ashmore, ‘Nonviolence as an Intifada Strategy’, pp. 100–1. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin would later say, ‘We are
military and civilian psychologists and psychiatrists told the country’s leadership that conscripts were suffering psychological stress as a result of a self-perception that they were part of an occupying force, not soldiers defending Israeli security. As Israeli scholar Yeshayahu Leibowitz would later note, at last there was recognition in Israel that the ‘status of violent domination over another people cannot endure’. While some activists arranged street demonstrations, others protested symbolically, undertook documentation of abuses, or made secret contacts with the PLO. Israeli peace adherents claimed that their nation’s moral standing and the tenets of Judaism were compromised by the government’s harsh treatment of the Palestinians. Israel had professed a posture of ethics involving a central concept of justice associated with Judaism—in the words of G. Van der Leeuw, ‘the religion of Will and Obedience’—and some Israelis were perturbed by the moral issues arising from fighting a civilian uprising. The Jewish state paying with blood for ruling another people... Ruling over another people has corrupted us’. Anthony Lewis, ‘The Logic of Peace’, New York Times, 20 May 1994; idem, ‘Israel’s Next Task: Complete the Peace’, International Herald Tribune, 30–31 July 1994, p. 4.


186The fibre of our country is threatened by denying the Palestinians rights—it’s morally wrong, politically wrong—and destructive for us and for them... We both have claims to this land; we both have rights to this land’. Galia Golan, one-hour interview (Jerusalem, 8 June 1988). Golan chaired Peace Now. ‘We need displacement of a whole vengeance theory regarding Arabs... The vast majority of Israelis are not racist, but afraid’. Avi Ravitzki, one-hour interview (Jerusalem, 8 June 1988). Ravitzki was with Netivot le Shalom, or the Pathways to Peace.


found it harder to assert that it presided over a benign occupation or espoused democratic values. A residual sense of tragic victimhood left by the Holocaust had been replaced in the international worldview by a perception of the Palestinians as the victims. It had become clear that even when the penalties were extreme, Palestinians in the territories would not remain quiescent and Israel could not suppress the seething in the camps, villages, and cities. In addition to the damaged morale in the military, the army was in conflict with Israel’s civilian leaders, who insisted that the army develop a military solution for a problem whose ‘roots and essence are political’, Dan Shomron, IDF chief of staff said. He told a Knesset committee, ‘there is no such thing as eradicating the uprising because in its essence it expresses the struggle of nationalism’. 189

Israeli soldiers, however, never felt compelled to mutiny, switch allegiance, or go over to the Palestinian side in political jiu-jitsu. 190 Despite their rejuvenation, the Israeli peace advocates exerted little effect on policy. 191 The ‘inability of the peace forces to create a resolute, unified, sustained political movement’, according to one seasoned peace activist, was a ‘tragic fact which historians will be hard put to explain’. 192

Dialogue and encounter groups, which had plied their trade in minute numbers since the 1930s, quietly facilitated discussions between Israelis and Palestinians, and accelerated

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189 Frankel, ‘Israeli Army Suffers Casualty’. In an interview, Shomron told Joel Brinkley, ‘We as an army cannot change political consciousness. Our job is to reduce the level of violence so that the political leadership can explore various options’ for a political settlement. ‘P.L.O. Shift on Violence’, p. 4.

190 See Gregg, Power of Nonviolence, pp. 43–51.

191 ‘Their political efficacy borders on zero’. Chazan, interview (6 June 1988).

their work as the uprising gained fervour. Peace Now, which had remained tied to Labour policies and lain low under Labour heroes Rabin and Peres, saw a resurgence. Israeli activists noted that the Palestinian approach, including its goodwill gestures, could achieve results, since many Israelis were already concluding that the uprising had demonstrated Israel’s inability to hold the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Amiram Goldblum, the official Peace Now spokesman, specifically singled out nonviolent forms of resistance—including civil disobedience—as departures that could hasten the winning of broad Israeli support. ‘Most Israelis are now convinced that Israel cannot rule the occupied territories forever’, Israeli columnist Danny Rubinstein said; ‘but they differ on what to do with them’.

Human rights issues were increasingly raised in groups such as Red Line, Women in Black, the Twenty-First Year (a mostly women’s association that circulated a covenant refusing cooperation with the occupation), East for Peace, and Sons of the Village. Idiosyncratic actions were plentiful. Third parties intensified their efforts, as churches and peace groups—some from outside the perimeter of the conflict—sent visiting teams to travel first to one side for discussions and then to the other. Peripatetic advocates for basic communication, they also imparted information. The televised news from South Africa showing direct talks between the F. W. DeKlerk government and ANC negotiators spurred those who believed negotiations between the Israelis and Palestinians were essential for a lasting settlement. The Jerusalem Post played an important role by carrying articles with a

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193 Sami Kilani, one-hour communication (Atlanta, 6 December 1991). From the village of Ya'bad, Kilani is a poet and professor at al-Najah University whose experiences with dialogue groups he found valuable. Also see Wallach and Wallach, ‘Sami Kilani’, New Palestinians, pp. 140-63.


195 Aboudi, ‘Palestinians to Reach Out’. Naomi Chazan viewed the Israeli peace camp as split between those who protested occupation with legal measures, such as Peace Now, and those who had concluded that civil disobedience was required. Chazan, interview (6 June 1988).

196 Aboudi, ‘Palestinians to Reach Out’.

neutral perspective on the Palestinians, and the Palestinian newspapers themselves became the focus of news stories. By late 1989, Ziad Abu Zayyad was trying to persuade Israeli newspapers to run weekly columns by Arab writers.

In June 1988, after years of Israeli policies rarely if ever denied to have been aimed at eliminating Palestinian nationalist leaders, Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin began limited dialogue with various Palestinian spokespersons. Reports were leaked from Israeli intelligence and military sources admitting that the uprising could not be ended and that a ‘political solution’ would have to be found. Israeli officials dropped their claim that were it not for the PLO, most Palestinians would accept occupation. Soon after the start of the uprising, political scientist Shlomo Avineri of Hebrew University had remarked,

Israel is now learning, the hard way, a simple truth, which should have been known to us from the days of confronting the British Army in Palestine in 1945–47: An army can beat an army, but an army cannot beat a people. Israel is learning that power has its limits. Iron can smash iron, it cannot smash an unarmed fist.

The intifada became recognized as possessing deep popular support, as Rabin confessed:

This is no terrorist organization we have to deal with, but rather a confrontation with the majority of the Palestinian population in the territories. ... [T]his population is led by a radical hardcore nucleus, but most of the residents support and identify with these radical elements and their goals.

In Israel, the intifada was experienced as ‘a seismic tremor that exposed deep layers of self-

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198 A comparative analysis of the coverage of the intifada by al-Fajr and the Jerusalem Post during the period of 5 December 1987 to 3 July 1988 describes the former as ‘unswerving’, with all articles reinforcing the identical Palestinian paradigm. The Post (then with ties to the Israeli Labour Party, but later under Canadian ownership that is editorially right wing) was found to offer a diversity of opinions within a framework of moderate Israeli viewpoints. Catherine Ann Collins and Jeanne E. Clark, ‘Structuring the Intifada in al-Fajr and The Jerusalem Post’, in Cohan and Wolfsted, Framing the Intifada, pp. 192–205. The Palestinians have had partisan newspapers expressing different ideological points of view since 1972, when al-Fajr became the ‘mouthpiece of the mainstream PLO’. By 1978, multi-party news organs had been established along factional lines. Frisch, ‘Transformation’, pp. 101, 103.

199 Aboudi, ‘Palestinians to Reach Out’.


202 Jerusalem Domestic Service, 17 June 1988, FBIS. Daoud Kuttab recounted a story told to him early in the intifada by Thomas L. Friedman of the New York Times, who spoke of dining with Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin. As Kuttab recalled Friedman’s words, ‘Literally between bites of roast beef, Rabin said, “terror we can deal with, but we can’t deal with this nonviolence thing”’. Kuttab, interview (4 November 1994).
A new generation worried about a future marred by conflict, business owners wanted access to lucrative Arab and Islamic markets, and increasing international isolation cast a bitter pall over a dispirited nation. Only five months into the uprising, General Ehud Barak said that the intifada had cost the army ‘tens of millions of dollars’. Efraim Inbar estimates the direct costs of fighting the intifada in the first three years at £240 million.

In the view of Yaron Ezrahi, the warrior hero Yitzhak Rabin—who had helped transform Israelis from stooped victims to champions in their own perception and the eyes of others—also brought Israel to its lowest point. This would ultimately prove intolerable for him and most Israelis, and begin ‘a process of self-transformation, the point at which we started the arduous climb toward peace’. The intifada, Ezrahi says, provoked an ‘unprecedented moral, legal, political, and ideological debate’ about Israel’s defence forces, instigating a profound reassessment of the purpose of the possession of power by Israel.

Public-opinion research in Israel suggests that the intifada obliged both the public and political leadership to think about the future in a more objective manner than they had in the past, highlighting anomalies noticed and reported yet largely ignored. The implication of allowing the occupation to continue was ‘brought home more powerfully than it had been in the previous twenty years’. Asher Arian, Michal Shamir, and Raphael Ventura, ‘Public Opinion and Political Change: Israel and the Intifada’, Comparative Politics 24:3 (April 1992): 318. ‘The perceived level of threat actually went down as the situation [intifada] heated up’. Israelis’ fears, as expressed in public-opinion research, dropped: ‘In the 1987 survey, 43 percent reported that they thought the Arabs ultimately wanted to conquer Israel and to annihilate a good part of the Jewish people living there. A year later, this percentage dropped to 34 percent’. Ibid, p. 327.

On 22 February 1989, Abu Iyad sent a videotaped message to the International Centre for Peace in the Middle East, a venerable Israeli peace group that includes MKs. His message was that there was no turning back from the uprising, and ‘no path but the path of peace’. The uprising persuaded Israelis by the thousands that they could not occupy the Palestinians, that ‘the war against the intifada cannot be won’, and the ‘status quo can no longer be tolerated’. The argument began to be asserted that there was no alternative to sharing the contested land.

The Unravelling of the Intifada, Rejection of the ‘White Art’ of Nonviolence

The same factors that explain the Palestinians’ adoption of nonviolent struggle also help to account for the strategy’s collapse. Additionally, forces within Israel, the PLO, and the Palestinian factions were opposed to the nonviolent strategy and wanted it to end. Some Palestinians persisted in seeing nonviolent resistance as a prelude to armed struggle and with [Rabin] in June 1992. ... The Jewish people, he explained to crowd after crowd, could not dominate another people and remain true to its true national character. ... Most of Israel’s senior military men agreed with Rabin that a political solution was the only way out. Still, few—even if retired—were prepared to say so out loud’. Lally Weymouth, ‘A Leader, a Friend’, Washington Post, 7 November 1995.


208 Giora Goldberg, Gad Barzilai, and Efraim Inbar, The Impact of Intercommunal Conflict: The Intifada and Israeli Public Opinion, Policy Studies no. 43, Leonard Davis Institute for International Relations (Jerusalem, Hebrew University, 1991), pp. 5, 4, 58-60. An Israeli foreign ministry spokesperson said, ‘We have the military capacity to kill all the Palestinians. Some say “transfer them”. Some say “disappear them”, but the prevailing feeling had become one in which Israelis were fed up with a dead end’. Caspi, interview (10 November 1994).

209 The first call to violence appears in Leaflet no. 6 of 2 February 1988. Mishal and Aharoni, Speaking Stones, p. 288. Leaflet no. 6 contains a list of calls to strike, refrain from working in Israeli settlements, resign from jobs with municipal and occupation authorities, form merchants’ committees, abstain from paying taxes and fines, and promote local industry and home economy. At the end of the list appears the following: ‘Respond in a revolutionary manner to the [Israeli] policy of beating and breaking [bones] by escalating the war of Molotov cocktails and stones’. Lockman and Beinin, Intifada, p. 335. This seventh and last point does not appear in the version published in Nicosia by Ibal Publishing, an organ associated with the PLO. No Voice Is Louder, pp. 30-33.
wanted reversion to bombings. Others thought that successes in the political realm could be used to score advantages in the military sphere. Apparently not grasping the potential for nonviolent struggle to induce change from within a target group, they seem not to have evaluated that the Israelis would not be moved by displays of nonviolent discipline in the face of reprisals so long as paramilitary operations were simultaneously being directed against them. This weakened the ability of the Palestinians in what William Vogele calls 'alteration of [Israeli] cognitive maps'. A turning point was reached in March 1988, four months into the uprising, as incidents were reported that included shots fired at a jeep, detonation of a grenade in Israel, shots fired from the Askar refugee camp near Nablus, and a bus hijacking. Israeli reaction to these events was noted by human rights monitoring groups as particularly brutal. Thus, the question of the use of violence had been sharpened, making even more exceptional the subsequent adherence to an overall strategy for the use of nonviolent sanctions. Demonstrations were reaching remote villages that had never before witnessed any form of protest activity, yet there was concern about whether the disposition of the intifada as popular, unarmed resistance could continue, when two or three Palestinians were being killed daily. Daoud Kuttab records that the Command showed 'pragmatism and maturity' in making

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210 Some representatives on the Command looked upon the intifada as a step towards armed struggle. 'There was always a problem about how to view it', Sari Nusseibeh recalled, 'If you ask the question, "What was the intifada?" I don't think you'll find an answer, because it is different for different people. This reflected itself in the fights that took place between the various leaflet writers—to introduce this word, not this word'. Nusseibeh, interview (28 January 1996).

211 In December 1988, in the territories the PFLP issued a pamphlet calling for the resumption of armed struggle. In a handout that contradicted Leaflet no. 29 from the Command, it stated its opposition to the PNC's acceptance of UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. By February 1990, the Damascus-based leadership was issuing a call for Palestinians to take up arms against Israeli soldiers, despite the significant gains that had been made in Western sympathy by the restraint of the intifada. Daoud Kuttab, 'The Loser and Winners after the Declaration of Independence', dispatch filed with news media, East Jerusalem, November 1988, Kuttab private papers; Shindler, Ploughshares into Swords? p. 230; Tony Walker, 'After the Violence Comes Civil Disobedience', Financial Times, 26 February 1988, p. 3. When other anti-Arafat Damascus-based factions, such as Ahmad Jabril's PFLP-GC, intensified attempts at cross-border operations, Arafat stated that he opposed guerrilla raids from southern Lebanon; yet a few days later, he said that they were a justifiable form of resistance. Also, members of the DFLP reportedly agitated for armed struggle within its own ranks. Moffett, 'Arafat the Ambivalent', p. 3.

212 Vogele, 'Learning and Nonviolent Struggle in the Intifadah', p. 313.

the needed adjustments. 214

Following celebrations associated with the issuance of the Declaration of Independence, in November 1988 an anti-climactic slough ensued, and the question of introducing violence was again raised. So anxiously had residents of the territories awaited the declaration, that few focused on what would happen next. Kuttab notes,

The success of the right-wing parties in the [autumn 1988] Israeli elections has given some radical Palestinian groups the idea of re-emphasizing the need to go back to the armed struggle. Supporters of the Islamic Fundamentalists also joined the [PFLP] in repeating slogans about using arms against Israel. . . . [Yet] the armed struggle is not a viable option, . . . if carried out arbitrarily it could spell the end of the intifada . . . a white unarmed popular struggle.215

A speech of Feisel Husseini’s to a Peace Now rally, calling for a two-state solution, evoked the ‘official wrath’ of the Israeli government. 216 Still, he persisted in explaining to Israeli audiences that ‘the intifada is not a military operation, it is a new movement which aspires to liberate thought and consciousness’.217 While he and other Palestinians in the territories ‘tirelessly’ sought to ‘dispel deeply entrenched Israeli fears of the PLO and Palestinian national demands’, the Fifth Fateh Congress, meeting in Tunis in August 1989, instead urged the intensification of ‘armed action and all forms of struggle’. 218 The Command and the PLO were nominally opposed to the use of arms,219 but the factions oscillated over the

214Daoud Kuttab, untitled dispatch to news media, East Jerusalem, approximately 10 March 1988, Kuttab private papers.

215Daoud Kuttab, untitled two-page dispatch filed with news media, East Jerusalem, November 1988, Kuttab private papers.


219The intifada had ‘developed its own particular methods for confronting the occupation’, Abu Iyad stated, ‘and we have been very clear about the need to adhere to a no-arms policy within the context of the intifada’. Khalaf, ‘Lowering the Sword’, p. 104.

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use of weapons against soldiers and Jewish settlers. Arafat came under heat for maintaining a policy of restraint within the PLO. Local Fateh leaders—embroiled in debate—splintered, as radical tendencies and Hamas gained adherents.

Since the Israeli army was the single largest sector of Israeli society in constant contact with the Palestinians, any civilian resistance needed to affect the morale of the soldiers and their willingness to obey orders. The PLO’s posture held little potential for sowing discord in Israeli public opinion or invalidating the Israeli popular support for military suppression of the uprising. Having backed the insiders’ suspension of armed actions for the first two years, the nonviolent discipline in the uprising came under attack as the third anniversary approached. Instead of focusing on how to affect the morale of the Israeli soldiers or cause defections, from outside the territories in 1990 the PFLP’s George Habash counselled ‘supporting’ the intifada ‘with fire’, and PLO Executive Committee member Muhammad Abu’l Abbas called for putting ‘a rifle in the hand of every Palestinian in the occupied territories’. The idea, which remained in the realm of rhetoric, was that those

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220In a mid-1988 interview, George Habash was questioned about why the Palestinians did not make the differentiation between military and civilian targets that armed post-colonial revolutionary insurgencies in other parts of the world had often made. His response: ‘Between 1945 and 1965, the Palestinians tried to fight by all means. Now the PLO in general concentrates on diplomatic struggle, political struggle, and armed struggle inside Palestine, not in Europe’. George Habash, two-hour interview (Damascus, 12 June 1988).


222Two Israeli soldiers were killed in an ambush in Gaza in November 1989, the first operation of its kind; Palestinian sources did not deny Israel’s claim that the attack had been carried out by Fateh, signifying a breakdown in adherence to the intifada strategy. Assad Saftawi, a Fateh leader in Gaza, told Timothy Phelps, ‘The more extremist organizations gave us a chance two years ago to achieve something for the Palestinian people. . . . Until now I can say the moderate Palestinian line didn’t achieve anything and this creates danger for this line and opens a big gate for the extremists’. Timothy M. Phelps, ‘Grim Forecast on Uprising; As Intifada Enters Third Year, Fears That Guns Will Replace Stones’, Newsday, 9 December 1989, p. 7.


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struggling inside were to be joined by combatants from outside the territories. By Leaflet no. 65, in late 1990, the Command itself refers to 'all forms of struggle'.

Civilian Mobilization Opens a Pandora’s Box

The pursuit of civilian nonmilitary organizing and the resulting web of surreptitious civil society associations across the territories during the two decades following the 1967 occupation, the first of the three major developments to be the focus of this study, is only part of the narrative. The nonmilitary movements of the 1980s, which had brought thousands of micro-organizations into being, permitted an infrastructure of popular committees to spring rapidly into place in December 1987 to cope with Israeli curfews, yet the same mobilization also opened doors to those who espoused violence, such as Hamas. As noted, the Islamic revivalists opposed the dominant thinking of the first two years of the uprising, in which nonviolent tools were deemed best and were not a part of the fragile consensus of the uprising. Islamic Jihad in particular disavowed any cooperation with Israel. ‘By the third,

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224To offer perspective, in 1990 Jane’s Defence Weekly reported that the PLO’s Ahmad Ahsani, a former Jordanian army brigadier also known as Abu Muhtasem, had claimed that the Palestine National Liberation Army (PNLA) had 30,000 men under arms. A contingent of 8,000 was in Lebanon, with other detachments in Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Sudan, and Yemen. Most of the officers were trained in Eastern Europe and Pakistan, according to Ahsani, and there were military attachés in more than twenty countries. Other Palestinian guerrilla groups were noted as follows: FFLP 2,000; DFLP 1,000–1,500; Abu Nidal 500; and Abu Musa (an anti-Arafat faction known as Fatah–Uprising and led by Col. Sa’id Musa) and Ahmad Jabril’s PFLP-General Command, both Damascus-based, 800–1,000 men each. Hussain, ‘Faith in the Intifada’, p. 556

225Ian Black, ‘Signs of Intifada Turning to Arms’, Guardian, 4 December 1990, p. 13. Such moves were led by the PFLP, Hamas, and a minority in Fatah, and were opposed by the communists, the DFLP, and some in Fatah.

226The IDF spokesman claimed that ‘muezzins in Gaza mosques urged youths to attack Israeli soldiers’ during the disturbances of December 1987. IDF spokesman, ‘Jihad’s Affinity’, p. 5.

227At the signing of the Oslo I accord on 13 September 1993, a hardened division of perspective was evident in East Jerusalem. To Zahira Kamal, of the DFLP, it was the ‘first sign of recognizing us as a people that has political and national rights’. Ben Lynfield, ‘Palestinians Hoist Flag over Their Capitol’, UPI, 13 September 1993. Fatah wanted to celebrate. Hamas, however, wanted a general strike against the peace accord and issued leaflets calling for a ‘day of mourning’. In compromise, it was decided to strike until mid-afternoon and afterwards celebrate. Deborah Horan and Abdelmajid Bejar, ‘Middle East: Palestinian Joy as Accord Is Signed’, Inter Press Service, 13 September 1993; Lynfield, ‘Palestinians Hoist Flag’. In Gaza, Israeli soldiers clashed with Hamas opponents of the accord. ‘Army Shoots Palestinians, Israeli Rightwingers Demonstrate’, Agence France-Presse, 10 September 1993. In Ramallah, fifty Hamas proponents burned tyres in the town centre. ‘Palestinians Raise Flag in Jerusalem’, Agence France-Presse, 10 September 1993.
fourth, fifth year’, Sari Nusseibeh recalled, with ‘acts of violence ... actually ongoing in the
intifada—Hamas might even argue ... that attacks on Jews were an inseparable and integral
part of the intifada.228 Israeli collective punishments may have reinforced self-reliance in the
popular committees, but kept their members under duress. Food shortages, restricted
movements, and controls on the passage of travellers from one village or town to another
through roadblocks were circumvented by the committees, but the incidents of trauma
continued to rise steeply, along with deportations, mass arrests, and detentions. Economic
constraints were severe, as Palestinian labourers were forbidden to travel to Israel for day
jobs. The potency of popular committees was validated by Israel’s retaliation in outlawing
membership in them, but the committees were also vitiated by such measures. Within the
Command, it was later acknowledged, the long incarcerations had an extremely chilling
effect, particularly on the stamina of those running the popular committees.229 Although the
ability to resist breaking down or revealing of names of colleagues under torture became a rite
of passage and badge of honour, clinicians say they will be forced to treat the sequelae of
stress from torture in Israeli gaols for years to come.230 Prohibitions against access by the
news media limited full international airing and reaction to the harsh reprisals. Among the
outcomes of Israeli repressive measures was an inability of the Palestinians to make plans.231

228 Nusseibeh, interview (28 January 1996).

229 Malki, interview (3 May 1995).

230 ‘Eyad Sarraj, ‘Torture and Mental Health: The Experience of Palestinians in Israeli Prisons’ (Gaza
City, Gaza Community Mental Health Program, 1993); idem, ‘Rehabilitation of Ex-Political Prisoners’ (Gaza
City, Gaza Community Mental Health Program, 17–18 April 1994); Samir Quta, Raija-Leena Punamäki, and
Eyad Sarraj, ‘House Demolitions and Mental Health: Victims and the Witnesses’ (Gaza City, Gaza Community
Mental Health Program, 1993); Eyad Sarraj and Samir Quta, ‘Relations between Traumatic Experiences,
Activity, and Cognitive and Emotional Responses among Palestinian Children’ (Gaza City, Gaza Community
Mental Health Program, 1993). In July 1995, Israeli prime minister and defence minister Yitzhak Rabin
granted that 8,000 Palestinians had been subjected to ‘violent shaking’ during interrogations by Israel’s
New York Times, 8 May 1997, p. 10. A seventy-page report by B’Tselem emphasizes the banal and systematic
character of torture as used on approximately 850 Palestinians annually. Yuval Ginbar, Routine Torture:
Interrogation Methods of the General Security Service (Jerusalem, B’Tselem, 1998). See also Allegra Pacheco,

By mid-1990, the cry that an independent state was a stone’s throw away was replaced by disquiet over the rising physical and economic losses. Criticism was openly expressed of the PLO in exile and the local leadership, also. Husseini chided violent factional disputes: ‘If we don’t control ourselves and unify our ranks [instead of allowing] tribal and factional differences to act up, then we will fail’. Rumours spread that the PLO, in taking over the intifada, had created a state of paralysis in which residents of the West Bank and Gaza were again waiting passively for outside developments. Three and a half years after its start, Husseini called for a reassessment and a retooling of the intifada: ‘We must build popular committees not on the basis of the PLO’s factions but on the basis of national unity’.

The Killing of Collaborators

The same fragmentation of authority and diffusion of the loci of power that had produced the capacity for mass mobilization was also implicated in the licence taken to kill collaborators. The killings reflected an internal schism in the uprising. On 24 February 1988 in Qabatiya, a town of 7,000, a fortune-teller named Muhammad Ayed was lynched on suspicion of collaborating with the Israeli authorities. During a protest march, youths threw stones at his house, and Ayed opened fire, killing a four-year-old boy and wounding eighteen. The crowd burned Ayed’s house, killing him, and hanging his corpse below a Palestinian flag on a telephone pole. The IDF closed off the village with boulders and earth, and electricity, telephone, and water services were cut. In Qabatiya, Glenn Frankel notes, everyone viewed Ayed as an informer under the protection of two Israeli ‘sheriffs’—operatives of the Shin Bet.

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233Williams, ‘Intifada Showing Signs of Failure’. Palestinian journalist Hamdi Farrai notes, ‘When the intifada began, the slogan was “No voice speaks louder than the intifada”. But as [time] went on . . . the PLO did not give local leaders the freedom to do what we wanted. Now, we are in a state of waiting’. Ibid.


235Greenberg, ‘After a Month of Siege, Kabatiya Faces a Grim Life.’
internal security service in charge of overseeing police matters in the town.\textsuperscript{236}

Israel had an intelligence-gathering apparatus in the occupied territories, which at its peak during the \textit{intifada} involved 18,000 informers.\textsuperscript{237} According to one Israeli soldier,

We could not understand how these people were still alive. As Israeli soldiers, we had to deal with these collaborators. We had to work alongside these collaborators, and we could not understand how the people in the village did not beat their brains out. That would be justified in my opinion.\textsuperscript{238}

Shin Bet used sexual entrapment, blackmail, drugs, and money to enlist collaborators, while developing a body of techniques for using them.\textsuperscript{239} Leaflet no. 15 of April 1988 calls for ‘cruel punishment to those who work for the police, the municipalities, and the appointed village committees, who willfully disregard the wishes of the people’.\textsuperscript{240}

It would have been impossible for the Palestinians to ‘disengage’ from the occupation—the central concept of the \textit{intifada}—without eventually weakening or eliminating the network of Palestinian collaborators utilized by the Israeli military-intelligence complex to support its administration. The Palestinians knew that Israel was dependent on their own collusion for information.\textsuperscript{241} The dénouement for collaborators proves the conscious proscription of firearms in the uprising as a whole. When shootings of Palestinians by Palestinians began, it provided evidence there were light weapons in Palestinian communities, but that they had elected not to use them in the political programme of the


\textsuperscript{238}Bergen, Neuhaus, and Rubeiz, \textit{Justice and the Intifada}, p. 31.

\textsuperscript{239}Black and Morris, \textit{Israel’s Secret Wars}, pp. 253–5, 395, 398, 475–79.


\textsuperscript{241}Even prior to the outbreak of the \textit{intifada}, the question had arisen with an unsigned, undated four-page leaflet distributed in the Balata refugee camp, ‘Let Us Foil the Intelligence Methods of the Enemy and Struggle against Them with Determination’. Women were warned not to patronize dress shops with which they were unfamiliar, to prevent vulnerability to hidden cameras that could photograph them in compromising positions and be used to blackmail them into collaborating, nor to frequent hair salons where drugs could unknowingly be administered. Black and Morris, \textit{Israel’s Secret Wars}, pp. 472, 563 en33.
intifada. Palestinian collaborators repented publicly in the mosques, but by 1991, more than 450 persons suspected of collaboration had been killed.242 The Associated Press in August 1993 tallied 755 suspected collaborators slain.243 By 1994, the Israeli army had estimated that 964 collaborators had been killed.244

On 7 June 1992, at the instigation of Feisel Husseini, Hamas and Fateh signed a 'covenant of honour' intended to regulate the killing of alleged informers and decrease the fighting between the two groups' supporters. The statement called for 'thinking deeply about the subject of liquidating collaborators'. It did not urge an end to the killings, but stated that 'orders for killing collaborators must come from a high, joint leadership', and announced the setting up of a joint steering committee 'to unite efforts against the occupation forces'.245 In February 1994, it was reported that Hamas was offering amnesty to any informer who killed his or her Israeli handler.246 Joost Hiltermann rejects interpretations of retributory killing related to political rivalry. In his view, Israeli issuances slanted reportage, spinning the murders into political rivalries, rather than accepting the 'Palestinian definition of collaborators as those who work for the enemy against their own people, and have therefore forfeited their right to membership in the Palestinian community'.247 Hillel Frisch agrees that few, if any, murders were based on political rivalry.248 One group, the Fateh Hawks, Ian Black describes as 'young desperadoes', who had killed more Palestinian collaborators than

245Immanuel, 'Hamas, Fatah Agree to "Regulate" Informer Killings'; Be'er and 'Abdel-Jawad, Collaborators, p. 167. Feisel Husseini admits that 'mistakes' were made and states that the Command's reluctance to declare itself clearly led to increased killings in Appendix A, Ibid., pp. 213–5.
they had Israelis. Regardles**, the Israeli view of the uprising as predictably violent found easy validation in the slaying of Palestinian collaborators.

**The Influence of the Activist Intellectuals Wanes**

Security had been Israel's stated goal in its efforts to suppress the intifada, but the methods it used to crush what was never officially acknowledged as civil resistance destroyed the very leadership that had arrived at the nonviolent formula to supplant armed struggle. With the leadership of the uprising repeatedly decimated, after two years there were few, if any, on the Command who had been involved in Feisel Husseini's committees or the Arab Studies Society, had participated in Mubarak Awad's workshops or read his samizdat, heard Gene Sharp's lectures, been prodded by Sari Nusseibeh's writings, or had followed the opinions of Ziad Abu Zayyad or Radwan Abu Ayyash. As new factional representatives took the place of imprisoned leaders, old assumptions of armed struggle returned. No one who had weighed the costs versus benefits of the difficult equations advocating mass popular actions—as had the leaflet writers of the first two years—would survive on the Command past the March 1990 decapitation of the last autonomous leadership collective. No longer able to maintain a coherent programme, violence and decentralization replaced unity. As the identities of the representatives on the Command

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250 Within Fateh, Feisel Husseini was threatened by a mutiny in Nablus and the northern West Bank by some who balked at his leadership and that of other East Jerusalem figures. Greenberg, 'West Bank; PLO Victory'.

251 Benvenisti says the Palestinian intellectuals were 'shunted to the margins' by 'something spontaneous and "irrational" ' in the Palestinian public. Meron Benvenisti, Intimate Enemies: Jews and Arabs in a Shared Land (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1995), p. 115. A less mysterious explanation is the eclipse, by Israeli incarcerations, of the agents who were arguing political struggle.

252 Nusseibeh, interview (5 November 1994); Immanuel, 'Sari Nusseibeh: Palestinians Wrong'. With the PLO driving the intifada, its preference for general strikes—the only technique of civil resistance with which it appeared familiar—wreaked the population, as each group urged its own strike day. As a technique of struggle, general strikes cannot be targeted with precision, unlike limited strikes aimed at specific grievances. For those without familiarity with nonviolent strategic action, a general strike is easy to call. In 1983, Mubarak Awad had warned against indiscriminate strikes by Palestinians, terming it a 'grievous error' to declare an
became known, the collective lost its iconic authority and ability to enthrall; when anonymous, it was captivating, but as names trickled out, its requests for sacrifice and suffering held less allure.\textsuperscript{253}

Internal dissension, old ideologies, lack of support from Tunis,\textsuperscript{254} and subversion of the nonviolent strategy meant that excessive Israeli force—instead of being read as indicative of the strategy’s effectiveness—became the logic for reviving the failed strategies of the past. As the intifada was chronically subjected to calls for a return to the worn-out suppositions of armed struggle,\textsuperscript{255} the activist intellectuals who had fought for a new consensus in the territories were unable to sustain the upper hand over tendencies that had for decades fetishized armed struggle. Civil disobedience was to have been part of a complex strategy of extrication from military occupation, while replacing the spent and ineffectual remedies of the past. As Radwan Abu Ayyash appealed, ‘Internationally, we have made many gains with the intifada that we would lose with armed struggle, and we are not prepared for it. If we use guns it will not be an intifada but a war. The Israelis want war. To take this decision would be to play into their hands’.\textsuperscript{256} The voices of the activist intellectuals could not always be heard above the din of those whom Yezid Sayigh calls ‘self-styled avengers and liberators’ of the state-sponsored guerrilla forces.\textsuperscript{257}

From the beginning, the PFLP had been ‘deadset’ against the nonviolent strategies open strike calling for the end of occupation. Awad, \textit{Nonviolence}. See here Appendix 7, p. 10. Furthermore, Israeli goods were back on the shelves of Palestinian shops. Clyde Haberman, ‘Strike! Strike! Strike! Some Arabs Feel Cudgeled’, \textit{New York Times}, 4 June 1993.

\textsuperscript{253}Nusseibeh, interview (5 July 1994).

\textsuperscript{254}Initiatives by local leaders who met with Israelis to try to break the political deadlock, were by 1989 being repudiated by the PLO. Yehuda Litani, ‘Fear Stalks the Streets’, \textit{Jerusalem Post}, 8 September 1989.

\textsuperscript{255}Black, ‘Signs of Intifada Turning to Arms’, p. 13; idem, ‘War of Stones Becomes a War of Guns’, p. 10.

\textsuperscript{256}Black, ‘Tension High’, p. 8.

for resistance.258 Hanna Siniora commented, 'the PFLP had tolerated the nonviolent strategy because its overwhelming public support . . . but as they took hold of the reins, they started shifting to more confrontational approaches. . . . Especially after the Israelis cracked down on Beit Sahour’s civil disobedience and tax resistance, the PFLP became convinced that they should return to their traditional military approach'. 259

Discord and fatigue showed, as divisions between the PLO factions and Hamas ‘widened over basic issues, such as whether to escalate the uprising by using firearms, how to deal with alleged collaborators, and whether to give diplomacy a chance’. 260 Rife with internal divisions, the shadow cast by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in the summer of 1990 and the 1991 Gulf War further affected the decline and confusion of the intifada.261 After the invasion, the rows created by double leaflets, issued four or five times during the first two years of the intifada, intensified. The Command’s second appendix to Leaflet no. 67, of late February 1991, is more moderate than the first, and discloses differences in the response to the Gulf War. Both appendices call for ‘escalation’ of the intifada and for ‘launching broad activities against the enemy in rural areas’, however, the second eliminates the military

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258Nusseibeh, interview (28 January 1996). The PFLP had separated its positions from that of the Command numerous times, but eventually the disagreement became fixed. A ‘war of leaflets’ broke out in the spring of 1990, with rival strike bids disrupting life and confusing the residents of the territories. Paul Taylor, ‘Rifts Emerge among Palestinians as Uprising Stagnates’, Reuters, 1 April 1990. The PFLP began publishing its own leaflets saying that the Palestinians should step up the intifada, form a new ‘national front’ to oppose peace talks, and initiate new civil disobedience to drive Israel out of the territories. They attacked the idea that a united Jerusalem should be the capital for both Israel and a Palestinian state—as suggested by Feisal Husseini and Sari Nusseibeh—and called upon Israel’s 650,000 Arab citizens to join the intifada, something the PLO had taken pains not to do. Jackson Diehl, ‘Palestinians Split on U.S. Plan for Talks with Israel’, Washington Post, 14 April 1990, p. A10; Taylor, ‘Rifts Emerge’. After the Madrid peace conference in October 1991, the PFLP, with its Syrian backing, and Hamas, with its Iranian support, joined forces to oppose the peace process. Lamia Lahoud, ‘United They Stand, Claim Disparate Palestinian Groups’, Jerusalem Post, 11 December 1992.

259Siniora, interview (16 December 1997).


language of a demand to ‘integrate the intifada with the Iraqi and southern Lebanon fronts’. 262 Ironically, the 1991 Gulf War did not intensify the intifada but advanced the disintegration underway, and Palestinian and PLO avowals of support for Saddam Hussein weakened it further.

The occupied territories were placed under extended curfews in reaction to the declared sympathy for Saddam Hussein,263 and the commiseration of the international community in response to the uprising dissipated, as did the sympathies of the Israeli peace camp and parts of the Arab world.264 As Kuwait expelled Palestinian exiles following the emirate’s restoration, another wave of Palestinian refugees swept Jordan for the third time since 1948. Remittances sent home to the occupied territories by Palestinians working in the Gulf dropped, poverty increased, and opportunities for day work in Israel all but ceased.265 PLO funds for the territories fell from $350 million at the height of the intifada in 1988 to $120 million after Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait in 1990, according to Palestinian economic planner and multilateral talks delegate Samir Huleileh.266 The PLO’s allying itself with Iraq led the activist intellectuals in the occupied territories to distance themselves from Tunis.267


267 The need for reform within the PLO was no longer a subject kept private. Ziad Abu-Amr proposed that the PLO revise its position to avoid being undercut by U.S., Arab, and Israeli hostility and suggested three steps: an overhaul of the PLO leadership, narrowing the number of factions within the PLO to three or four, and a shift in focus within the PLO from the diaspora to the occupied territories. Tony Walker and Hugh Carnegy, ‘The Middle East; Baker Hears All the Old Tunes on Peace Merry-Go-Round’, Financial Times, 14 March 1991.
Husseini criticized Iraqi missile attacks on Israel: 'I am not happy about bombing Tel Aviv or Baghdad or any city'.

As the intifada resumed after curfews were lifted in the occupied territories, anarchic tendencies that the Command had been able to restrain broke free. The period after the Gulf War was accompanied by the rise of undisciplined and decentralized 'masked youths', and maverick actions by Palestinian splinter groups continued to sabotage the strategy of nonviolent resistance. Driven by a fear of independent thinking in the occupied

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268 Ibid. Local Palestinian leaders were angered by Arafat's embrace of Saddam, yet as East Jerusalem editor of al-Quds, political scientist at al-Najah University, and future minister of local government Saeb Erekat pointed out, Arafat had never been more popular on the streets of the West Bank and Gaza. The waning of the intifada meant that these leaders had less muscle with which to challenge Arafat than before the war. Jackson Diehl, 'Mideast Peace Bid By Baker Faces Tough Obstacles', Washington Post, 5 March 1991, p. A12.

269 Islamic Jihad threatened to kill the Palestinian activist intellectuals who had met with Secretary of State Baker and singled out Feisel Husseini in particular. 'Jihad Threatens to Kill Husseini', Jerusalem Post, 5 August 1991. As internecine fighting absorbed energies, leaflets attacked the Jerusalem-based leadership of activist intellectuals and charged 'corruption'. There had been relatively few and modest instances of such criticism prior to the post–Gulf War period. As an example, in 1989 in Nablus, a flyer had warned that 'graduates of long-term detention challenge the intellectuals and the prominent figures who have been accepted in the public eye as the leading group'. Michal Sela, 'Intifada Leadership: Trying to Heal the Rift', Jerusalem Post, 12 July 1989.

270 The masked youths, or mulathamin, belonged to Fahd al-Aswad, or the Black Panthers, a group founded in Nablus in 1989 and reportedly an armed wing of Fateh, and the Red Eagles of the PFLP. The emergence of such gangs as a 'free-lance arm' of the intifada was indicative of a loss of unity and cohesion, as chagrined with the meager fruits of the intifada spread. 'Fatah Calls West Bank Strike over Israeli Arrests', Reuters; George D. Moffett III, 'Resistance Is a Way of Life in Battle-Scarred West Bank City of Nablus', Los Angeles Times, 10 December 1989, p. A8; Ian Black, 'Israelis Shoot Dead Four Black Panthers', Guardian, 2 December 1989, p. 9. Daoud Kuttab notes that when Black Panthers in Nablus killed nineteen collaborators, Arafat privately attempted to persuade them to disarm and appealed to them personally through the PLO's Baghdad-based radio, but they refused. Daoud Kuttab, 'Beit Sahur Battles On', Middle East International, 3 November 1989, p. 10.

271 Leaflet no. 84 of July 1992 praises stabbers and condemns newly elected Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. Jon Immanuel, 'UNL Leaflet no. 84 Attempts to Jump-Start Intifada, Condemns Rabin, Glorifies Stabbers', Jerusalem Post, 6 July 1992. Immanuel claims the leaflet bears the 'hallmarks' of the PFLP and 'appears to have been proofread by Fateh youth gangs rather than by high-level political activists'. Reversion to armed struggle is what precisely any opponent wants in nonviolent struggle, Sharp had warned the Palestinians in his 1986 visit. 'Sharp: Nonviolent Struggle', interview by Afif Safieh, p. 45. Any use of guns alongside militant nonviolence weakens the nonviolent resisters, he had explained, because it produces support for repression in the target group, breeds revulsion, and unites the opponent's citizenry instead of splitting its ranks. Ibid., p. 46. Although the undergirding strategy had been nonviolent, in order for it to work it had to be adhered to by all of the factions, as violence against persons would undermine it. According to Sharp, nonviolent struggle generally requires greater strategic savoir faire than does military strategy, and its moves and countermoves demand more astute calibration. Gene Sharp, one-hour lecture, Peace and Conflict Resolution Department, the American University, Washington, D.C., 23 April 1998. Captain Sir Basil Liddell Hart notes the 'relief' experienced by military generals and troops 'when resistance becomes violent, and when non-violent forms are mixed with guerrilla action', because it justifies 'drastic suppressive action against both at the same time'. B. H. Liddell Hart, 'Lessons from Resistance Movements—Guerrilla and Non-violent', in Roberts, Civilian Resistance as a National Defense, p. 205.
territories—according to sources in the West Bank—the PLO in Tunis itself instigated dissension among leading figures in the territories. West Bankers allege that the PLO split the ranks, particularly of Fateh, through unfulfilled pledges, by insinuations that turned one person against another, and by letting others to go into financial debt based on false promises and with no help when the bills came due.  

Between the Madrid conference in 1991 and the signing of the Oslo accords in 1993, with Yasir Arafat’s support, Sari Nusseibeh organized technical and political committees to aid the Palestinians’ transition to self-governance. Nusseibeh described the committees:

I wanted live primaries in preparation for what would come later, the development of parties. . . . Even those working with me were worried; they still thought that history wasn’t moving forward; they were unable to realize that the pages were being turned. You had to create a party in order to create a government. We needed to work towards both. The technical committees were to be a professional backbone for government—archaeology, transportation, education, electricity. Haj ‘Abd Abu-Diab was the coordinator for the electricity committee. Manuel Hassassian [Bethlehem University political scientist] was to coordinate the elections committee.

If each professional committee were to think collectively, we could come up with guidelines for negotiating positions. We needed technical visions, not slogans . . . The multilateral negotiations would be the destination. The technical committees held meetings with ministers and turned over the data and plans. The major plan in effect with the World Bank was done by these committees.

272 Interviews (West Bank, December 1997).


274 He used the term as applied in the United States, meaning accessible preliminary assemblies, caucuses, or elections in which candidates are chosen or slates of delegates are prepared.

275 The PFLP and DFLP opposed the political committees. Riad al-Malki attacked the plans as an effort to establish a political party with the ‘connivance’ of the United States and independent of the PLO. Jon Immanuel, ‘Palestinian Returnees Accused of Connivance with US’, Jerusalem Post, 23 December 1991.

276 Nusseibeh, communication (16 December 1997). Hanna Siniora described these committees as more consequential than Nusseibeh’s supervision of the uprising, as it ‘brought the Fateh underground above ground’. Siniora, interview (16 December 1997). Yezid Sayigh contends that the purpose of the committees, under Arafat’s sponsorship, was to limit the emergence of an autonomous power base and especially to circumscribe the influence of Feisel Husseini. Sayigh, Armed Struggle and the Search for State, p. 654.
Eventually, however, Nusseibeh became disenchanted with the violence that was, in his phrase, a deviation from the intifada. He and others, such as Ghassan Khatib in the West Bank and Haidar 'Abd al-Shafi in Gaza, would ultimately withdraw from political activity.

In evaluating the breakdown of the intifada, a major reason is that the proponents of the nonviolent strategies were inadequately supported by the PLO. This is not surprising, as Eqbal Ahmad’s admonitions had fallen on deaf ears when he met with the PLO in the 1970s, and the March 1989 sessions in Tunis led by Mubarak Awad and Gene Sharp are not remembered as successful. According to Lucy Austin Nusseibeh, ‘The Palestinians [in the territories] knew that violence would be counterproductive and used conscious restraint—they wanted to keep it a “white revolution”’. In her view, they were not paying taxes, they were boycotting Israeli products, and they were burning their identity cards. They attacked the Israeli policy of car number tags; they didn’t pay taxes and also didn’t change the number tags as required. The Israelis simply retaliated by changing the tags—by a certain date all cars needed new tags—and these you could only get by paying the taxes. If they had been better supported from the outside, the uprising would have gone further and quicker. It might have meant that those on the outside would have organized the manufacture of counterfeit car number tags, for example.


Lucy Austin Nusseibeh, interview (5 November 1994).

In contrast, for three years prior to the 1994 South African elections, the African National Congress sponsored consultations to develop a Reconstruction and Development Plan (RDP). Preparation of the RDP built on a long process. Walter Sisulu recalled, ‘In the political schools we ran on Robben Island and in other prisons, long sessions were held to analyze every issue. . . . As we developed intellectually, we were able to see problems in a way that we might otherwise not have seen. . . . While Mandela dealt with the negotiations, we were able to deal with the future. . . . Both sides became convinced that there was no alternative to negotiations. . . . Violence would only have made our economy worse, and we would have been unable to manage. Whatever violence there was came from the forces opposed to change. . . . Basically, it was our analysis that took precedence’. Walter Sisulu, two-hour interview (Johannesburg, 3 June 1994).
educational institutions in the Arab states might have provided accreditation of the alternative education in the *intifada* through examinations, for example with Tunisian universities. Not only did the PLO fail to support the *intifada* strategy, but by putting first the taking over of the uprising, it placed organizational supremacy ahead of its stated goals.  

The Israelis, in mimicking the reaction of the British during the 1920s and 1930s and failing to distinguish violent from nonviolent resistance, hastened the turn to violent incidents. Had the nonviolent protagonists in the territories received an Israeli response which differentiated them from their colleagues who were sponsoring cross-border paramilitary operations and bombings, their fealty to the PLO might have wavered further. The failure to keep the *intifada* independent abetted factionalism, which, having disappeared from the coalitional arrangements of the first two years of the uprising, was by the third year undermining its cohesion. Ironically, the Fateh-affiliated activist intellectuals—such as Abu Ayyash, Abu Zayyad, Husseini, Nusseibeh, and Siniora—in their desire to influence the thinking in Tunis, also made easier the ultimate takeover of the *intifada* by the PLO. The years of dutiful allocation to the PLO are now regretted by many of the Palestinian progenitors of the uprising.

**Conclusion**

Remote hamlets had benefited from the analysis of the East Jerusalem activist intellectuals, often European- and North American-educated professionals and thinkers, yet the ideas of these generative figures were never institutionalized. Having gained from their class or family connexions in the fight against worn-out dogma, and waging brilliant cognitive warfare against traditional thinking, they eventually lost out to those who were

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281 Feisel Husseini called for Fateh to turn itself into a political party. Abdallah, 'Fatah Torn'.

282 Kuttab, 'Two Years of Intifada', p. 15.

283 Jadallah, interview (15 December 1997); 'Abd al-Hadi, interview (13 December 1997).
advocating old theories of resistance. Armed struggle had never completely disappeared from Palestinian political thought. Two schools of thought—one of which saw nonviolent resistance as a predecessor to future armed actions, the other of which believed that disciplined nonviolent political strategies would produce the best results at negotiations and was the prerequisite for a durable settlement—were in conflict with each other throughout the uprising. In these internal struggles, intellectuals played a seminal role, but their impact was inhibited when other social realities prevailed. Complex doctrinal disagreement had become the normal state of affairs—until opponents of the nonviolent strategy won. Resistance became all things to all persons and a coherent programme could not be sustained. The strict prohibition against the use of weaponry was eventually ignored, and the intifada, which had managed to contain within its circumference contradictory polarities on the question of arms, came to an end.

Although consensus was lost, the uprising never became in any sense an armed rebellion, and a fundamental determination to limit violent acts and keep a popular civilian character remained in view. At no point did the Palestinians use the methods of sabotage or other forms of violence that were ‘mixed’ with nonviolent resistance and made famous in the European resistance against Nazism in World War II, and there was little destruction of Israeli property.\footnote{By 1942 in Denmark, the organization of internal sabotage against the Nazis had begun, and by 1943, three to seven acts of sabotage were occurring per day. Semelin, Unarmed against Hitler, pp. 40–41.}

The intifada was forceful internationally and to a certain extent in Israel. In the words of Shlomo Avineri, it achieved for the Palestinians what ‘decades of terrorism and diplomacy’ had not been able to gain for them: ‘a large measure of international sympathy; internal pride [and] a modicum of respect within Israel itself’. As Avineri notes, the ‘world Jewish community’ was not united behind Israeli policies, and even if criticism was hushed, a ‘deep feeling of unease’ pervaded Jewish communities abroad.\footnote{Shlomo Avineri, ‘Upsetting the Palestinian Applecart’, Jerusalem Post, 27 June 1988, p. 8.} Danny Rubinstein told Ian
Black, ‘when the intifada came, people respected [the Palestinians’] civil disobedience’. 286

Although it took five years, Israeli leaders became persuaded that there could be no military solution to the Palestinian predicament, nor any solution whatsoever that was not based on direct negotiations with the Palestinians themselves. 287 For the first time since 1948, the primary interlocutor designated for dialogue by Israel was ‘not some Arab country, but well and truly the Palestinians’. 288


Chapter Eight

CONCLUSION

Achievements of the Uprising Coincide with Its Most Nonviolent Phase

The intifada proceeded in roughly four phases. The first phase started with the spontaneous outpouring after 9 December 1987. The second phase began a month later, as the Unified National Leadership Command was organized and a relatively coherent programme of essentially nonviolent resistance got underway. The zenith, this second phase produced the greatest and most enduring results of the uprising and lasted for more than two years, from January 1988 until March 1990, when members of the last autonomous Command were incarcerated. The third phase coincided with Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait in August 1990 and the ensuing Gulf War in 1991. As a ‘war of the leaflets’ erupted, the PFLP breached the nonviolent programme of the intifada, and Hamas gained ascendancy with its justifications for violence. This phase saw a surge in cross-border incendiary operations meant to ‘help’ the intifada or sabotage the nonviolent strategy, as factional spokespersons outside the occupied territories urged the arming of Palestinians inside the territories. The fourth phase began as, outside the territories, strides were taken towards the international peace conference in Madrid, held in October 1991. This final period in the intifada witnessed the continued breakdown of discipline, the loss of political clarity and purpose, a failure to press for goals as a more or less united front, and rising internecine conflict, killing of collaborators, and violence towards Israeli civilians. The intifada effectively ended shortly before 1992, five years after it began, by which time armed ‘strike forces’ had appointed themselves or had been propelled into action by competing factions that rejected the nonviolent strategy of the uprising.¹

¹In quarters where the intifada is not perceived as a fundamentally nonviolent political phenomenon in the first place, or where it is seen as but a phase of unending war against Israel, it is often considered to have ended in September 1993 with the signing of Oslo I.
This study has plumbed the second, most productive phase, which lasted for nearly three years, during which nonviolent discipline held relatively firm. Within six months of its start, the uprising had realized its main objectives, according to Daoud Kuttab, who, writing at that time states,

It has reversed the trend of creeping annexation by directing Palestinians to build their own economic infrastructure, ... stopped the attempts by Jordan to toy with the idea of representing Palestinians, ... consolidated the role of the PLO, ... made Palestinians ... more self-reliant, and ... united than in the past. Unarmed Palestinians have succeeded in exposing Israeli brutality, transform[ing] the image of the Palestinians in the international community.2

Less than one year into the intifada, the Husseini Document had been issued as the Palestinian Declaration of Independence, just prior to the nineteenth PNC, or 'intifada PNC', held in Algiers on 15 November 1988; the text was recognizably Sari Nusseibeh's expropriated draft. Instead of an interim government-in-exile as condoned by Arab leaders in the past, implying a centre located outside the territories, the document speaks of the establishment of a Palestinian state in Palestinian territory and accepts the 1947 UN partition boundaries of Resolution 181.3 The term armed struggle was dropped from the official

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2Kuttab, 'Second Phase, Self-Sufficiency', p. 43. Israeli peace activist Uri Avnery concurs: 'The intifada has already won. And its achievements are immense. A Palestinian state already exists today for all practical purposes. A system of self-government is functioning in the occupied territories; national decisions are made by a leadership which enjoys the total support of the people; tremendous sacrifices are willingly incurred, ... a system of mutual help has come into being and beleaguered committees have held out under awesome pressure'. Avnery, 'Intifada: Substance and Illusion', p. 12.


The desire of the PLO to capitalize on the intifada led some in the PLO to propound a government-in-exile, with those in the occupied territories acting as 'absentee members'. Christopher Walker, 'PLO Will Appoint Exile Government Early in New Year', The Times, 19 December 1988, p. 7. According to Yezid Sayigh, Abu Jihad squelched this idea because he feared that, if implemented, Arafat could weaken the uprising by making premature diplomatic compromises. In early 1988, Abu Jihad said, 'No voice rises above that of the intifada and so talk of a government-in-exile must cease'. Interview of Abu Jihad in al-Safir, 27 January 1988, as cited by Sayigh, Armed Struggle and Search for State, pp. 618, 831 en65, 616. The activist intellectuals guiding the intifada, however, had no interest in an exiled government and hardly saw themselves as absentees. They wanted a provisional government located in the territories, with the diasporan leadership as the titular heads outside. Sari Nusseibeh, as quoted in Greenberg, 'Nusseibeh Wants Provisional Government Now'; Friedman, 'King’s Move'. See paragraph one of the Husseini Document (here, in Appendix 4) stating that the 'interim government will consist of two parts: Those who are in exile and those who reside on Palestinian soil'. Regardless, a provisional government was never formed.
lexicon of mainstream Palestinian political discourse. Both this phrase and all references to the 1964 Palestinian National Charter vanished from the resolutions of the PNC within one year of the start of the uprising. According to Ghassan Khatib,

The intifada was a turning point, because what gave power to the [PLO] leadership was its association with the strongest part of the struggle. The centre of gravity was first in Jordan, then it was in Lebanon, and then it was inside the territories, because that was the only place left, and the culmination was the intifada. The statement of a Palestinian leader in Ramallah became more important than something from Tunis.

Ignored or misread by the media and rebutted by Yitzhak Shamir’s government, the Algiers session was a watershed. Susan Hattis Rolef would later observe that professional Israeli PLO watchers had started noticing changes in PLO positions after the twelfth PNC in Cairo in 1974, but academicians and politicians became convinced of significant alterations only after the nineteenth PNC. Its resolutions made explicit what for fourteen years had been an evolving trend in Palestinian political thought. The 1974 call for a ‘national authority’ had implied two states existing side by side, and this growing consensus was reflected ten years later at the 1984 PNC meeting in Amman, in which the same line of thinking was carried forward, adding the context of a confederation with Jordan. Although formal mention of the recognition of Israel had been sidestepped in Cairo in 1974, the concept grew until, in 1987, at the PNC in Algiers before the outbreak of the intifada, an international conference and negotiations with Israel were added to the resolutions.

At the same time, changes were also occurring in Israeli discourse. ‘I knew the intifada was creating a transformation on the Israeli side because, right up to the intifada, the words “Palestinian state” were taboo on Israeli television’, Nusseibeh recalled, ‘but once the intifada began, suddenly “Palestinian state” and “Palestinian people” came into use’. Nusseibeh, interview (5 July 1994).


Khatib, interview (15 December 1997).

Rolef, ‘Israel’s Policy toward the PLO’, in Sela and Ma’oz, PLO and Israel, p. 257.

Recognition of Israel was again avoided in Algiers in 1988 at the intifada PNC, to provide an umbrella broad enough to encompass George Habash, leader of the PFLP. By the time I met with Habash, in Damascus in 1988, there had been a verbal softening of the PFLP’s stance to reject anything short of Palestine in its entirety. The PFLP, which was opposed to the nonviolent strategies of the intifada, subsequently adhered
Ironically, with the uproar of support for the declaration of a state at the intifada PNC, the distinctive ability of the uprising to contain within it both secular nationalists and those cultivating political gains through religious organizing ended; after the Algiers meeting, the schism between Hamas and the rest of the intifada was flung into the open. Support for Hamas fell in Nablus and Gaza—its two strongholds—as a result of their condemnation of the Declaration of Independence, which accepted the 1947 partition plan.9

The nineteenth PNC stands out as evidence of the repudiation within the PLO theatre of the doctrine of armed struggle as the ‘only way to liberate Palestine’, and passages of its controversial 1964 Charter are ‘flatly contradicted’ by its resolutions.10 Its declarations stand out for their hopefulness for reconciliation with Israelis. The Israeli response to the changes in Algiers—including the affirmation of Israel’s right to ‘secure and recognized’ borders implicit in the PNC’s acceptance of 242—was to reject them and castigate the international community for being fooled by the PNC’s ‘supposed attempt at moderation’.11 By March to the PLO’s decision to work for a two-state solution encompassing only part of historic Palestine, until 1990 when it again called for arms.

At the 1991 PNC in Algiers, I witnessed efforts by Arafat to bring Habash and Nayef Hawatmeh of the DFLP into agreement on participating in the international conference in Madrid. Feisel Husseini and Hanan Mikhail Ashrawi, forbidden by Israel to travel to Algeria for the PNC, did so secretly and reported the saga of their numerous sessions with Secretary of State James Baker, as part of the effort to bring along the PFLP and DFLP.


10 Said, ‘Intifada and Independence’, in Lockman and Beinin, Intifada, p. 18. Ziad Abu-Amr notes that acceptance of 242 and 338 showed the obsolescence of the 1964 document. ‘The uprising bailed the PLO out of an already faltering armed struggle’. Ziad Abu-Amr, ‘The Politics of the Intifada’, in Hudson, Palestinians: New Directions, pp. 5, 6. Hisham Sharabi indicates that the notion of liberating Palestine by military means had been abandoned in all but rhetoric for years prior to the start of the uprising. ‘If it was possible in the 1950s, or even in 1967, to reconquer the ancestral land taken from us by force, it was no longer so after the 1967 war’. Hisham Sharabi, ‘A Look Ahead: The Future State of Palestine’, in Hudson, Palestinians: New Directions, p. 157. To Sharabi, only a political solution based on partition was possible, following the intifada, which had ‘converted the dream of a Palestinian revolution into reality in December 1987 by transforming “armed struggle” from the outside into genuine internal resistance’. Ibid.

1989, former U.S. secretary of state Henry Kissinger was suggesting that ‘Israel’s best hope is with Arab leaders living on the West Bank’.12

Soon after the intifada PNC came the ‘great events’ of December 1988.13 Arafat met in Stockholm, on 7 December, with five American-Jewish peace activists and reiterated the PNC’s recognition of Israel. On 13 December 1988, Arafat addressed the UN General Assembly in Geneva.14 At the assembly, Arafat again declared Israel’s right to exist and repudiated terrorism, and he did so once more the following day in Stockholm, traveling with the same delegation of American Jews.15 Finally, his words met the dicta established by Kissinger in 1975, and the way was cleared for the United States formally to enter discussions with the PLO.16 Israeli defence minister Yitzhak Rabin, in protesting that it was a grave error for the United States to talk to the PLO, correctly noted that the Americans had given ‘legitimisation to the uprising in the territories’.17 On 12 January 1989, the UN Security Council granted the PLO the right to speak directly to the council as ‘Palestine’, the same as any member state.

Arafat’s statements in Geneva and Stockholm arose directly from the uprising and


14David Hirst, ‘A Passport to the World’, Guardian, 16 December 1988. The meeting was held in Switzerland because the United States would not allow Arafat to travel to New York to deliver his remarks.


17Roy Isacowitz, ‘Turmoil as Israel Seeks Response’, Sunday Times, 18 December 1988, p. A17. Conversely, the reluctant U.S. agreement to take up a remote diplomatic exchange with the PLO in Tunis was denounced in the Israeli peace camp as insufficient, as Avnery notes, ‘Significant resolutions of the PLO—such as its recognition of Israel—which were made possible by the intifada and the regaining of national dignity, have not led to a political breakthrough. After two years of the intifada, the only game in town is a ridiculous dialogue between the PLO and an American ambassador’. Avnery, ‘Intifada’, p. 13. To a Palestinian journalist in London, the events in Geneva ignored the moral issue involved: ‘The wrong done in Palestine has never been recognized. Instead, the Palestinians are urged to recognize Israel’s “right to exist” before they are allowed even to negotiate. Everyone has a right to exist. What the Palestinians challenge is Israel’s right to Palestine’. Nadia Hijab, ‘The Palestinians Once Had a Land and Still Have Rights’, International Herald Tribune, 16 March 1988.
reflected the outlook of the popular leadership in the territories. It was the intifada that had allowed the PLO to pursue a more flexible line of thinking and to begin active pursuit of territorial compromise with Israel. Alterations had been made to the Palestinian political terrain in the early stages of the intifada that would have been considered villainous earlier. Arafat had previously drawn the line at recognizing Israel, but the intifada had altered the situation. The key rejectionists—the PFLP’s Habash and the DFLP’s Hawatmeh—did not spurn the changes.

Among the factors that made such reversals possible was that within the territories, as a result of the intifada, the ability to compromise had become viewed as a strength rather than a weakness. In Husseini’s words, ‘Only those who feel strong and confident are capable of offering peace proposals. The weak can offer nothing. Now we are strong.’ The uprising had given Palestinians the confidence to make concessions without a feeling of surrender. The facts of Israeli existence on conquered Palestinian land and subsequent colonization for


Arafat himself revealed this point by acknowledging, ‘Neither Arafat, nor any [one else] for that matter, can stop the intifadah... The intifadah will come to an end only when practical and tangible steps have been taken toward... establishment of our independent Palestinian state’. Yasir Arafat, press conference statement, Geneva, 14 December 1988, in Palestinian-Israeli Peace Agreement, p. 298. Publicly, Arafat tended to claim that participants in the intifada were merely obeying instructions, e.g., in their refusal to use weaponry: ‘This is a decision taken by myself and accepted in our leadership and we are completely satisfied that this has been accepted and followed strictly by our masses and our people. We said no using arms in our intifada’. Yasir Arafat, MacNeil-Lehrer Newshour, Public Broadcasting System, 20 April 1989, interview transcript of broadcast no. 3414, p. 3. In fact, the directional circuitry was the reverse.


20 Acceptance of UN Security Council Resolution 242, which treated the Palestinians solely as refugees and implied Palestinian recognition of Israel prior to negotiations in its precept of land for peace, was anathema until the intifada. According to Sari Nusseibeh, ‘Just before the nineteenth PNC in Algiers [November 1988]... a leaflet mentioned 242 and 338 in one sentence, by themselves, not dressed up, just straightforward, very normal. Many of the things that later were formalized appeared first, undressed, in the various leaflets. Three or four years before, Palestinian headlines would have called 242 the worst thing on earth’. Nusseibeh, interview (5 November 1994). On 242, also see Nusseibeh, ‘Personal Perspective’.


forty years had not changed, but the ability of the Palestinians in the occupied territories to address these facts had been transformed.24

The intifada increased the price of occupation to Israel, financially and in international sympathy; it made occupation unattractive and unsustainable.25 According to Hanan Mikhail Ashrawi, six months of uprising had obliterated three myths created by the Israelis:

It has destroyed the myth of improving the quality of life. Life has no quality under occupation. The myth of autonomy was also destroyed. We have proved that we can exercise a large degree of autonomy ourselves without the Israelis making that as a political condition for the settlement. And the uprising has ended the myth of the Jordanian option. Palestinians have shown that they are not immature people needing the guardianship of another country.26

As the twelfth month of uprising approached, Kuttab writes,

Eleven months after the first sparks of the uprising were lit, ... the Palestinian state, ... had become a reality recognized by nearly one hundred countries. ... After forty years of exile and twenty-one years of occupation Palestinians now stand on the threshold of a new dawn, ... [the result of] the active decision by the Palestinians to take the initiative rather than to wait for others to accomplish their goals.27

In the words of a Palestinian activist, 'Forty-seven years of struggle of all types made it possible for our people to become an existing fact on the political map, but we didn’t succeed in liberating one inch of our land in the previous style, or to return one refugee'.28

Sorties, raids, and bombings had unified Israelis in opposition to Palestinian claims and lessened international sympathy for rectification of Palestinian losses. The intifada, however,


27Kuttab, 'Popular Teaching Begins in the Home', handwritten attachment.

had done what no cross-border mission had ever done: it had undermined the military superiority of Israel.

Civil Society, Noncooperation, the Intifada, and Statehood

In the intifada, the values of civil society predominated and the methods of civil society were utilized, while at the same time the rights required to support such an emergent civil society had still to be secured through the same techniques.

'The Palestinian professionals who were developing the medical relief committees, teachers' associations, and women's organizations in the late 1970s and 1980s were all reading Antonio Gramsci', recalled Gail Pressburg, whose responsibilities with the American Friends Service Committee had brought her into contact with a wide range of the groups. As noted in Chapter One, Gramsci was delving into how forces that were opposed to a regime—in his case Mussolini's fascism—could effectively and nonviolently promote social and political change. In Gramsci's view, resistance movements could be successful only if those groups and individuals involved in the struggle possess broad popular backing and permeate the structures of civil society before attempting to wrench control of state power. This requires that alliances be formed of popular and democratic struggles that are not necessarily related to class, such as movements on behalf of women, students, peace, or civil liberties. In Gramsci's sense, achieving hegemony, or egemonia, also direzione, meaning direction or leadership, necessitates what he calls a 'war of position', which requires building blocs of varied and influential forces linked by a common denominator. Without having won at a 'war of position' in the realm of values, culture, voluntary associations, and ideas, dissident voices would be stifled. Gramsci's notion of hegemony suggests that major change through nonviolent struggle becomes a practical possibility only when groups opposing a state

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30 Simon, Gramsci's Political Thought, p. 24; Bobbio, 'Gramsci and the Concept of Civil Society', pp. 91-3.
apparatus gain widespread consent within civil society.

Thus in Gamsciian terms, the thousands of civilian committees that the Palestinians mobilized in resistance to Israeli occupation throughout the late 1970s and 1980s in the territories were striving to achieve hegemony over the ideology of military liberation and armed struggle. These networks were components to what would become the intifada. The antecedent movements to the intifada reviewed in Chapter Three—such as the voluntary work committees, women’s movement, and student organizing against Israeli Military Orders 854 and 947—made concrete such consent by encouraging the participation of broad categories of persons, not just physically fit young men. A new political culture, located in civil society, was able to benefit from the capacity of nonviolent resistance to give rise to a democratic ethos in the sense that no one can decide for another to take the risks involved in nonviolent struggle, and no one can coerce another to pay the penalties incurred from methods such as civil disobedience. Although the ideological generators for the engine of Palestinian nationalism were by the early 1980s located in the occupied territories, it was not solely the intellectuals, academicians, professionals, journalists, and editors who sought an alternative preferable to armed struggle and realized that they would have to live alongside Israel. The consensus included refugees living in camps, some of them twice displaced, in 1948 and again in 1967. Sometimes unschooled and unsophisticated, they were among the first to accept the idea of a two-state solution.

Gramsci took from Benedetto Croce the notion of human beings as protagonists in history with the ability to turn thought into action.31 Gramsci discusses the role of intellectuals at length in his Prison Notebooks.32 In thirty-three notebooks—written between 1929 and 1935 during a decade spent in Mussolini’s gaols, and published in six volumes from

31Carnoy, State and Political Theory, p. 71.

1948 to 1951—Gramsci broadens his concept of hegemony to encompass ‘cultural leadership’, or what Norbert Bobbio calls ‘a transformation of customs and culture’. Of note in the Palestinian context is Gramsci’s perception of the need to eliminate the division between the intellectual and manual labourer. The Palestinian voluntary work committees, starting in 1972, had the elimination of this separation as one of their objectives. Gramsci is also greatly concerned with knowledge and power, and sees power as a relationship, much as does Gene Sharp. Diffusion of the loci of power is an accompaniment of nonviolent struggle for Sharp, and power for Gramsci must be dispersed throughout civil society and embodied in networks of organizations.

One aspect of Gramscian thought peculiarly compatible with the emergent role of the Palestinian activist intellectuals is the extension of the definition of intellectuals to embrace political leaders, artists, literary figures, entrepreneurs, engineers, managers, technicians, and journalists. It is not simply the thinking of ‘organizer intellectuals’ that counts with Gramsci, but the function they perform. The connexion between thinking and doing resonates with particular emphasis in considering nonviolent struggle, where there is no theoretical presumption that one can achieve positive ends by negative means or violent subjugation. In the study of Gramsci, the Palestinian activist intellectuals and professionals in the occupied territories were pondering a model in which coercive forms of resistance were rejected in favour of a search for social and political mediation and change led by political, cultural, and academic leaders and organizers who relied on nonviolent means. The force exerted by such intellectual engagés, as seen through Gramsci’s lens, and the hegemonic consent that they attain are situated in an autonomous civil society in which intellectuals are the primary

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33Bobbio, ‘Gramsci and the Concept of Civil Society’, p. 92.

34Simon, Gramsci’s Political Thought, p. 93.

35Ibid., pp. 27, 73.

36Ibid., p. 94.
historical impetus.

Furthermore, nonviolent measures, employed with civility of behaviour, had been the dominant means employed by the Palestinians earlier in the century, as they struggled for the revocation of the Balfour Declaration, limits on Jewish immigration, and the achievement of independence. The intifada reflected the survival of deep-seated Palestinian values displayed in their nonviolent efforts for recognition of their civil and political rights during the 1920s and 1930s. Depth and ingenuity typify the Palestinian experience with political struggle and civil resistance, yet the record has often been ignored, mischaracterized, subjected to a class analysis in which the élites are condemned, or, with some justification, denounced as ineffective. From the first large peaceful demonstration against the Balfour Declaration in Jerusalem on 27 February 1920 to the 174-day general strike of 1936—perhaps the longest in history—through the intifada, the Palestinians have employed nonviolent struggle. Yet, little reinforcement has greeted Palestinian attempts to make their case from a standard quiver of political tools. Disregard for the Palestinian perspective was reflected in adamantine policies backed by London and then by Washington—that is, until the intifada.

The intifada and its antecedent movements correspond with Keith Tester’s perception that civil society must be imagined and that a dialectic of imagination is intrinsic to the idea:

On the one hand, civil society is imagined as that which has been achieved. On the other hand, civil society is imagined as that which stands in need of achievement. . . . Civil society was always imagined as a difficult achievement. But, of course, it was precisely the difficulty which made it an attractive destiny in the first place. . . . The point was not so much that civil society was possible, but rather that it needed to be possible.38

The formative work of the Committee Confronting the Iron Fist was based on an imagined, shared community in which Israelis and Palestinians together sought a way out of the mutual degradation of military occupation. This imagining of solidarity created the possibility for an appeal to Israeli sensibilities and was clearly manifested in the restraint against arms in the


uprising. Driven by a need to replace what they regarded as the exhausted covert military ideologies of the 1950s and 1960s, through forming alliances with sympathetic Israelis and envisioning direct negotiations, Feisel Husseini and Sari Nusseibeh’s conjuring of an imagined commonality directly strengthened the girders of a sphere for political activity that was not coercive and within which the individual could act as a moral agent. Combined with employing the principle of openness, the fight for Palestinian political and civil rights could thus be fastened to a larger, contemporary framework of respect for the rule of law and human rights.

The two virtues of tolerance and nonviolent interaction that have emerged as constitutive of civil society in modern political thought displayed themselves during the second, most productive phase of the intifada: frequent allusions to the three great revealed religions and injunctions to a ‘white revolution’. Yet, we must take our analysis one step further. Civil society also encompasses confrontational collective action, according to Jean L. Cohen and Andrew Arato, who conclude their 771-page study on civil society and political theory with the chapter ‘Civil Disobedience and Civil Society’.

While civil disobedience moves between the ‘boundaries of insurrection and institutionalized political activity’, to Cohen and Arato it is a ‘key form’ in the ‘utopian dimension of politics’ of modern civil societies, as it keeps alive the vision of a just and democratic civil society. Civil disobedience may actually constitute civil society, they claim, as it ‘initiates a learning process that expands the range and forms of participation open to private citizens within a mature political culture’. Although Cohen and Arato are concerned chiefly with constitutional democracies where entitlements, the rule of law, and democratic institutions have already been established, we may deduce that the use of these measures under authoritarian circumstances, such as occupation, for purposes of establishing rights can

39Cohen and Arato, Civil Society and Political Theory, pp. 566, 567.
be part of a normative process leading to the formation of such institutions. This is the perspective offered by Adrien Katherine Wing’s assessment that the intifada represented an attempt to wrest control over legal decision making, which had customarily been in the hands of outsiders in the West Bank and Gaza Strip—whether Ottoman, British, Jordanian, Egyptian, or Israeli. She cites, in particular, the voluntary compliance of the populace with the new rules of the uprising, the result of the ‘rulemakers’ legitimacy’ rather than coercion.

Cohen and Arato’s perception of the linkages between civil disobedience and civil society is closely akin to the stream of thought based on the sixteenth-century writer Éstienne de la Boétie, whose ‘Discours de la Servitude Volontaire’ was probably studied by Gandhi and which propounds the idea that people can refuse to be governed by those who dominate them. The ability of individuals to withdraw cooperation from the ruler, even if in bondage, became the salient element in the thinking that underscored the intifada. This is not to speak of a Lockean insistence on the right of individuals to withdraw from any contract that does not protect life, liberty, and property. The Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza had not voluntarily contracted for the imposition of a belligerent occupation. Regardless, full measure was taken of the significance of Boétie’s proposition—transmitted through Gene Sharp’s writings and Mubarak Awad’s interpretations—that it was Palestinian cooperation with the military occupation that was sustaining it. This insight forms the basis of the Jerusalem Paper, 

40The 1996 Palestinian elections suggest the development of such norms. The significance of elections ultimately lies in their meaning for the participating population. Recognizing this, external observers monitoring elections globally have largely ceased to certify whether elections are fair, preferring instead that domestic or local monitors carry out the certification process to indicate compliance with rules developed in advance. The reason for this shift in the elections-monitoring ‘industry’ is that even where elections are rife with violence, graft, and fraud—as was the case in South Africa on 27 April 1994—they may still signify fairness in the eyes of a populace that has previously been unable to participate in its own governance. My observation as one of the official international monitors for the 20 January 1996 Palestinian elections is that the Palestinian people accept balloting as the formal mechanism for bringing about political change. Exceedingly high numbers of voters presented themselves, including unanticipated strong participation by women and the illiterate in Gaza.

41Wing, ‘Embryonic Self-Rule’, pp. 95–153, esp. pp. 98, 131, and 153. Wing has suggested that the Palestinians have the opportunity to construct the first genuine democracy in the Arab world, an integral aspect of which would be institutionalizing the rule of law. Eadem, remarks at ‘The Future of Palestinian Society and Politics’, a conference sponsored by the Middle East Institute and the Elliott School of International Affairs, George Washington University, Washington, D.C., 13 February 1998. It is worth noting John Willis Harbeson’s observation, concerning Africa, that the issue is not the form of the state—democracy, as opposed to authoritarian governments—but its legitimacy. Harbeson, ‘Civil Society and Political Renaissance’, p. 9.
drafted by Sari Nusseibeh, in which the concept of ‘disengagement’ from the occupation became anchored as the central tenet of the intifada.

Official Israel’s persistent refusal to recognize the intifada as an effort to lift the occupation through nonviolent sanctions, rather than as an attempt to defeat Israel with armed struggle, only weakened Palestinian efforts to substitute nonviolent direct action for violence. Moreover, the intifada, and equally important, the years preceding it, represent a transition in which Palestinians—both those affiliated and not affiliated with factions—learned to work together, exemplifying the norms of civil society and utilizing democratic procedures.42

To argue that a hardy, if tempestuous, civil society for the Palestinians would be a prerequisite for the evolution of coexistence and peace in the eastern Mediterranean is not to assert that the Palestinians are responsible for a state without actually having one. Where no state exists, it cannot be argued that entities of civil society have the capacity to balance or contest the powers of government. Under circumstances of occupation, the popular committees of the intifada—with their divisions of labour and layers of elected leaders ready to replace the incarcerated—became a type of shadow governance, reflecting a commonality of interest shared by Palestinians from competing nationalist movements and parties who worked together, much, as Charles Tilly notes, as a feature of civil society.43 As the loci of power became diffused, the popular committees became a cardinal example of how the structures of civil society can protect popular participation. Gandhi’s constructive programme had made it possible for the poorest Indians to participate in the national fight for independence. The popular committees of the Palestinian uprising—alternative institutions, an advanced form of nonviolent resistance—enabled the young and very old, women,


43Charles Tilly, From Mobilization to Revolution (Reading, Massachusetts, Addison-Wesley, 1978), pp. 54, 55.
refugees, professionals, intellectuals, and others who would not have participated in 
*fida'iyyun* operations to take part in a national struggle.

Standards of political behaviour changed during the *intifada*, with the repertoire of 
nonviolent sanctions expanding; human cleverness and inventiveness in responding to the 
acts of the opposition is a property of such struggle.\(^4\) While not necessarily equating 
democracy with civil society, Edy Kaufman and Shukri Abed observe that self-assertion and 
behaving collectively are characteristic of democratic behaviour,\(^4\) features that were in 
abundance during the early years of the *intifada*. The building of coalitional arrangements 
became a staple of the uprising.\(^4\) Even Hamas and Fateh found common ground. The civic 
order that evolved was a far cry from the riots and chaos enunciated in the stock phrases of 
Israeli officials.

Instead of threatening to let slip the dogs of war or invoking retaliation from Arab 
states, the *intifada* was distinguished by an assumption of responsibility by the occupied. 
Nowhere can this be seen more clearly than in the long discourse on civil disobedience.\(^4\)
The utensils for civil disobedience were identified as the ‘spirit of cooperation, sacrifice and 
equality’, the improving of ‘independent national and popular economies’ through 
cooperatives, and the strengthening of the local committees—termed ‘national instruments’

\(^4\)An example of minute, simple, and clever action was the setting of Palestinian watches to a different 
time zone from Israel’s—a symbolic step introduced by Awad. In April 1989, the Command asked that 
daylight savings time be adopted by Palestinians two weeks in advance of Israel’s customary turning forward 
of the clocks. Palestinians who tried this silent protest got their wrists broken and timepieces smashed by 

\(^4\)Kaufman and Abed, ‘Relevance of Democracy to Israeli-Palestinian Peace’, p. 47. Michael Walzer 
notes, ‘only a democratic state can create a democratic civil society; only a democratic civil society can sustain 
a democratic state. The civility that makes democratic politics possible can only be learned in the associational 


\(^4\)This conversation has not ended. A bimonthly published by Ghassan Khatib reports, ‘Moshe 
Yal’alon, chief of [the] Intelligence Commission in the Israeli army, warned that the Palestinians might start 
comprehensive “civil disobedience” in the West Bank and Gaza if peace talks were to fail’. Alessandra 
2–3.
and utterly independent of the occupation. Much as Gramsci had defined the work of the intellectuals needed for his 'war of position'—or transformation of culture—new organizer leaders arose from the voluntary work committees and the women's, youth, student, and prisoners' movements of the 1970s and 1980s. From these, what Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe Schmitter term 'popular upsurge' against authoritarian rule, leadership emerged, tried and tested on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip, often having scant connexion to PLO military cadres. The new spokespersons earned their standing through service and the acceptance of responsibility that often carried life-and-death consequences.

Information played a significant role in the intifada and constitutes an adjunct to Palestinian civil society. Facility in issuing reliable news releases and credible reports became a valued skill. The new spokespersons were expert at informational methodologies, including the use of documentation and archival technologies, as pioneered by al-Haq. As journalists from around the world gathered to cover the uprising, they would be accompanied by Daoud Kuttab, members of the FACTS Information Committee, Radwan Abu Ayyash, Mubarak Awad, and others into villages and refugee camps, where they met scores of the women, men, and youths who were running the popular committees. Reporters became the 'darlings of the Palestinians, and bane of the soldiers', and, as Joel Greenberg writes, were perceived as a complementary channel to the Palestinians' own efforts at combatting a great injustice on the world stage. Ushered into humble homes, journalists were urged to take photographs and 'write and tell Israelis and the world what the soldiers are doing', which,

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50 To borrow the words of Charles Taylor and apply them to the Palestinian context, the opening up of 'a new print-mediated public space, unembodied in any traditional structure' conform to a general feature of civil society, in which the 'space of public opinion' arrogates to itself the 'power and duty to define the goals of the people'. Taylor, 'Modes of Civil Society', p. 110. On 'traffic in news' as a component of civil society in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe, see Habermas, Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere, pp. 15-17.

Greenberg claims, often seemed like ‘pointless thuggery’. The sight of unarmed youths dying daily from the bullets of a vastly superior military, armed by a superpower, reached a world in which there was less sympathy for the vestiges of colonialism as reflected in the Great Powers’ protectionism of Israel. Pictures of Palestinian blood being spilled touched the sensibilities of viewers, who were at the same time seeing reports of the mighty Soviet Union imploding, abetted by similarly popular and unarmed movements in Poland, East Germany, and the Czech and Slovak republics.

Gaoled Palestinians were exposed to the intricacies of elections—elaborately employed in the prisoners’ movement—and ideas about political struggle. Palestinian civil society may have been helped by the incarceration of an estimated 120,000 Palestinians between the start of the intifada and 1995. For the first time, Palestinians from the West Bank met their countrymen and women from Gaza, and vice versa, during confinement in Israeli gaols. Such encounters were otherwise impossible, since the occupied Palestinians were not normally allowed to travel in the territories, nor hold joint meetings, party congresses, or national conventions.

Alternative symbols of authority took precedence, such as invisibly coordinated hunger strikes throughout the Israeli gaols where Palestinians were detained. Such exposure to ideas and symbols is significant, because nonviolent struggle requires supremacy of thought and discipline in order to restrain instinctive, reflexive, and undisciplined retaliation. Yet, partly

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52 Joel Greenberg, ‘Notes from an Uprising’, Jerusalem Post, 12 February 1988, p. 6. It is true, as Augustus Richard Norton notes, that global communications have lifted cloaks of secrecy in the Middle East. Norton, ‘Toward Enduring Peace in the Middle East’, in Fernea and Hocking, Struggle for Peace, p. 319. On the other hand, television reporters seriously skewed reportage on the intifada. The organizing of alternative institutions such as popular committees lacked the visual motion sought for television news. Stones thrown by children, however, made for good daily footage, and the children easily learned that if they threw stones, camera crews would rapidly appear.

53 Barton Gellman, ‘Palestinians Await Release of Prisoners’, Washington Post, 3 October 1995, p. A12. Gellman cites Israeli official government sources for this figure, yet some may have been gaoled more than once.

because of the lack of support from the PLO, the Palestinians in the territories never undertook training on the scale that would have been necessary for the ‘total civil disobedience’ envisaged by the Jerusalem Paper and the Command’s issuances; additionally, the Israeli authorities would not have allowed mass training programmes. Nonetheless, the Palestinians in the occupied territories broadened civil disobedience beyond its customary usage of a deliberate defiance of laws, decrees, or military orders that are regarded as illegitimate, unethical, or immoral, when they proved the ‘non-governability’ of the territories. At the same time there was no conjuring of unarmed civilians lying in advance of military convoys, massive ‘lie-ins’ across bridges or highways, disruption of public services, or dumping of sugar into fuel tanks as adopted by the Norwegian resistance to immobilize Nazi vehicles.

A review of the uprising and a glance at the 1983 booklet circulated by Mubarak Awad confirms that the methods of nonviolent struggle as adopted in the intifada worked effectively in moving towards seven of the eight aims set forth in the publication. The maximum potential and resources of the Palestinians inside the occupied territories were utilized. Instead of passive activities, the society unified itself in action, and significant sectors of Israeli society also became enlisted in the struggle to lift the occupation. International public opinion became focused on the Palestinians. ‘Security’ arguments used to justify Israeli policies were proved to be of pyrrhic value; much of Israeli society became convinced that security lay in giving up land, not seizing more of it. The destructive potential of the Israeli military apparatus was neutralized; its full power was never unleashed, as brakes were applied by the international and Jewish censure of Yitzhak Rabin’s break-their-bones reprisals. Although the intifada had the effect of isolating Israel politically and morally, an objective cited in the booklet, it must

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54 Boserup and Mack, War without Weapons, p. 45. Illegal under Israeli statutes and the more than one thousand military orders promulgated after 1967 were virtually all of the 198 nonviolent methods tabulated by Gene Sharp in 1973—including peaceful demonstrations and distribution of leaflets. The list is found in Sharp, Methods of Nonviolent Action, pp. xi–xvi.


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be noted that one of the original eight goals was not accomplished: removal of ‘the irrational fear of “Arab violence” [that] acts like a glue which cements Israeli society together’.\footnote{Awad, ‘Nonviolence’ (here in Appendix 7).} In failing to neutralize that fear, which might have required cessation of all throwing of stones, not only did the unrest not produce political \textit{jiu-jitsu} in Israeli society, or conversion,\footnote{As noted in Chapter One, elements of three of Sharp’s four ‘mechanisms’ can be discerned as resulting from the Palestinian \textit{intifada}. Some ‘conversion’ took place, the first mechanism, as some Israelis came to see themselves as occupiers and learned to view the Palestinians as human beings. ‘Accommodation’ occurred, where opponents yield on demands but without altering their thinking on the basic issues. Traces of ‘nonviolent coercion’, the third mechanism, could be seen in the internal splits in the Israeli military (also noted in Chapter Seven). The fourth mechanism identified by Sharp, ‘disintegration’, did not occur.} it diminished the accomplishments of the uprising.

If we view Palestinian civil society as a political space that is not inhabited by bureaucratic machinery or central government, but one in which other more subtle and evanescent forces can play, the expansion of this sphere\footnote{Palestinian civil society has widened as a result of the \textit{intifada}, according to political scientist Saleh ‘Abdel-Jawad. Political life is ‘more vibrant’, and participation by the peasantry, refugee camp dwellers, and women has increased, although not that of Christians, due to emigration. ‘Abdel-Jawad, panel discussion, Middle East Institute, Washington, D.C., 25 March 1998. ‘Abdel-Jawad is co-author, with Yizhar Be’er, of \textit{Collaborators in the Occupied Territories: Human Rights Abuses and Violations} (Jerusalem, B’Tselem, 1994).} relates to a central finding of this thesis and is exemplified by a statement from Salim Tamari:

\begin{quote}
We always saw our war with the occupation as an heroic military act that was enacted upon orders from the outside. But we discovered that ordinary people have incredible abilities that, when used, were able to determine the outcome of that battle more successfully than the military way. This is an amazing discovery, . . . not really revealed until the \textit{intifada}.\footnote{Tamari, ‘Time to Converse Calmly’.
}
\end{quote}

Earlier, monopolistic assumptions of armed struggle had left the Palestinians beholden to Arab state sponsorship and kept them divided, while the PLO imposed its coercive authority, ill preparing the Palestinians for the very independence they sought. Far from growing out of the militarization of Palestinian society, the \textit{intifada} arose in reaction against it and represented a search for methods of struggling for Palestinian entitlements that could balance the power between the military giant of Israel and the disarmed Palestinians. The methods
chosen fit a world in which norms of universal human rights had been incorporated into statecraft and diplomacy, among them protections for autonomous social action. Such information-based techniques were able to neutralize Israel, while encircling the globe with sympathy-arousing disclosures in a way that no Kalashnikov could, bringing Palestinian aspirations into an era in which information had become a potent tool for reform, empowerment, and even state formation.

Yezid Sayigh concludes that the only nationalist rubric capable of galvanizing and uniting the far-flung Palestinians during the 1960s and 1970s was armed struggle, despite the fact that by the 1970s and 1980s the limits of ideologies of armed struggle were being vigourously contested within the occupied territories, and distinctly nonmilitary forms of mobilization had become the principal means of political participation within an inchoate civil society. Rather, as this study shows, building a state for the Palestinians has had little in common with the Arab and Third World post-colonial settings that comprise the background to Sayigh’s claim that the Palestinians’ armed struggle has been the unifying element in the construction of a state. The Palestinians’ ‘search for state’ arose not out of international distributions of power, nor from the aggrandizement of the PLO and its interactions within a system of states, but from a civil society that was able to produce an uprising of historical

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42 Sayigh, ‘Armed Struggle and Palestinian Nationalism’, p. 33. Also see Sayigh, Armed Struggle and the Search for State. While respectful of the scale of Sayigh’s detailed inquiry—in which the PLO is viewed as the non-territorial equivalent of a statist entity—this study challenges his conclusion that armed struggle and the militarization of Palestinian society helped to ‘rebuild societal structure and reconstitute the body politic’, enabling nation building. Ibid., p. 34. The developments enumerated here suggest an altogether different historical instance of state formation. In Armed Struggle and the Search for State, Sayigh correctly notes that during the 1980s and prior to the intifada, the PLO viewed the populace of the territories as a target for co-optation. Yet, while taking cognizance of the growth of voluntary non-governmental formations based on popular participation, he considers this evolution merely as an outgrowth of the work of leftists and critics of the PLO. This research shows a different reality. In addition to the communists and unaffiliated professionals who were active throughout the 1980s, Fateh-affiliated figures also played crucial roles in the several movements that preceded the intifada, e.g., witness Qaddourah Faris’s successive yearly election to be leader of the prisoners’ movement, discussed in Chapter Three, and Sari Nusseibeh’s roles in the student and faculty movements, noted in Chapter Four. Not only does Sayigh miss the breadth of such social mobilization, including the scope and depth of women’s organizing (which he admits), he also does not recognize the formative developments steered by Feisal Husseini and Nusseibeh including their redefinition of concepts and symbols. He does not note that open elections were slowly replacing clandestine military leadership training, although he briefly acknowledges that the stress on armed struggle, despite the persistency of its failures, led to ‘hostile disregard’ for nonviolent resistance; Mubarak Awad appears in a footnote. Ibid., pp. 612–3.
specificity.

The concept of a Palestinian state, in an age marked by the proliferation of nation-states, is no less a creature of its times than was the Jewish state. The Zionist claim to Palestine had been advanced during an era in which colonialism and belief in the nation-state were prevalent. In the intervening decades, it became commonplace, if not fashionable, to argue that the Palestinians were responsible for their own fate by virtue of their failure to accept compromise and defeat. Israeli historian Yehoshua Porath disputes this point of view:

It is too easy to simply accuse [the Palestinians] of making continuous blunders. In truth, we are talking about a tragedy. They acted all the time out of a deep sense of justice, not out of [realism]. They couldn't agree to the various compromises offered [in the 1920s to the 1940s] because they couldn't understand them, they didn't conform to their sense of justice. In 1947, for example, how could they have agreed to the UN partition resolution, which allotted the Jews, who were 30 per cent of Palestine's population, 60 per cent of the country? One cannot today expect them to have understood or accepted this. . . . The Palestinians' 'mistakes' and unwillingness to compromise were inevitable. They couldn't avoid the 'mistakes'.

As Muhammad Hallaj notes, the late twentieth century is marked by the rebirth of nations rather than their demise. Moreover, as a number of works have shown, the initiation of

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63By rejecting the British White Paper of May 1939, the argument goes, Palestinians sacrificed their chances for an Arab state in Palestine. For examples, see Rubin, Revolution until Victory? pp. 184–5; Quandt, 'Political and Military Dimensions', p. 45.

64Porath, 'United Uprising', p. 7. Porath also notes, 'Perhaps in 1937, they could have accepted [the Peel Commission] proposals, which spoke of a Jewish state on 15 per cent of Palestine's land and allocated 80 per cent of the land to the Arabs. Maybe they could have and should have accepted this'. Ibid.

Among the effects of the intifada has been modification of Israeli historiography, as Ilan Pappé asserts: 'The intifada opened a new chapter in the Israeli-Palestinian dialogue, conducted mainly by scholars. . . . [acquainting] most of the Israeli scholars writing about their country's past who were not connected to radical political groups with the historical version of their Palestinian academic counterparts for the first time. . . . [and bringing] the first recognition of the scholarly merit of what hitherto had been regarded as sheer propaganda. Unpleasant and at times shocking chapters in the Israeli historical narrative were exposed. Above all, Israeli scholars became aware of the basic contradiction between Zionist national ambitions and their implementation at the expense of the local population in Palestine'. Ilan Pappé, 'Post-Zionist Critique on Israel and the Palestinians, Part 1: The Academic Debate', Journal of Palestine Studies 26:2 (Winter 1997): 33. Barbara Harlow contends that the Israeli government sought to suppress the Arabic word intifada from absorption into the Hebrew lexicon. Harlow, 'Narrative in Prison', p. 33. If so, the attempt has failed.

social and political change is increasingly coming from within civil societies.\textsuperscript{66}

Gene Sharp had, in 1989, suggested that a realignment in the power relationship between Israel and the Palestinians was a necessity, a shift that he saw as dependent upon the building of institutions and nonviolent struggle.\textsuperscript{67} His viewpoint is strikingly similar to Gramsci’s conviction that power must be dispersed throughout civil society and incorporated into organizational networks before wrenching control of state power. What finally tipped the balance of power between Israel and the Palestinians was the capacity of the intifada to compromise Israel’s seemingly unassailable supremacy and make the military occupation untenable, to expose the brute nature of Israel’s putatively benign occupation, to place the Israeli armed services at a disadvantage, to pierce the psychological defences of an indifferent or hostile public in Israel, and to arouse the sympathies of a global community increasingly perturbed by the willingness of Israel to inflict reprisals against unarmed children, youths, women, and men. Once started, the intifada shifted the balance of power away from the PLO in Tunis, weighting the scales in favour of those inside the territories—where leadership networks had questioned monopolies of power and Truth based on armed struggle and where symbols and ideas rested upon pluralistic popular participation in civil resistance. The Israelis had finally reached their limit, Sari Nusseibeh said; the only thing left was ‘mass expulsions and mass murders, because they’ve tried everything else’.\textsuperscript{68} These achievements were never in the telescopic sights of the commando cadres and the PLO.

Concrete formation of a state for the Palestinians necessitated, first and foremost, the

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{68}Ian Black, ‘Quiet but Not at Peace’, \textit{Guardian}, 2 March 1990, p. 10.
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limiting of Israeli coercion of the Palestinians.

**The Intifada and Other Struggles**

The *intifada* was one of a number of principally nonviolent movements that girded the globe in the late 1980s, several of them in Eastern Europe. In the East German and the Czech and Slovak struggles, as in the case of Poland earlier in the decade, the essential goal was one of independence from the occupation accompanying the end of World War II. The Palestinian uprising similarly sought independence from occupation which, although dating to 1967, followed upon the losses sustained in 1948. In both their ends and their means, the Eastern European and Palestinian struggles have similarities.

The populations of Eastern Europe and those residing in the lands reserved for the Arabs after the partition of Palestine had been disarmed. The quiescence of the 1950s and 1960s in Central and Eastern Europe yielded to a period in which small epistemic communities of activist intellectuals—academicians, artists, clergy, playwrights, and poets—with their words and writings prepared the way for movements gestated from the circulation of ideas, much as in East Jerusalem. The central political concept in Eastern Europe in the 1970s and 1980s was civil society, a space independent of official life where political dissent could emerge.\(^6^9\) This arena pulsed with seminars at ‘flying’ universities in private flats, irreverent cabarets and guerrilla theatre troupes, ecological groups, and trade unions, thus allowing Eastern Europeans to re-imagine life without occupation and in which civil society was both a tactic and a ‘prefiguring of “society-to-be” ’.\(^7^0\) In both the Eastern European and Palestinian settings, for ten to twenty years prior to the perceptible coalescence of a popular uprising, the dissemination of ideas was taking place. During this phase, individuals led workshops,

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\(^{70}\)John Feffer, ‘Uncivil Society’, *In These Times*, 15 November 1993, p. 28.
translated and clandestinely published writings—including those of Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Gene Sharp—and set up networks of committees that covertly studied such materials years before a coherent movement became visible. Despite the standard assumption that the élite have little in common with the masses, in the Czechs’ and Slovaks’ Velvet Revolution, the Pastors’ Movement of East Germany, and the Palestinian intifada, there was little disjuncture between the intellectual élites and the broader sectors of their societies. Rather than sowing triumphalist slogans, invoking the idiom of vanquishment, or threatening discomfiture, all of these endeavours offered clear political objectives, spurned fanaticism, and established limited dockets of objectives rather than universalistic delusions. As Michael Walzer notes, the new social movements of the East and West did not necessarily aim for the taking of power, ‘reflecting a new valuation of parts over wholes and a new willingness to settle for something less than total victory’.

These movements can be dismissed if they are observed through a Great Powers view attributing such upheavals to the end of the Brezhnev Doctrine and collapsing levels of support by the Soviet Union for Eastern European states, or, in the case of the Palestinians, by allocating the phenomenon of the intifada to the military ineptitude of the PLO, also nominally

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71 Gandhi, King, and Sharp’s writings often circulate during the early stages of unarmed political movements. In Poland in the 1970s, the Roman Catholic monthly Wiew published a number of translations of Gandhi and King, and two underground publishing companies brought out translations of Gene Sharp. Zielonka, Political Ideas in Contemporary Poland, p. 95. Also see Adam Michnik, Letters from Prison and Other Essays, tr. Maya Latynski (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1985), pp. 88–9.

A Sharp monograph on the transition from dictatorship to democracy through nonviolent struggle had by 1998 gone into its third printing in Burmese. Gene Sharp, From Dictatorship to Democracy: A Conceptual Framework for Liberation, special edition for Khit Pylang, or New Era (Rangoon, Committee for the Restoration of Democracy in Burma, 1994). This work was legally published in Jakarta in 1997, eight to ten months before the revolution there, having been translated into Behasa Indonesia with a title that translates as Towards Democracy without Violence, with introductions by the Muslim leader Abdurrahman Wahid and the Jesuit professor Franz Maghis Suseno (Jakarta, Menuju Demokrasi Tanpa Kekerasan, 1997). In 1998, this work was observed circulating among ethnic Albanians promoting nonviolent opposition in their struggle against the Serbs in Kosovo. Theresa Crawford, one-hour communication, Peace and Conflict Resolution Department, American University, Washington, D.C., 26 March 1998.

72 On the limited aims in such Eastern European movements, see Adam Roberts, Civil Resistance in the East European and Soviet Revolutions, Monograph Series no. 4 (Cambridge, Massachusetts, Albert Einstein Institution, 1991), pp. 3–4.

within the Soviet sphere of influence. Those who view major political change as the purview of the state might offer nuclear reactors as the reason for progress towards a settlement of conflict. Former Israeli prime minister Shimon Peres said that he ‘built Dimona to get to Oslo’, referring to Israel’s construction of a nuclear reactor in the Negev in the 1950s and 1960s. It would be equally easy to conclude that the Palestinian turn away from armed struggle represented nothing more than a belated recognition that Palestinians could expect no help from other Arab quarters. Indeed, all of these factors may comprise part of the backdrop to the Palestinian uprising, but they do not explain it. In neither Eastern Europe nor the eastern Mediterranean was the sharing of power an option; any potent oppositional dissent was considered a threat to the survival of the state. The communist regimes of Eastern Europe would not have considered the sharing of power with dissidents or human rights activists, and the State of Israel would not have contemplated sharing power with the Palestinians.

This study has judged that the controversial throwing of stones by some Palestinians gave continuing pretexts for repression, thus shrinking the obtainment of goals. It must in fairness be noted, however, that the throwing of stones and use of barricades appear in other struggles; furthermore, popular nonviolent movements are never pristine. The 1986 movement in the Philippines—a textbook example of political jiu-jitsu because of the soldiers’ abandonment of the army and crossing over to the side of the nonviolent activists against the Marcos regime—created barricades of tropical pine trees, lampposts, and drainage grills; sandbags were placed in the path of the army, as were ‘human sandbags’.

In Poland, on 14 August 1980, workers at the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk went on strike. While the shipyard’s former master electrician, Lech Walesa, urged strict adherence to


Gandhian injunctions for maintaining contact with the adversary, in this case the Communist Party, within Solidarity’s ranks many proceeded to act as if the party had already disappeared. Chaos followed the initial success of the Lenin Shipyard strike, as some labourers extracted revenge for their suffering and lost comrades. Z. A. Pelczynski takes note of former Solidarity activists who consider the upheaval ‘an incoherent, elemental mass movement, a kind of social avalanche or political landslide which could not be meaningfully controlled or guided’. 77

Workers went on strike almost constantly and without a rational strategy. Walesa, recipient of the 1983 Nobel Peace Prize, became known as ‘the Fireman’, for his chronic efforts racing across Poland to put out ‘blazes’. 78

Rigoberta Menchú Tum writes of the stones thrown by the Maya Indian villagers in their struggle against the U.S.-backed army in her native Guatemala:

We knew how to throw stones, we knew how to throw salt in someone’s face. .

. . You can blind a policeman by throwing lime in his face. And with stones for instance, you have to throw it at the enemy’s head, at his face. If you throw it at his back, it will be effective but not as much as at other parts of his body. 79

Menchú, winner of the 1992 Nobel Peace Prize, justifies Guatemalans building barricades to impede armies, like the burning tyres used by Palestinians, because the violence originated with the army, in her view exculpating the Maya for using whatever they could to deter the soldiers from further massacres and the razing of their villages. 80

In the Burmese pro-democracy movement, elevated to attention by Aung San Suu Kyi’s receipt of the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize, violence against security police has occurred in provincial areas, as in this instance from Burma: ‘Although protests started peacefully, the


80 On physical obstruction, human and material, see Boserup and Mack, War without Weapons, pp. 40–4.
participants, when confronted by police or troops, turned to violence: stones, poison darts, even beheadings. 81

The period from the founding of the African National Congress (ANC) in 1912 to South Africa’s 1994 elections represents a time-span comparable to that between the Balfour Declaration in 1917 and the Oslo accords in 1993. Comparisons come easily to mind of the ‘lost generation’ of South Africa’s township youths—whose chaos made their communities impervious to the reach of the Nationalist government—with the Palestinian ‘intifada generation’. As options collapsed for contesting apartheid nonviolently in the late 1960s, when the anti-apartheid movement was banned and driven underground, the ANC split into two wings. Lacking constitutional political space in which to organize, by the mid-1970s ANC exiles in Lusaka called for the townships to be made ‘ungovernable’. Nelson Mandela helped to propound the shift away from half a century of adherence to nonviolent strategies in June 1961:

I and some of my colleagues came to the conclusion that as violence in this country was inevitable, it would be wrong and unrealistic for African leaders to continue preaching peace and non-violence at a time when the government met our demands with force. . . . For a long time the people had been talking of violence . . . we, the leaders of the ANC, had nevertheless always prevailed upon them to avoid violence and pursue peaceful methods. 82

The ANC and other anti-apartheid groups had abandoned their insistence on nonviolent methods decades prior to negotiating a settlement.

A large measure of expediency was involved in the choice of nonviolent struggle in each of these movements. Principled nonviolence versus pragmatism, two polarities of thinking in the U.S. civil rights encounter, were rarely cause for debate, apart from the case of the Philippines. Against opposition such as Israel’s, Daoud Kuttab asserted, ‘nonviolence is more effective than force’, because ‘it tore off all the Israeli arguments. Use of


nonviolence for the Palestinians was not ideological—it was a necessity—and there was no alternative'. Nusseibeh agreed:

Had people been bold enough to take up military struggle, they would have done that. [Nonviolent struggle] was the next best thing for someone who hesitated at military acts. . . . It was not so much that people preferred nonviolence to violence that made them take up nonviolence, as much as the fact that they couldn’t do anything else. When they were convinced, finally, that there was something they could do failing violence, they went ahead and did it. Also a factor was the recognition by the Palestinians in the occupied territories that they could not, as Palestinian journalist Nadia Hijab acknowledges, ‘seek a solution that would return the status quo to what it was at the turn of the century, and displace 3.5 million Jews’. The argument here that the proponents of political struggle were substantially able to define the parameters of the intifada as nonviolent for more than two years is not disqualified by the presence of episodic violence or the eventual collapse of the uprising by 1992 due to violent tendencies. Armed might and nonviolent action are often presumed not only to be distinct from each other but opposites, yet the relationship between them may be complex. In his early and influential analysis of the topic, Stephen King-Hall notes that a review of the evidence available in 1958 suggests that while the efficacy of nonviolent struggle is always reduced by violence, a mingling of violence and nonviolence is often found: ‘All of the cases of which we have records were combinations of violence and nonviolence and (with the exception of certain racial episodes where no arms were available to the resisters) we have no evidence of a completely non-violent struggle’. The erroneous view that nonviolent resistance is the absolute opposite of violence or an exact substitute for it overlooks the fact that both violent and nonviolent struggle are means of contention. The

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83 Kuttab, interview (4 November 1994).
84 Nusseibeh, interview (5 November 1994).
85 Hijab, 'Palestinians Once Had a Land'.
86 Roberts, Civil Resistance in the East European and Soviet Revolutions, p. 5.
87 King-Hall, Defence in the Nuclear Age, pp. 195–6.
simple dualism of violence as the opposite of nonviolence is a gross distortion of reality, Gene Sharp contends, because responses to conflict more properly fall into categories of action or inaction. Nonviolent action is one type of active response, which, by definition, cannot take place without replacing submissiveness with struggle.88

Designed 'to prevail in an intensely conflictual exchange', nonviolent struggle has been called an 'irrevocable commitment' which can elicit concessions and force the opponent to do the work of bringing about change.89 Effectively implemented, the locus of responsibility for what occurs is shifted to the adversary; it falls to the target group to decide whether to give in to the demands of the nonviolent protagonists, who have made the foregone irrevocable commitment to accept penalties, consequences, and suffering. Nonviolent resistance is nothing if not contentious. The equivalent of combat, instead of using bloody sorties nonviolent resistance seeks a form of coercion other than physical violence. In it, the opponent is induced either to do something or stop doing something—yet without breaking the will of the opponent or leaving festering cycles of intra-generational resentment and retaliatory violence, such as those accompanying violent forms of action or warfare.90

What was wanted by the Palestinian people, Riad al-Malki observed, 'was not so much nonviolence as something revolutionary'.91 In the Palestinian context of an historic policy of armed struggle, by the late 1980s commando actions could no longer be deemed 'revolutionary'. Václav Havel alludes to this phenomenon when writing about dissident


90Described in the instance of Gandhi, 'This was a new kind of warfare. . . . [I]t ennobles both the one who uses it and the one upon whom it is used. . . . War with the ordinary weapons degrades both'. S. R. Bakshi, Gandhi and Ideology of Non-Violence (New Delhi, Criterion Publications, 1986), p. 68.

91Malki, interview (3 May 1995). A PFLP spokesperson, Malki quit the group due to his recognition that violent strategies did not work. Nuseibeh, communication (16 December 1997). According to Hanna Siniora, Malki 'slowly realized that the hard-line approach ended negatively', and 'he was thrown out of the PFLP because he wanted to stand in the 1996 elections for the legislative council. When his party [PFLP] refused, because it was boycotting the Oslo accords, he dropped out'. Siniora, interview (16 December 1997).
movements of the Soviet bloc which, he notes, 'do not shy away from the idea of violent political overthrow because the idea seems too radical, but on the contrary, because it does not seem radical enough'. Considering the accomplishments of the intifada, one cannot help but speculate about what might have ensued had the uprising been 100 per cent nonviolent. Yet, as suggested here, it would have been difficult if not impossible to have a mass movement of such consistency.

Findings of the Thesis

Opposed by a military adversary of Brobdingnagian scale, the Palestinians increasingly recognized the futility of armed methods after the 1967 war, so weapons from another arsenal were sought. In setting aside a military dream for the reclamation of Palestinian lands and hope of liberation by Arab armies, the Palestinians inside the occupied territories admitted that there was no one else to turn to but themselves. Over nearly twenty years, albeit without a definite plan, they built the capacity for what became the intifada.

In postulating an explanation for the appearance of nonviolent strategies in the Palestinian uprising to oppose the Israeli occupation, this thesis has found three seminal developments: a Palestinian civil society was created under occupation through movements led by committees and became the wellspring for the intifada; activist intellectuals redefined the orthodoxies of armed struggle by advancing alternative ideas on political compromise and negotiations, which affected the means for reaching talks with Israel; and knowledge and


93The American unrest had its violent breakaway parties, sects, and counter-movements in the Black Muslims, Black Panthers, and other groups advocating armed self-defence. Gandhi canceled an entire nationwide campaign of civil resistance when a single village, Chauri Chaura, set fire to a police station, burning to death six policemen inside it. Jawaharlal Nehru, Toward Freedom: The Autobiography of Jawaharlal Nehru (Boston, Beacon Press, 1958), p. 79. In his later years, Gandhi realized that the cancellation of campaigns due to the perpetration of violence granted veto power to insurgent groups and was unfair to those striving to maintain nonviolent discipline.
techniques from movements elsewhere in the world were transmitted among Palestinians, including the insight that the Palestinians’ cooperation with the occupation was sustaining it. In considering the assumption of power by the unarmed Palestinians in the occupied territories through the *intifada*, this study questions the accepted premise of scholars who emphasize an exclusive role for the state in directing major political change and the prevailing wisdom that the *intifada* was inherently violent.

1. The development of civil society prepares the way for the *intifada*. Within view of the omnipresent Israeli military forces, the competence for massive and deliberate confrontation with its belligerent occupation was constructed. In response to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967, and to compensate for it, Palestinians developed new networks of nonmilitary civilian organizations. Popular agencies and societies, local sports and youth clubs, and women’s and professional federations were organized. These networks had among their major effects the fragmentation of authority, which allowed persons who proposed ending the occupation by means other than armed struggle to rise to positions of leadership, and the diversification of centres of power, which established flexible organizational leadership structures in which pluralistic outlooks were reflected. Those who were proposing armed insurrection through the PLO-related military movements comprised some centres of power, yet these were no longer monopolistic, because other, newly emerging civilian entities formed new centres of power in which armed struggle was considered to be of dubious worth—in part because it was Palestinians under occupation who suffered Israeli retaliation against the cross-border raids and sorties by the *fida’iyyun*, or self-sacrificers.

The notion of the *intifada* as a spontaneous phenomenon is discredited by this research; even the view that the *intifada* was ten years in the making falls short. This study instead establishes that nearly two decades of social mobilization undergirded the uprising. The year 1969 marks the starting point for such civilian nonmilitary Palestinian
mobilization, when the Palestine Communist Party broke the Israeli ban on Palestinian political activity in the occupied territories and began popularly based organizing through small institutions and services and shunning militaristic strategies. The emphasis by the communists on local governance and the organizing of community institutions as the best preparation for independence coincided with the necessity for covert organizing, in order to safeguard against Israeli military intrusion; the appearance was therefore maintained of gathering for nonpolitical purposes. The attraction of such popular nonmilitary organizing was of sufficiently compelling logic that the local Palestinian clandestine military factions soon appreciated that they stood to lose numbers if they failed to adopt similar tactics. Goaded into action with this recognition, the broad-based nonmilitary organizing of youth, women, labour, and professionals accelerated.

The voluntary work committees that started in 1972, and the women's, youth, labour, and professional organizations that followed, recapitulated the ganglia of committees organized in 1936, a measure employed by the Palestinians to fight British policy and Zionism and in support of the 'great revolt'. This research shows that the preponderant means of contention used by the Palestinians to fight for their land in the 1920s and 1930s were nonviolent. Without obscuring the three major, aberrant, turns to violence in 1921, 1929, and 1938–9, it is clear that the British and Zionists responded to the rare violent affray, but chose to dismiss the Palestinians' more indicative overtures through nonviolent protest. Reinforcement was thus provided for those advocating violent resistance, including the Qassamite groups. This pattern of responding to the violent, but not to the nonviolent, struggle of the Palestinians over the changes to their patrimony was entrenched by the late 1930s and persists in the contemporary period.

Thus, while armed resistance for the total liberation of Palestine was being organized in diasporan refugee camps during the 1950s and 1960s, inside the newly occupied territories the consolidation of committee structures allowed the Palestinians both to oppose and to
compensate for occupation. This development progressed through the 1970s and 1980s, as Palestinians of all walks of life assumed the responsibility for ridding themselves of occupation, and hundreds upon hundreds of committees proliferated, offering leadership opportunities to Palestinians who would not have joined guerrilla units in any instance. Organizers prepared for heavy incarcerations and created institutions based on diversification of leadership, anticipating the survival needs of communities under harsh reprisals. Diffusion of the centres of power lent itself to procedural and substantive flexibility, and assured that there would be management of the movement no matter the number of gaolings, as new leaders stepped forward to assume the duties of their incarcerated predecessors.

Manifesting this fragmentation of authority and dispersal of the loci of power, in the 1970s and 1980s the territories were roiled by distinctly nonmilitary movements, which were, to use Sari Nusseibeh's words, 'consciously conceived as ... civilian struggle'. Insufficient attention has been paid until this research to the fact that the voluntary work committees, youth movement, student and faculty struggles against Military Orders 854 and 947, and the prisoners' movement (about which almost nothing appears in the literature) were conspicuously based upon strategies that relied for their success on broad nonviolent civilian participation. At the forefront of the various movements—as in the 1920s and 1930s—was women's organizing, which took a quantum leap in 1978 in Ramallah, when the first women's committee of the contemporary era was added to the roster of those surviving from earlier in the century. As Rita Giacaman declared, it was impossible to put sixty to seventy thousand peasant women in gaol. In 1979, Palestinian clinicians began forming formal associations of health professionals, many of which persevere today. In the same year, Raja Shehadeh and Jonathan Kuttab embarked on the first and only prolonged challenge by Palestinians to the thousands of legal restrictions imposed by the Israeli military administration. A new politics was developing, and although often surreptitious to elude detection the internal processes of
those driving it were egalitarian, cooperative, and democratic. Elections became the means of selecting leadership, groups learned democratic self-governance and made decisions of the whole, and tiers of leaders stood ready to assume loads.

The emerging civil society, with its political consensus for self-reliance, popular participation in nonmilitary strategies, and a willingness to compromise existed cognitively in the domain of ideas, and on the ground it took the form of movements of committees. Out of this process of civilian mobilization, the popular committees of the intifada would burgeon as if instantaneously, providing a necessary infrastructure for the uprising, while furthering the influence of the diversified local leadership because of their breadth of representation across class, sexual, and educational lines. Deriving their authority from the popular organizing of the previous twenty years, and despite being forced underground by Israel’s outlawing of membership in them, the tens of thousands of small voluntary committees and professional associations by then rooted in villages, towns, and refugee camps were able to yield freely to the Unified National Leadership Command of the Uprising when they deemed, and to cope with Israeli recriminations with originality and independence. From this civil society would arise not only the uprising, but cogent pressure for a Palestinian state.

2. Activist intellectuals of an epistemic community champion compromise and negotiations. The second critical transmutation assessed in this work is the way in which, as a complement to the process of forming committees as prototypes for popular nonmilitary mobilization, monopolistic assumptions about the value of armed struggle as the strategy for ending the occupation were discarded. Intellectuals had played catalytic roles in the 1970s and 1980s in the voluntary work committees, student and faculty struggles against Military Orders 854 and 947, and women’s movements, and it was they who had fought what Antonio Gramsci calls a ‘war of position’ to bring about hegemonic consent for a new political calculus. Gramsci’s view of intellectuals as the primary historical agents of change finds corroboration in our review of the years leading up to the Palestinian intifada and the early
years of the uprising, and we may deduce that it is no coincidence that his writings were influential within the small community of activist intellectuals around East Jerusalem. This study thus presents a causal interpretation of the emergence of leadership in the intifada, usually debated in the literature as whether it was new. The notion of robotic automatons taking orders from Tunis is here thoroughly contradicted, as is the misbegotten view of the leadership in the occupied territories as 'subordinated' to the PLO abroad. In pondering whether individuals can have a formative effect on political movements or whether such turmoil is produced by forces that affect the emergence of individuals, in this case the dispute is resolved in favour of the potency of persons. Human agency was powerfully generative in the intifada, especially by the activist intellectuals, Gramsci's 'organizer intellectuals'.

This study points to Feisel Husseini's series of Palestinian-Israeli committees as the earliest tangible harbinger of the political metamorphosis taking place in the territories and the first clear-cut enunciation of the adoption of nonviolent methods after 1967. Despite the known risks of advocating the enlistment of the 'enemy' as one's ally, starting in 1981 and building upon Husseini's and Ziad Abu Zayyad's contacts with Israeli political parties and audiences dating to 1968, the Committee Confronting the Iron Fist and other committees that antedated it brought Palestinians together with Israeli sympathizers, such as Gideon Spiro and Michel Warschawski, in campaigns that relied for their effect on the exposure afforded by news media. Both the message and the media were nonviolent. Thus another major shift was underway: reliance on the news media to promote strategies based on public disclosure and appeal. Setting aside metaphors of deprivation, lamentation, and revenge, Husseini and his committees instead manufactured powerful symbols in which shared solidarity between the Israelis and Palestinians was imagined, and in which both occupied and occupier were defiled and humiliated. In an ironic twist, when Husseini declared that what must be forgotten was as important as what should be remembered, he evoked memories of his late father, the legendary warrior 'Abd al-Qadir al-Husseini, and his controversial relative Haj Amin al-Husseini. This lineage gave him
extraordinary legitimacy among the Palestinians to advocate nonviolent struggle—the end product of which was to be cooperation, rather than vanquishment and retaliation.

More consequential than any stones that would be thrown in the intifada were the gauntlets tossed down by Sari Nusseibeh throughout the 1980s, as he wrote to redefine stock Palestinian nationalist concepts and discussed Palestinian perspectives with Israeli newspaper reporters. Publishing in Arabic and English outlets, his deconstruction of revolutionary military dogma and ideology proffered a right of return that existed in the mind of the Palestinian people and was equated with citizenship in a state, rather than retrieval of the exact dunums of land owned by one’s ancestors. The political framework that he formulated for claiming Palestinian rights marks a coherent first step towards the restitution of Palestinian losses. The entitlements about which he penned pertained not to titles to land, but to universal claims of human rights, which were fast on their way to becoming international norms after the 1975 Helsinki accords. His reconceptualization of the right of return provided a bridge over which dispossessed Palestinians could walk to participate in a vibrant civil society, where the means of working for a Palestinian state was to be inseparable from its end. Alternative ideas took root among the Palestinian activists in the territories to such an extent that, as a model, South Africa’s negotiated quest for majority rule came to replace Algeria’s savage war of independence.

Individuals such as Aziz Shehadeh risked themselves to pave the way for compromise on a two-state solution as an alternative to the liberation of all of Palestine; Shehadeh’s influence through Feisel Husseini and Jonathan Kuttab affected the images, tonalities, and constructions of the intifada. If Husseini’s gaolhouse Hebrew lacked eloquence, his speeches as early as 1968 clearly stipulated that solely a nonviolent course should be pursued. Declaring the Palestinians’ insistence on peaceful coexistence, his articulations and those of Ziad Abu Zayyad to Israelis, also in Hebrew, can now be evaluated for their full significance. As metaphors and symbols were fabricated, such as coexistence with Israel and the imagery of two states side by side, Israelis and Palestinians began sitting in committees and marching
together with placards written in Arabic, Hebrew, and English; the outlines of the approaching intifada could be glimpsed, at least in retrospect.

This study shows that almost two decades of social organization and political reformation allowed activist intellectuals of a Palestinian epistemic community to become determinative in the moulding of the uprising. A perspective of action as the incarnation of ideas pervaded this community. The three documents drafted by Nusseibeh were pivotal in the intifada and substantiate the flow of ideas into action in the occupied territories during the mid-1980s. One of these, the Jerusalem Paper, which guided the Command for more than two years, has prior to this study appeared only in Arabic (and with typographic errors). In contrast to conventional military or strategic thinking, where it may be assumed that positive ends can be achieved by negative means, the activist intellectuals believed that if they proposed a sovereign independent state, then Palestinian behaviour had to conform to demonstrate that statehood was viable. As they sought to change the goal from the liberation of all of Palestine to an independent state alongside Israel, to be reached through direct negotiations, they advocated techniques that could improve the odds of reaching the stage of talks with Israel. As prime beneficiaries of the diffusion of the centres of power and fragmentation of authority noted here, the activist intellectuals developed a working doctrine of mass popular participation based on the belief that the political fate of the Palestinians in the occupied territories rested with themselves, and that they could, through their own travail, create the compromises necessary to live side by side with Israelis. Abandoning short-term tactical thinking, they transformed ideologies and recruitment mythologies of armed struggle by the few into political defiance requiring the invigouration of the many. Once the intifada began, the activist intellectuals were able to gain the upper hand for more than two years as members of 'unofficial' Fateh and the 'Think Tank', which included the main Palestinian factions and tendencies as well as unaffiliated persons. The only perplexity more astounding than their ability to guide a mass uprising has been the failure heretofore of outside observers to
recognize the enormity of the struggle within a struggle that the activist intellectuals waged in their reconstruction of political thought, as displayed in the actions of the intifada.

The Israeli government paradoxically aided the delineation of the new propositions being stropped by the activist intellectuals. So thoroughly disenfranchised were the Palestinians that the activist intellectuals benefited from the lack of channels for expressing their viewpoints, whether in the occupied territories, to Israel, or the outside world. Palestinians inside the territories had difficulty sending delegations to international conferences, symposia, and fora. (Al-Haq’s formal links to international juridical associations were unique; comparable political networks did not otherwise exist.) What Nusseibeh called his ‘long journey of open dialogue’ with Israelis was made more weighty by the lack of established channels for communication. Contradicting official Israeli interpretations of the ethos of the Palestinians in the occupied territories, had traditional connexions existed, Husseini’s and Abu Zayyad’s early explorations with Israelis and Nusseibeh’s exploratory probes for negotiations might have lacked currency. Although Arafat knew of these initiatives and approved them, the PLO’s overall ambivalent posturing and the bellicosity of the guerrilla movements’ rhetoric provided a backdrop that contrasted with the two-decades-old process of social mobilization in the territories. Once the uprising began, the blunder of Israeli curfews and closures became an accessory to the uprising, broadening its consolidation as intellectuals and academicians became directly involved with youthful street organizers and popular committees, thus intensifying the proclivity of the majority of the population as it took power into its own hands and with much discipline suspended armed retaliation. The unity displayed in the restraint of arms was such that, as the IDF has acknowledged, from the start of the intifada in December 1987 and for more than four years, through 1991, only twelve Israeli soldiers were killed in the West Bank and Gaza Strip despite their overwhelming presence on rooftops, in doorways, and in patrols of streets and alleys.

From the evolving Palestinian civil society new spokespersons were thrust forwards.
Figures such as Abu Ayyash, Abu Zayyad, Aker, Ashrawi, Awad, Hussein, Jadallah, Kamal, Khatib, Kuttab, Malki, Nusseibeh, and Siniora directly addressed the Palestinian, Israeli, and international news media, for attribution and without *noms de guerres*. One might have thought that the privileged class, foreign educations, or family backgrounds of some of the activist intellectuals would qualify or limit their ability to get their messages across to Palestinian villages and refugee camps. Instead, their call for wholly nonviolent struggle was enhanced by their being descended from great names of defiance and notable families that had stood against the British, including with conventional weapons. They openly stated limited, achievable political goals, scorning the threatening, oblique, grandiose and carmine cryptographic language of military cadres. Such reliance on information strategies is typically found as an adjunct to nonviolent struggle and is linked to the necessity to explain grievances clearly. This allowed them to wedge open still further the political space for Palestinian contact with Israelis.

3. The transmission of knowledge about nonviolent struggle leads Palestinians to withdraw cooperation from the occupation. The turn to political rather than military means of struggle exemplified by the intifada was in substantial part facilitated by the transmission of ideas and demonstration of techniques from other struggles. Thus the third decisive development identified here is a flow of knowledge about theories and methods of nonviolent resistance among Palestinians, including the insight that the submission of a populace to a belligerent occupation is required for that occupation’s sustenance and that, in this respect, it was within the power of the Palestinians themselves to refuse to cooperate with Israeli ubiquity. This discernment, the latter part of which appears in the primary literature of the intifada as ‘disengagement’, is the single most significant change in thinking that galvanized the uprising. Cotermious with the political evolutions being led by Hussein and Nusseibeh, Mubarak Awad’s wholesale dissemination of materials on revolutionary nonviolence and pilot exercises in nonviolent direct action gave graphic form to the consolidation of alternative ideas.
cum action in the territories. Thus, as one group of activist intellectuals was shaping the political contours of the upheaval during the 1980s, especially in Fateh’s quarters, another group trained by Awad was showing Palestinian villagers and dwellers of refugee camps, aligned and nonaligned, how to rely on themselves and use the rudimentary techniques of nonviolent strategic action at their disposal.

The prevailing observation that Mubarak Awad was ‘interesting’ but ‘not important’, overlooks the depth of the principles upon which his methods were based and is rendered invalid by this study. Disputing the assumed merits of armed struggle, Awad contended that the way to penetrate the calculated animosity of Israeli officials and the indifference of the international community was not through the pretense of retaliatory paramilitary operations, but by accentuating the asymmetry of the unarmed Palestinians vis-à-vis the State of Israel. The deceptive simplicity of another of his arguments—that the Palestinians could aim to prevent Israeli authorities from accomplishing their goals, i.e., as a way of converting the context to a two-sided bargaining situation—is belied by its strategic reasoning of a kind not previously found in the Palestinian canon. The principles and abstractions he argued for included limited goals for specific actions and self-sacrifice—not by joining the fida ‘iyyun, but by a willingness to demonstrate injustice and appeal to a larger community, even if inviting punishment and penalties upon oneself. Such conceptions were inseparable from action, and, equally important, were to be carried out openly. Mubarak Awad’s autumn 1983 workshops, apart from the intrinsic substantive value of their theoretical material, were advertised in local newspapers, explicated a system of tenets to be applied without clandestinity, and included Israeli participants and reporters in the audience. Held a full four years prior to the start of the intifada, these workshops mark the point in time from which a catalogue of theories and methods from other popular movements began to be spread in the West Bank. Haj ‘Abd Abu-Diab and other volunteers from the Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence carried directly into forty to fifty villages, towns, and refugee camps ingenious measures for fighting
to protect one’s land without violence, in which, in yet another significant conceptual alteration, the antagonism was to be differentiated from the antagonist. Any doubt about the roots of the uprising stretching back beyond 1987 is dispelled by this tangible evidence of old and new methods of nonviolent resistance making their way into the popular understanding.

This infusion of concrete knowledge from external sources also helps to explain how, once the intifada erupted, more than one hundred measures for withdrawing cooperation from the occupation or evincing opposition to it were employed—techniques that are recognizable from an international repertoire. It also accounts for how such methods fill the leaflets of the Command: renaming streets and schools, appealing for family reunions, defying school closures, refusing to fill out forms, refusing to carry identity cards, holding symbolic funerals, ringing church bells, flying flags, mounting boycotts, holding local strikes, applying pressure for prisoner releases, and reclaiming agricultural land. Parlaying classic nonmilitary methods of defending one’s way of life, Awad’s 1983 booklet and mimeographed translations, pamphlets, and lectures, along with experimental trials of nonviolent direct action in Qatanna, Hebron, and elsewhere made explicit the theoretical argument that it was within the capacity of any Palestinian to withdraw his or her cooperation from the labyrinth of contacts through which Israel sustained its occupation. Observers of the uprising reveal their own ignorance of nonviolent resistance as a verifiable category of struggle by writing solely of its civil disobedience, so often the only nonviolent method to be reported. More consequential for this study than the highly impressive resignation from jobs and stellar application of the ancient technique of tax resistance was the protracted debate on civil disobedience in the clandestine leaflets—a dialogue that persisted for the entire first year of the uprising and well into the second—through which is disclosed the full extent to which ‘hegemonic consent’ over the ideologies of military liberation and armed struggle had been achieved. One can evaluate how extraordinary was the consensus preserved for almost three years in the uprising in light of the triangulation of counter-resistance employed by the Israelis, the PLO, and those in the
triangulation of counter-resistance employed by the Israelis, the PLO, and those in the occupied territories who were propounding desiccated theories of military retaliation.

The realization that the occupation had continued because of Palestinian compliance with it, and conversely the recognition that Palestinians possessed the power to refuse to submit to it, is derived principally from Awad’s *samizdat*, specifically his interpretations of Gene Sharp’s theories. It may be no coincidence that the first leaflet of the *intifada* made its appearance in the Qalandia refugee camp, where Sharp and Awad had lengthy conversations in 1986 with Palestinian youths, while hammering nails for a new youth centre. The concepts imparted through Sharp’s studies and his meetings with Palestinians were among the most important of the external influences honing the fledgeling civil society because they affected the Palestinians’ perception of their own power vis-à-vis a military colossus. In lectures to Palestinians in 1986, a year before the outbreak of the uprising, Sharp explained that civilian defence meant relying on no one else, and he argued that planned, disciplined nonviolent direct action taken from a body of historically proved techniques epitomized self-reliance. For four years prior to the *intifada*, thousands of reprints, translations, booklets, and pamphlets poured out of the Centre for the Study of Nonviolence, broadcasting Sharp’s analyses in the vernacular. Dog-eared copies circulated hand to hand and were left lying about on public conveyances. Sharp’s admonitions to build small, local institutions for safeguarding survival under the probable reprisals, stressed in Awad’s 1983 booklet and analogous to Gandhi’s constructive programme, dove-tailed with the thousands of committees that had been forming during the civilian movements of the 1970s and 1980s. In retrospect, as a result of this research it can also be seen that Sharp’s insights hastened the eventual Israeli recognition that no military solution could defeat the *intifada*, as elucidated by Sharp when he accepted Eugene Weiner’s and Reuven Gal’s invitation to the February 1988 Israeli strategic forum for the airing of his analyses and when Gal imparted the findings of Sharp’s studies to General Natan Vilnai and his top brass soon after.
at an appreciation of forms of power other than arms, including noncooperation methods revived from their own past, which, it might be added, they had not been able to study under Israeli, Jordanian, or Egyptian rule. Although unexamined in the standard literature, in early 1986 the villagers of Tqu’ regained ten dunums of their land by nonviolently resisting its expropriation by Israeli settlers. As shown in this chronicling of what may be the first reversal of land loss—the central fact of Palestinian political experience in the twentieth century—this relevant if modest success came about not through the vaunted use of armed struggle, but by three hundred farmers and villagers standing on their own reclaimed ground, unarmed, and refusing to flee when assailed by Israeli settlers’ bullets.

As approaches adopted from struggles elsewhere and used in the 1920s and 1930s spread, later to be magnified by the leaflets of the Command, the appeal of individualistic and idiosyncratic guerrilla raids continued to subside. This newfound cognizance of power, a byproduct of actions in which all persons could participate and were thus empowered, underscored the advantageous properties of nonviolent struggle as a genuine alternative to the extremes of doing nothing or joining a commando unit. Although the imaginative nonviolent measures undertaken by the Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence did not entirely halt the uprooting of aged trees, lift the military occupation, or stop the building of Israeli settlements (which have continued apace under both Labour and Likud governments), they demonstrated to the Palestinians methods for resistance that did not provide pretexts for further retribution, counterattack, and depredations. Objectively, the situation of the Palestinians had not changed, yet isolated farmers and peasants were developing a capacity for addressing their condition, and overcoming fear by choosing action rather than inaction, with no reliance on the violence that had historically contributed to worsened straits. The centre’s focus on West Bank villages helps to explain the near-perfect implementation of Gandhian techniques in many hamlets during the early intifada; indeed, it would ultimately be in the villages of the West Bank that the uprising would be enacted with greatest coherence.
Convinced that, as Awad had said, 'whenever the Palestinians start violence, we start losing', and armed with a studied grasp of the potential for causing splits in the opposition, Haj 'Abd Abu-Diab, 'Abd al-Jawad Saleh, Jonathan Kuttab, and other volunteers at the Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence enlisted Israeli activists as allies in their actions, which were designed both to confront and entreat Israeli sensibilities. As important as the pilot campaigns was the replacing of Palestinian submission with resistance, a quality exhibited in the uprising that had not been seen since the British crushed the 'great revolt', yet on a greater scale and with more astute calibration of consequences. Such ability by the activist intellectuals to weigh costs and benefits had often been cross-fertilized by years of education in fine European and North American universities, where they had studied history, international politics, the law, literature, philosophy, and psychology. Their ideation was also influenced by contact with Israeli sympathizers, some of them from the ranks of the military forces, and among whom there were some prepared to embark on civil disobedience of their own in protest against the occupation. The alterations in thinking that resulted from these external influences, along with the ideas and techniques borrowed from the Indian independence struggle and the U.S. civil rights movement, helped to locate the Palestinian struggle within an inventory of contemporary nonviolent movements reaching from Eastern Europe to Tibet to Burma, a complement to the process led by activist intellectuals to acquaint and involve Palestinians in a larger international quest for human rights. Detachment of the Palestinians from other peoples' struggles had ably served the administrators of the military occupation and had also retarded global recognition of the Palestinians' quandary.

'A Deluxe Uprising'

At both ends of the twentieth century, Great Powers were the underwriters of the structure within which the Palestinians were forced to struggle to authenticate their patrimony. The civil and political rights of the Palestinians were not considered inalienable by
either Britain or the United States. Far from it. As this study shows, over the span of seven decades the only alterations in the pattern of systematic alienation of the Palestinians from their land resulted from the intifada, including the decisive years preceding it.

'Forty years of violence have got us nowhere', Hanan Mikhail Ashrawi stated at the Madrid conference in 1991.94 Far broader than was visible at the time were the consequences of the Palestinians' secession from the cycle of violence. The balance of forces between the State of Israel and the Palestinians was altered, as the new Palestinian spokespersons presented political positions based on compromise and negotiations, proffering the uprising as a nonmilitary test of fixity of purpose and tenacity. Politically, the intifada brought the Palestinians what Milton Viorst calls the 'grandest victories' they have won since 1948.95 Yet, although the Palestinian intifada exhibited monumental mass discipline, it also included a minority of the population throwing stones and Molotov cocktails. The pragmatic line of reasoning which assumes a more favourable result vis-à-vis one's opponent from the use of nonviolent techniques was unevenly applied, thus preventing the splitting of opinion in Israel or political jiu-jitsu which might have resulted in the lifting of the occupation. As Israeli authorities gaol the representatives on the Command one by one so that none remained whose views had been honed by the Committee Confronting the Iron Fist, the Arab Studies Society, the writings of the activist intellectuals, or the volunteers and lecturers around the Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence, old assumptions were revived. Impaired by the struggle between those inside the territories and those outside in the form of 'interference' from Tunis, and vitiated by the lack of appropriate PLO support, the Palestinians in the occupied territories were unable to sustain their comparative power in the equation with Israel.

In the end, however, the cleverness of nonviolent resisters is not the biggest determinant of the outcome of civilian mass movements. The failure of the Palestinians to

95Viorst, 'Letter from Jerusalem', p. 23.
bring about independence under British policy in the 1920s and 1930s cannot be ascribed to a lack of Palestinian persistence or resilience. Similarly, it was the willingness and capability of Israel to administer violence against the resisters in the intifada that was probably the major determinant of the eventual outcomes of the uprising. Writing in 1989, Joel Greenberg predicts that ‘any move to end the uprising . . . must provide the intifada leadership with a means to translate their struggle into political gains’. Palestinians in the occupied territories, he recommends,

could be allowed free, non-violent political expression and organization, including political meetings with Israelis. . . . [to] enable the uprising to take an increasingly political course. . . . With a reduction in political repression, the need for violent confrontation would decline. Palestinians would be able to pursue their struggle through more normal, non-violent means, and devote their energies to political initiatives.\(^6\)

What Greenberg proposed was not allowed to happen.

Both the Likud and Labour parties bear responsibility for ignoring the opportunities presented by the intifada to end violent struggle once and for all by Palestinians. By responding swiftly and positively to the impressive restraint of the intifada, and by profiting from the profound alterations that it represented for accession to peace and security, for decades professed as Israel’s goal, Israel could have neutralized the regression to the ideology of armed struggle, long emptied of meaning by the failure to make progress, and in so doing negated the allure of the Palestinian commando units and Qassamite cells of Islamic resistance groups. If nothing else, it is curious that the textual analysis underpinning Israeli gathering of intelligence and academic scholarship did not produce clear readings with policy implications in 1988 that the vocabulary of armed struggle had all but disappeared from the leaflets of the intifada. The vigorous debate on civil disobedience in the leaflets early disclosed the fact that Israel was facing a civil, political, and information-based struggle against which military suppression would not work. Instead of seizing on this dramatic

\(^6\)Greenberg, ‘Where Is the Intifada Heading?’ p. 42.
development, Israel gave preference to perpetuating the status quo, characterized by its brutal suppression of the uprising and its protection and favoured status then accorded to the Qassamite groups. The creators and exhorters of the new political lexicon, who had been rewriting the orthodoxies of *thawra* during the 1970s and 1980s—Radwan Abu Ayyash, Ziad Abu Zayyad, Feisel Hussein, Muhammad Jadallah, Zahira Kamal, Ghassan Khatib, and Sari Nusseibeh—were imprisoned, despite Israel’s longstanding claim that it lacked suitable negotiating partners. An independent *intifada* might have generated a countervailing force to the PLO, a known Israeli objective, yet those who were pressing for independence from the PLO were not permitted to pursue their courses uninterrupted. Mubarak Awad—among the keenest advocates of an independent uprising—was expelled. Meanwhile, Jabotinskian tendencies on the Israeli landscape continued to veto the efforts of Israelis who sought accommodation with those whose ruination underlay the saga of their statehood.

To Ze’ev Schiff, the *intifada* was ‘a deluxe uprising’, by which he means that it was a contest about international public opinion. It was also territorial, that is, about land, as Nusseibeh observes; without understanding its lessons, and securing a durable settlement based on justice, the conflict could become one of race and religion and, therefore, much worse. Not until 13 September 1993 was the first legitimation of Palestinian political and territorial rights codified, in the Declaration of Principles of the Oslo I accords, seventy-six years after Lord Balfour signed his letter to Lord Rothschild. The *intifada*, as Chris Hedges writes, ‘finally drove the Israelis to negotiate a peace accord’. It had succeeded as had nothing else.

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98 Nusseibeh, ‘In a Different Time Zone’, p. 29.

10 August 1977

H. E. Cyrus Vance
U. S. Secretary of State
Jerusalem.

Your Excellency,

I, the undersigned, a Palestinian Arab, take the opportunity on the occasion of your visit to this area to submit to you the following Framework for Peace which I believe represents the viewpoint of the majority of the Palestinian Arabs in the Occupied Areas and abroad.

At the present stage of the Israeli-Arabs dispute which is rooted in the conflict between the Jewish and Palestinian National Liberation Movements, there cannot remain any doubt that neither the Palestinian People nor the Israeli People will renounce their rights to a free independent homeland in what is called ‘Filistin’ in Arabic and ‘Eretz-Israel’ in Hebrew.

The fundamental question is whether the building of these two homelands must be mutually exclusive, as we are constantly told by leaders of both nations.

My reply is an emphatic no. The mere acceptance of these views is fraught with new tragedies and more bloodshed. Renewed hostilities cannot lead to a final victory for either side but only to further destruction, suffering, and a growing hatred.

We Palestinians must not be ignored in the search for peace. We must play a part in working out our own future.

Furthermore, Israelis and Palestinians should recognize the mutual legitimate rights of both peoples to sovereign, national statehood in the land which both claim as their homeland.

The Israelis have already materialized their rights to national sovereignty. What remains then is for the Palestinian people to implement this very right by establishing their own independent state, within boundaries which will be the result of an agreement reached by both parties and not the product of warfare and military conquest. This agreement should also take into consideration benefits for both sides provided for by U.N. Resolutions.

By the same token, peaceful, secure and recognized boundaries between Israel and the other Arab States cannot be the result of conquest and annexation, as has been emphasized in Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

We Palestinians believe that our future lies with the Arab world and particularly with Jordan. This could only be achieved by agreement with King Hussein and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. We do not want to be offered a ready-made solution.

Equally we see that we have got to live with the fact of Israel, and we want to work out this relationship with the Israelis themselves.

If Israelis are sincere in wanting a peaceful settlement and if they acknowledge our right to work this out, we ask that they should give us the opportunities to define what we think just and possible. We, for our part, can understand the Israeli need for security, but it must be considered side by side with our right to recover occupied territory and to have a homeland of our own with the recognition of our dignity and worth.
As a first step towards this implementation of the Palestinian people's inalienable right to self-determination, it is imperative that both Israel and the Arab states recognize the basic rights of the Palestinian Arabs to set up a state of their own. For the interim period a Peace Promoting Force acceptable to both Israelis and Palestinians might be needed.

Only when this is implemented will it be possible for the Palestinians in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and those living abroad to decide freely if they want to join with Jordan.

If the Palestinians decide, however, to set up their own democratic Palestinian state, which I believe they will, Israel and the emerging Palestine State would be in a position to sign a non-aggression pact, providing that none of the parties would invite foreign armed forces on its territories or enter into [a] military pact with a third party, without mutual consent. That would be a first step towards closer relations, the development of economic and cultural exchange, and the gradual disappearance of mutual distrust.

In no way should these links jeopardize close relations between the Palestine Arab State and the Arab world. Nor should they preclude an eventual federation with Jordan and other Middle Eastern States as part of the peaceful development of this region.

I the undersigned am confident that a prosperous, independent Palestinian State will be a bridge towards lasting peace and cooperation between the Arab nation and Israel.

Furthermore, it is my firm belief that in this land, claimed as a homeland by the two nations, there should be free passage and liberty of movement for citizens of both states. This means that the citizens of Filistin shall travel freely in Israel, and in turn those of Israel shall have freedom of movement in Filistin.

Jerusalem, which is dear to the hearts of both nations, should never be divided again by a wall—symbol of the hostility and distrust which have divided Palestinians and Israelis—but as Jerusalem is rightly claimed by both nations, it should also belong to both. This means not a divided city but a shared sovereignty.

I suggest separate municipalities to be established for Israeli and Palestinian areas of Jerusalem, with a joint commission to control and coordinate public services.

Thus Jerusalem will again become the city of peace, holy to three religions, and of free access to all. A just and generous settlement for the refugees, either by return to their old homes or by direct compensation to them, should be worked out. We know that most refugees would not choose to go back to Israel, though they would like the acknowledgment that they could do so under agreed conditions.

To compensate or rehabilitate two million refugees will be a task of great magnitude, involving great finance, and I believe that, given a fair settlement, many nations would contribute generously, both those in the Middle East and those outside.

I am convinced that such an approach would solve our basic conflict, lay the foundation for a stable peace in this region, and be to the benefit of both nations.

Yours faithfully,

Signed

Aziz Shehadeh
LET TODAY'S MARCH BE A STEP IN THE 'MARCH OF THE MILLIONS' AGAINST OCCUPATION

As we stand on the threshold of the third decade of the occupation of the Palestinian land, we are faced by a number of facts which have accumulated over these long years. These facts reflect the ferocious nature of this occupation, and aim in their entirety at obliterating Palestinian identity and confiscating the basis on which the Palestinian people can exercise its right to self-determination. To this aim, the authorities have confiscated Arab lands in a blatantly arbitrary manner and established Jewish colonies on these lands. It has destroyed entire villages, demolished thousands of homes, and expelled about 2,000 political activists, for no reason other than their adherence to their opinions and identities. Throughout these years, the occupation authorities have carried out 500,000 arrests; at this moment there are 4,500 Palestinian political prisoners behind Israeli bars. During this long process, hundreds have been martyred, including innocent children, and thousands wounded. And now the occupation has developed the 'iron fist' policy to lay siege, with unprecedented ferocity, to the right to freedom of expression. The authorities have issued orders to close down newspapers and magazines, schools, colleges and universities, and to town arrest, administratively detain and expel journalists, unionists and student leaders. These orders strangle every Palestinian public figure holding fast to the Palestinian right to independence. In spite of this, the sons and daughters of the Palestinian people are standing up to the attempt to confiscate the Palestinian factor. The Palestinian identity deepens despite oppression, as the Palestinians increase their attachment to their rights and their land, and continue their just struggle for self-determination and the establishment of an independent state on their national soil.

The occupation imprints its effects on Israeli society itself. We see its negative effects reflected through the deterioration of religious and moral values and the destruction of democracy for Jewish society itself. We see it also reflected in economic strangulation resulting from the enormous budget required by the army of occupation and the policy of war.

On the basis of our belief that occupation is an enemy to both occupied and occupier, we address our call to the democratic and progressive forces in Israel to stand in solidarity with Palestinians in the struggle to end the occupation and to bring about a just peace in the region.

Let this march be the first step in a joint, mass struggle against the occupation and its policies, and let us work together to bring about the success of the march of millions of Palestinians and Israelis against occupation, when the voices of the masses will be raised high demanding justice, national dignity and independence for all the peoples of the region.

Telephone: 02-273686   02-287077 (also in Hebrew) P. O. Box 20479 Jerusalem

1This text is identical to the original, including its minor syntactical and grammatical errors.
THE FOURTEEN TALKING POINTS OF WEST BANK–GAZA PALESTINIANS

14 January 1988

During the past few weeks the occupied territories have witnessed a popular uprising against Israel's occupation and its oppressive measures. This uprising has so far resulted in the martyrdom of tens of our people, the wounding of hundreds more and the imprisonment of thousands of unarmed civilians.

This uprising has come to further affirm our people's unbreakable commitment to its national aspirations. These aspirations include our people's firm national rights of self-determination and of the establishment of an independent state on our national soil under the leadership of the PLO, as our sole legitimate representative. The uprising also comes as further proof of our indefatigable spirit and our rejection of the sense of despair which has begun to creep to the minds of some who claim that the uprising is the result of despair.

The conclusion to be drawn from this uprising is that the present state of affairs in the Palestinian occupied territories is unnatural and that Israeli occupation cannot continue forever. Real peace cannot be achieved except through the recognition of the Palestinian national rights, including the right of self-determination and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state on Palestinian national soil. Should these rights not be recognized, then the continuation of Israeli occupation will lead to further violence and bloodshed and the further deepening of hatred. The opportunity for achieving peace will also move further away.

The only way to extricate ourselves from this scenario is through the convening of an international conference with the participation of representative of the Palestinian people, as an equal partner, as well as the five permanent members of the Security Council, under the supervision of the two Super Powers.

On this basis we call upon the Israeli authorities to comply with the following list of demands as a means to prepare the atmosphere for the convening of the suggested international peace conference which will achieve a just and lasting settlement of the Palestinian problem in all its aspects, bringing about the realization of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people, peace and stability for the peoples of the region and an end to violence and bloodshed:

1. To abide by the Fourth Geneva Convention and all other international agreements pertaining to the protection of civilians, their properties and rights under a state of military occupation; to declare the Emergency Regulations of the British mandate null and void, and to stop applying the iron fist policy.

2. The immediate compliance with Security Council Resolutions 605 and 607, which call upon Israel to abide by the Geneva convention of 1949 and the Declaration of Human Rights; and which further call for the achievement of a just and lasting settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

3. The release of all prisoners who were arrested during the recent uprising, and foremost
among them our children. Also the rescinding of all proceedings and indictments against them.

4. The cancellation of the policy of expulsion and allowing all exiled Palestinians, including the four expelled to Lebanon on 13 January 1988, to return to their homes and families. Also the release of all administrative detainees and the cancellation of the hundreds of house arrest orders. In this connection, special mention must be made of the hundreds of applications for family reunions which we call upon the authorities to accept forthwith.

5. The immediate lifting of the siege of all Palestinian refugee camps in the West Bank and Gaza, and the withdrawal of the Israeli army from all population centres.

6. Carrying out a formal inquiry into the behaviour of soldiers and settlers in the West Bank and Gaza, as well as inside jails and detention camps, and taking due punitive measures against all those convicted of having unduly caused death or bodily harm to unarmed civilians.

7. A cessation of all settlement activity and land confiscation and the release of lands already confiscated especially in the Gaza Strip. Also putting an end to the harassments and provocations of the Arab population by settlers in the West Bank and Gaza as well as in the Old City of Jerusalem. In particular, the curtailment of the provocative activities in the Old City of Jerusalem by Ariel Sharon and the ultra-religious settlers of Banim and Ateret Kohanim.

8. Refraining from any act which might impinge on the Muslim and Christian holy sites or which might introduce changes to the status quo in the City of Jerusalem.

9. The cancellation of the Value Added Tax (VAT) and all other direct Israeli taxes which are imposed on Palestinian residents in Jerusalem, the rest of the West Bank, and in Gaza; and putting an end to the harassment caused to Palestinian business and tradesmen.

10. The cancellation of all restrictions on political freedoms including restrictions on freedom of assembly and association; also making provisions for free municipal elections under the supervision of a neutral authority.

11. The immediate release of all funds deducted from the wages of labourers from the territories who worked and still work inside the Green Line, which amount to several hundreds of millions of dollars. These accumulated deductions, with interest, must be returned to their rightful owners through the agency of the nationalist institutions headed by the Workers' Unions.

12. The removal of all restrictions on building permits and licences for industrial projects and artesian water wells as well as agricultural development programs in the occupied territories. Also rescinding all measures taken to deprive the territories of their water resources.

13. Terminating the policy of discrimination being practised against industrial and agricultural produce from the occupied territories either by removing the restrictions on the transfer of goods to within the Green Line, or by placing comparable trade restrictions on the transfer of Israeli goods into the territories.

14. Removing the restrictions on political contacts between inhabitants of the occupied territories—and the PLO—in such a way as to allow for the participation of Palestinians from the territories in the proceedings of the Palestine National Council, in order to ensure a direct input into the decision-making processes of the Palestinian nation by the Palestinians under occupation.
TEXT OF PROPOSAL FOR PALESTINIAN STATE

This document is alleged to have been among several seized on 31 July 1988 by Israeli authorities from Feisel Husseini's papers. This version appeared in the Jerusalem Post on 12 August 1988.

The announcement in Jerusalem of the independence document will herald the establishment of an independent Palestinian state within the partition boundaries, as determined in 1947 and by the (UN) Security Council in Resolution 181. Its capital will be Jerusalem and its interim government will consist of two parts: Those who are in exile and those who reside on Palestinian soil.

The state will be headed by Yasser Arafat, chairman of the PLO executive committee, Farouk Kaddumi, who heads the PLO's political department, will serve as foreign minister in the new government, PLO executive committee members will be considered members of the new government. It will also include Messrs. George Habash, secretary general of the PFLP (Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine) and Nayef Hawatmeh, secretary general of the DFLP (Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine).

In parallel, the Palestine National Council will be proclaimed the new state's parliament. It will include personalities from the occupied territories. Their names will be declared in the Declaration of Independence. PLO representations abroad will automatically be regarded as the new Palestinian state's legations.

An interim administrative body will be set up in the occupied territories. It will deal with various internal administrative matters, such as health, education, social welfare, law, police, agriculture, industry, commerce, construction, electricity, water, municipalities, press and media affairs. This is done through a hierarchy in which every department has its own internal bylaws.

THE OBJECTIVE

This programme aims at moving from a phase of clashes with stones on the battlefront to the stage of political initiative through a diplomatic mechanism initiated by the Palestinian side, which will provide the blessed 'uprising' with renewed momentum towards an international conference.

This technique will have a stronger influence on diplomatic activity than any other political initiative that could be presented by the Palestinian side. It will give the Palestinians a tremendous bargaining chip because the issue for debate both in the international and Israeli arenas will change from a demand that the PLO recognize Israel as a precondition for negotiations to a demand that the international community recognize the state established by the efforts of the Palestinian people, whose lands were occupied by the Hebrew state.

1Contains minor syntactical and grammatical errors, as in the original.
The above does not mean and end to the blessed uprising, but an escalation which lifts it to the level of the proposed national state.

**PROJECTED SCENARIO**

Israel will find itself subjected to diplomatic pressure on the international level, especially if the declaration of the state will be accompanied by an active diplomatic campaign led by the political department in the PLO through its representatives around the world. Friendly countries will be asked to officially recognize the new Palestinian state while countries with diplomatic relations with Israel will be called on to create parallel representations in the Palestinian state, as well as having economic and trade relations with it.

Of course, the Israeli authorities are going to carry out an arrest campaign against all those who have any relationship, whether from near or far, with the draft of a Declaration of Independence. It will also put obstacles in order to stop Palestinian personalities and delegations from participating in a national conference in Jerusalem in which this independence will be declared. But the media coverage that will accompany these events will give the uprising a new face in which the characteristics of the newborn state will be reflected. This will especially be true in the eyes of the people who will see in this new state a renewed incentive to continue the resistance. They will support it in order to plant the seeds for a new infrastructure based on popular committees. Therefore, they will heed its directives and respect its guidelines as a national alternative to the occupation.

The popular committees deployed throughout the territories will gain official status as branches of the new state, helping to continue the growth and development of the state apparatus.

Regarding the Israeli position: It will be unable to fight against, strangle, or abort the 'newborn' —the state struggling to save itself from occupations'—will be accorded respect and admiration by all forces worldwide, including those that support Israel. Internally, Israel will be divided because the voices demanding recognition of the 'newborn' will increase, especially since this 'newborn' has come into being as the result of heroic labour pains, witnessed by everyone. This is also true because the nature of the new state will confirm that it is not aggressive, and that the Palestinian people do not desire the annihilation of the state of Israel. Rather, they wish to live peacefully as its neighbour.

The announcement of the Declaration of Independence, as outlined above, does not necessarily mean the creation of an interim Palestinian government-in-exile, as has been suggested by Arab leaders in the past. Instead, it will mean the birth of a Palestinian state in the homeland. In order to reach this objective, the birth of a Palestinian state in the homeland. In order to reach this objective, the Unified National Leadership of the Uprising, in Jerusalem, the capital of Palestine, will take the responsibility of carrying out this objective. Our people will thus hold the reins of the initiative even as they are setting up their state on their national land, instead of persistently demanding that other parties—especially the international conference and the United States—establish such a state.
CONTENTS OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

The Declaration of Independence will have the following points:

The geography of the state will be the partition plan of 1948; the executive of the state will consist of:

- Mr. Yasser Arafat, president of the state;
- Mr. Farouk Kadoumi, foreign minister;
- PLO executive committee members-members of the new government;
- The membership will include Messrs. George Habash and Nayef Hawatmeh.

A general legislative body in the occupied territories made up of persons who will be considered automatically members of the Palestine National Council. The Unified Leadership of the Uprising will nominate the following names in one of its communiqués:

There follows a list of 152 names of Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza Strip, including eighteen women, mayors and former mayors, heads of trade unions and professional societies, educators, doctors, artists, and community leaders.

An administrative board assigned from the above-mentioned legislative body will temporarily carry the affairs of the interim government inside the occupied territories. This body will consist of representatives from within the community distributed according to geographic and speciality considerations.

The interim government will proclaim, on behalf of the PLO, its readiness to appoint a specialized delegation whose members will be from within and outside the occupied homeland. Its mission will be to launch negotiations towards reaching a final settlement with Israel. The negotiations will center on the following points:

1) The final borders between the Palestinian state and Israel;
2) The political and practical link and ties between the two portions of the Palestinian state—Gaza and the West Bank;
3) Issues connected to the network of (Jewish) settlements planted in the occupied territories;
4) The nature of relations between the two countries, with special emphasis on basic necessities needed for the survival of the state, particularly the issue of water;
5) The issue of the refugees’ right to return, or their right to compensation in accordance with UN resolutions.

The declaration of independence will be preceded by consultations with the Arab countries and friendly nations, especially with the Soviet Union. This consultation is not for the purpose of requesting permission from these countries, but in order to guarantee their needed support to this state.

The nature of the independent Palestinian state will be a republic—elected president, ministerial council made up of elected parties. The state will allow multiple political parties and religions, and the freedom of all believers to worship. It will guarantee the human, economic and political rights of individuals and the community. It will guarantee for the citizen to live in freedom and in dignity. It will guarantee to him [sic] all the rights stated in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, including the freedom of expression, education, and ownership. It will provide for him health, social, economic, educational and agricultural possibilities so that he can build a bright future for himself and his children.
The declaration for the creation of a Palestinian state means forcing an accomplished fact on Israel, the Arab countries and the world community; which will have no way out of dealing with this reality created by the uprising.

All the citizens of the occupied territories will be expected to carry out the orders and instructions issued by the new state, its various executive institutions, and operational bodies as expressed through the popular committees which are subordinate to the Unified National Command. The residents will similarly be expected to surrender their Israeli identity cards and exchange them for Palestinian cards which will be issued by the interim government. These will be distributed by the popular committees. Foreign reporters, visitors and tourists will be expected to obtain travel documents from the interim government’s institutions in order to enter the state.

The PNC will be called for a new session. One week before the start of the session the Unified Leadership will announce the Declaration of Independence and the Palestine National Council will discuss it and approve all of its detail.

Final note: Following recognition of the state and the withdrawal of the Israeli army, arrangements will immediately be made for free, direct elections to form the new government and name a new President whose authority will be decided by the parliament after its first session, forming the first elected government for the new Palestinian state.
Appendix 5

THE 'JERUSALEM PAPER' 1

A Working Paper Presented before the National Forces

First: The General Framework

It is necessary to move the state of the intifada from the stage of strikes, demonstrations, and confrontations with the occupation authority to a new phase of quasi-separation from the system of occupation, in preparation for the proclamation of independence of the Palestinian people living on Palestinian lands in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The continuation of the state of the intifada in the same manner tends to diminish the political and media returns resulting from various intifada actions. In addition, it generates a negative state of mind for the masses in the Palestinian streets. Extinguishing the intifada, however, creates a state of desperation and frustration which will have a negative impact on the totality of the resistance against the occupation, for extinguishing it after an inflammation in this manner and without a tangible yield will diminish the possibilities of its ignition in the future.

Escalation—that is, qualitative elevation of the intifada from its present state to a new one that tends to open new horizons on the road to establishing an independent Palestinian state—is what is required then. The phase we have in mind is the one in which the masses of the occupied land had created with their own will: the appropriate objective background for the proclamation of independence and the building of the state after they have prepared themselves materially for an international, diplomatic/political action leading to the recognition of the existence of the independent form of the Palestinian people’s will.

Second: The Overall Picture and the New State of the Intifada

The relationship of the Palestinian people to the occupation consists of a vast network. The majority of this network includes procedures, transactions, and regulations requiring tacit consent from the Palestinian side whereas the remaining part of it forms an Israeli, one-sided coercive relationship.

The difference [between tacit consent and the coercive relationship] is similar to when you receive instructions to appear before the intelligence bureau; you do so, and you are imprisoned and the army comes to your home and leads you forcefully to prison. Most of the network of relations between the [Palestinian] people and the occupation system is of the type requiring tacit consent on the part of the people under occupation.

Occupation is Palestinian employees working in the Civil Administration Bureau. Occupation is compliance with the authorities’ regulations dictating the closing of any print shop, press agency, or university. Occupation is paying taxes, and it is submitting an application for family reunification, travel, a professional licence, a travel licence, a car, or driving. Occupation is compliance with regulations dictating house arrest, requiring

1Tr. comm. Mohssen Esseesy. This document appears in Arabic, with numerous typographic errors, as Appendix 1 in Ziad Abu-Amr, The Intifada: Causes and Factors of Continuity, 2nd edn (East Jerusalem, PASSIA, 1994), pp. 46–52. The translation provided here corrects these errors.
registration with the Israeli Labour Bureau, or prohibiting spending the night beyond the Green Line. Finally, occupation is compliance with carrying Israeli identification cards.

The sum of these relations represents the overwhelming majority of what is called occupation. The remaining part is those coercive/compulsory procedures requiring only one party for implementation. Consequently, ending the occupation necessitates [the Palestinians’] own national will to break off all of the relationship’s ties to the occupation system, whose existence depends on our tacit consent, so that nothing remains of the occupation except the part only relying on coercion and violence by the other side. Stripping occupation of its embellishment, as previously mentioned, means several things. The most important of them is to place the burden on the international community to perform its role in compelling Israel to recognize our right to live freely in our independent state.

Third: Complications and Perils

Implementing an integrated programme for rebelling against the occupation and for breaking off all relations connecting the people to it means confronting a set of difficulties which we ought to point out and dangers of which we ought to make the masses aware.

One of the particular difficulties is the economic aspect of the relationship since the elevation of the intifada to a stage of disobedience necessarily means blocking the economic channels through which the people breathe. These channels will be cut off through a series of disobedient acts such as [the following]: cessation of working in the Civil Administration Bureau leading to the stoppage of income for employees; work strikes at the level of the merchants, labourers, or professionals; or depletion of consumer goods and the ability to acquire them. Perhaps the most important of these difficulties lies in the area of water and electricity, where refusal to pay the water bills to Mokort Water Company and electric bills to Regional Grid Company may lead to the cutting off of these services definitively. The possibility of exasperating these livelihood/economic difficulties reminds us, however, of the need to avoid self-suffocation throughout the process of elevating the intifada to its total disobedience state.

Hence, we ought to distinguish between administrative/political aspects and economic aspects. Consequently, we ought to keep the livelihood/economic channels open for the longest period possible. First, this means we do not permit commercial strikes or our protest acts to cause us suffocation (that is, ‘the need to keep stores open for limited hours daily and allowing work in partial forms’). Second, this means we postpone rebellions against paying water and electric bills, for example, until a later stage of disobedience. The presence of committees to observe the economic situation of the different sectors of the masses is necessary at all times. Their goal is to provide possible assistance to the public.

On the other hand, it is necessary to make the masses escalating the intifada aware of this route of dangers ensuing their actions. Cutting off the relationship through disobedient acts is tantamount to ‘burning bridges’, for every decision to perform a specific disobedient act will be equivalent to burning the bridge of returning to practise that procedure against which we will have rebelled.

Among the responsibilities of field leadership for the intifada are drawing the map of the intifada accurately and transmitting its form to the people. Thus, the people bear the burdens of the disobedient acts they were asked to perform and are aware of the difficulties and dangers resulting from them.
Fourth: The Escalation Program

The escalation programme must follow these steps:

- Calling for the constancy of strikes, demonstrations, marches, sit-ins, and protest conferences while taking into consideration allowing a minimum level of civil transactions—trade and labour—with the goal of avoiding self-suffocation. Also taking into consideration that the required obstruction is primarily one of transactions which connect the [Palestinian] people to the occupation system and not of hampering those which tie the people to each other. Hence it is necessary to distinguish between cessation of work in the Civil Administration Bureau and cessation of educational activity. The former is a relationship connecting the masses to the occupation while the latter is a one tying the people to each other.

- Calling for disobedient acts, according to a well-studied escalation programme: beginning with stopping compliance with occupation procedures and instructions, continuing with refusing to pay taxes and water and electricity bills, and ending with burning Israeli identification cards. Hence, it is first required to ignore the orders and instructions of the occupation authorities such as those dictating the closure of universities and establishments or pertaining to work or construction.

Based on these steady actions, the followings steps are required while taking into consideration a disobedience period lasting at least a few months:

1. Continuing partial strikes while calling on all sectors of society—except for hospitals, emergency crews, and national committees—to adhere to them.

2. Continuing demonstrations during times of strikes, focusing on confronting the Israeli military forces, and refraining from intimidating civilians unless circumstances necessitate or in self-defence.

3. Boycotting bureaux which connect authorities with the Palestinian people by the following:
   a. Resigning from all city and village councils while preserving the continuation of coordination between popular committees at various levels.
   b. Calling on all workers in the police offices to resign immediately and to join the national defence committees in various neighbourhoods.
   c. Calling on all workers of the Civil Administration Bureau, except the educational and health sectors, collectively to resign. This call includes the judicial and social affairs sectors as well.
   d. Calling on all workers in the Jerusalem Municipality—including departments of taxation and insurance as well as labour bureaux—to resign from their jobs.

4. Non-compliance with the instructions and orders issued from the Israeli authorities by the following:
   a. Refusing to comply with house-arrest orders.
b. Refusing to comply with the authorities' orders concerning appearing before the police.

c. Refusing to comply with authorities' orders to close establishments, including the educational establishments and universities—except when authorities use force. In this case, those who are affected must make a comeback and try to return to their establishments the following day and thereafter.

d. Refusing to comply with all instructions and guidelines of various Israeli departments, including appearing before courts and paying fines.

e. Refusing to be restricted by Israeli orders concerning professional licences, registration of associations, motor vehicle registration, and driving.

f. During later stages of disobedience, refusing to be restricted by press censorship and to follow the observers’ instructions, which will inevitably lead to the closure of existing press establishments and replacement by the underground press.

g. These disobedient acts will be augmented by burning all Israeli identification cards.

5. Blocking the economic channels tying the public to the Israeli system by the following:

a. Refraining from paying taxes in all forms, including income tax, value-added tax, and Arnona [municipal] tax in Jerusalem.

b. Boycotting all Israeli products for which an alternative may be found.

c. Calling on merchants to reduce their various imports from Israel as much as possible and boycotting the importation of non-essential goods such as electronics, appliances, refrigerators, televisions, etc.

d. Calling on workers to reduce their workdays within the Green Line zone as much as possible, particularly during the advanced stages of disobedience.

e. Refraining from paying all monetary obligations to various official and commercial Israeli establishments.

- In the final stages, refraining from paying water, telephone, and electricity bills while considering the possibility of these services being cut off and living without all or most of them for several weeks.

Fifth: General Guidelines

The success of the disobedience plan requires a coordinated, collective effort which, in turn, necessitates working on the formation of popular committees in various areas and neighbourhoods to spread awareness among the masses and to observe aspects of their livelihood. [The plan also requires] coordinating efforts to provide assistance to the needy and the disadvantaged.
One of the fundamentals for success of the disobedient *intifada* is that the masses hold the reins of power themselves and achieve the highest level of coordination and interaction between all national forces to mobilize and march with them towards liberation and independence of the PLO, the sole legal representative of the Palestinian people.

It is a revolution until victory.

Jerusalem, 8 February 1988
Workshop Programme

PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE AND NON-VIOLENT WAYS WORKSHOP

13 TO 15 OCTOBER 1983

Thursday, 13 October 1983

3:00 - 3:15 Introduction
3:15 - 4:00 What Is Non-Violent Resistance and Why for the Palestinians?
4:00 - 4:15 Coffee Break
4:15 - 5:00 Historical View of Non-Violence

Friday, 14 October 1983

3:00 - 3:15 Summary of Thursday’s Session
3:15 - 4:00 Palestinians and Non-Violence
4:00 - 4:15 Coffee Break
4:15 - 5:00 Group Discussions on Non-Violent Activities

Saturday, 15 October 1983

3:00 - 3:15 Summary of Friday’s Session
3:15 - 4:00 Panel Discussion
4:00 - 4:15 Coffee Break
4:15 - 5:00 Group Discussions on Creating Non-Violent organization
5:00 - 6:00 Social Hour

1This text is identical to the original, including its minor syntactical and grammatical errors.
Palestinian Resistance and Non-Violent Ways Workshop

13 to 15 October 1983

Introduction

Non-violent action in the Palestinian mind is vague and mysterious. The purpose of this workshop is to introduce nonviolence to the mass people and those ordinary individuals who can apply it as individuals in their personal day-to-day lives. This involves adapting non-violence at school, in their neighborhood, or in their group as a way of life and/or as a political method that can be available to them today. It is unfortunate that we do not have any ready list in Arabic or articles in Arabic on this subject; however, it is our aim to start and put the olive branch before the gun in our thoughts, actions, and writings.

Non-Violence

The Palestinian definition of non-violence is a social change-method for social liberation from the Israelis. We are oppressed, and we are under military control, and to us this is considered evil. A non-violent person resists evil to awaken the social conscience, both his and his brother’s.

Goals

Our goals are to achieve social justice and self-determination for the Palestinians. We must meet the Palestinian human needs—physical, psychological, and spiritual. We must also consider all people as human with these same needs, and help them fulfill them.

Methods for Achieving these Goals

1. Openness
2. Truthfulness
3. Self-suffering
4. Personal risk

Who Can Join this Citizens’ Action?

Anyone seeking justice through law and action who wants to liberate him/herself from the Israeli military rule and who wants to work now is welcome to join us in accepting non-violent goals and methods.

Basic Aspects of Non-Violent Philosophy

1. Non-violence is not a method for cowards.
2. It does not seek to defeat or humiliate the opponent.

3. Attack is directed against forms of evil. It is evil that the non-violent resister seeks to defeat; not the person who commits the evil.

4. Non-violence requires a willingness to accept suffering without striking back.

5. It avoids not only external physical violence, but also internal violence directed at the spirit.

6. It is based on the conviction that the universe is on the side of justice.

**Resolving Conflict in Non-Violent Ways**

1. Affirmation — We must affirm that each individual has good in him and has the ability to do good. If we feel good about ourselves, we will see good in others. If we feel confident about ourselves,
   a. we can do the things we want,
   b. we can learn new things,
   c. we can achieve,
   d. we can be free from the Israeli military—we chose to accept occupation.

2. Supporting Group — The supporting group fulfills an important role by participating in the following:
   a. negotiation and arbitration;
   b. preparation of the group for direct action;
   c. agitation, active propaganda;
   d. issuing ultimatums, i.e., if a shopkeeper abuses the consumer with high prices, consumer boycott;
   e. economic boycotts and forms of strike, i.e., picketing, educating the community, holding sit-ins, labor strikes;
   f. non-cooperation, i.e., non-payment of taxes, etc.;
   g. civil disobedience, i.e., disobeying unjust laws to change them and taking the consequences;
   h. parallel government, i.e., local government to carry out parallel functions.

3. Problem Solving —
   a. Be clear about your objectives. Talk, listen. Know what you want, how you want to accomplish it, and how to follow instructions.
   b. Do not be frightened. Your fear communicates itself directly to others. Talk slowly, breathe deeply, maintain eye contact.
   c. Do not be frightening. Someone who wants to commit an act of violence is likely to be more full of fear than the person who is being attacked.
   d. State the obvious with clarity, express your feelings, keep talking and let the opponent talk.
   e. Do not behave like a victim and avoid becoming hostile.
   f. Seek to befriend your opponents better.
4. Sharing Feelings —
   a. Break down the strong sense of loneliness and isolation.
   b. You can not learn if you are upset.
   c. Sharing is dealing with emotions. Find someone who can listen.
   d. Sharing ideas—information, experiences—will enrich other Palestinians’ lives.
   e. Create an atmosphere.

*Creating an Atmosphere for Non-Violent Action*

Non-violence is often associated with ‘being nice’ or somebody getting ‘walked on’.
*Non-violent* action is the way people can act on the problems and challenges around them
without *emotionally or physically* damaging anyone.

*Assumption[s]:*

1. People do not want to hurt each other. A government does not want to hurt its people.
   God does not want to hurt humanity.

2. People are capable of thinking and reacting creatively to conflict.

3. When people are overcome by anger, fear, or other difficult feelings, they may act
   violently.

4. When people have no self-worth, they may act violently.

*Problems that Face Us As Palestinians*

1. We would like one ‘quick shot in the arm’, i.e., resist one day or one hour, duty is done,
   go home and brag about it. The need is to do it daily, weekly, monthly, and
   constantly have alternatives ready for every action.

2. We have not anticipated the reaction of the Israelis in the past. We need to study their
   actions and use that knowledge to help us.

3. We need people to take initiative and step in for organizers when they are arrested.

4. In the past we have not used the press to inform others of what is happening. We need to
   use the international press, the Arab press, as well as the Israeli press.

5. Many of us are afraid of physical violence and financial punishment for our actions. We
   need to overcome these fears.

6. In the past, we have had little reward from non-violent resistance. If non-violent
   resistance is organized well, prepared well, and with masses of people, then it can be
   a viable tool.
The primary needs today are to master the force of non-violence through:

1. developing self-awareness
2. developing self-identity
3. conducting research and analysis
4. leading and organizing others
5. forming action groups
6. sponsoring a range of activities
7. taking direct action
8. showing self-resolution

1. Self-Awareness

Gandhi talked about Satyagraha (Truth Force) and said that Truth is non-violent action and self-suffering.

a. Truth is meeting people's needs

b. Non-violent action is the act of holding on to truth in public conflict. We make our concerns for human needs into public issues. The process is to give your opponents every opportunity to convince us that they are right. We must be open in our activities and have no secrets.

c. Self-suffering
   Not as 'martyrs', but not harming our opponents even if they harm us.

2. Self-Identity

Change yourself from intellectual and factual talk to social and political action. Start working for social change. As long as slaves accept to stay slaves, there will always be masters. Non-violent revolution begins in your mind.

3. Analysis

a. Define a specific concern.
b. Gather the facts, information.
c. Determine long-range goals.
d. Consider the alternatives.
e. Develop constructive programs.
4. Organizing Others/Forming Action Groups

a. Talk.
b. Form groups.
C. Assume leadership.
d. Recruit others.

Why is it important for Palestinians to understand non-violence?

Many Palestinians deal with injustice on a daily basis, either from the occupation or Arab nations. Either we think that we are sick and insane to accept this injustice or everybody is sick to inflict on us this injustice. So we need to make a change, effect change and want to take part in dealing with our self-determination and our own lives.

With non-violent action, Palestinians and (not the politician) but every Palestinian can participate in his own destiny if he so choses [sic]. By doing this we overcome the feeling of impotence.

What is non-violence?

Each Palestinian must find an individual answer to this question through his own self-experience. Non-violence is a way of life and a process that can bring change.

1. Renounce violence as a means.
2. Seek and speak the truth.
3. Seek constructive solutions.
4. Direct action toward the injustice.
5. Be prepared and willing to suffer.
6. Expect to be willing to suffer.
7. Give up resentment.

What are the steps in non-violent action?

1. Investigate.
2. Negotiate.
3. Educate.
4. Prepare.
5. Take action.
What are some of the obstacles in using non-violence?

1. Some Palestinians do not want to get involved and some gave up.
2. People are afraid of getting arrested.
3. We are submitting slowly to authority.
4. We are fighting each other.
5. Less and less people trust each other.
6. We are afraid to make changes or try to use other ways.
7. Some have heard of cases of non-violence which did not work.
Appendix 7 1983 Booklet on Nonviolent Resistance in the Occupied Territories

NONVIOLENCE IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

by Mubarak E. Awad

1. Historical Introduction

Nonviolence is not a new method nor an innovation in the struggle of the Palestinian people since Palestinians have used nonviolent methods since the beginning of the 1930's side by side with the armed struggle in their attempts to achieve their goals against Zionism. The six-month strike of 1936 and the Arab boycott of Israel are two of the most prominent examples of the use of nonviolence in the service of the Palestinian cause.

In the occupied territories today, the struggle and resistance against the occupation does not generally reflect violent methods. The school and commercial strikes, the petitions, protest telegrams, advertisements and condemnations in the daily papers, and the attempts to boycott Israeli goods are in fact manifestations of nonviolent struggle.

The Syrian citizens in the occupied Golan Heights are also conducting a powerful, successful, and concentrated campaign of nonviolent resistance to the attempts of Israel to impose Israeli law on the Syrian Golan Heights. This campaign appears to be well organized, developed, and intelligent in its methods, ideas, and execution of classical nonviolence tactics.

In this study I wish to discuss the issue of nonviolence as a serious and comprehensive strategy for resisting the Israeli occupation and the means and tactical methods that may be successfully used to implement this strategy, as well as the problems and obstacles which would face such a method in the occupied West Bank and Gaza.

2. The Present Conditions in the Occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip

A serious observer of the present conditions in the occupied territories will notice that the following important factors limit the nature and possibilities of the Palestinian struggle in those areas at the present time:

a. There are 1.3 million Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza. They are unarmed and not trained militarily and are not permitted to possess weapons as individuals or collectively in any effective manner. And at any rate they do not have the necessary lines of communication to continue receiving military supplies in sufficient quantities to be able to carry on continuous military operations against the occupiers for any length of time.

b. The Palestinian citizens suffer under the full authority of the power of the military government and its institutions, since the military government exercises (either directly through its military personnel and its civilian administration or indirectly through the Arab...
employees in the different departments of the military government and the civilian administration) full and complete control over all aspects of the lives of the Palestinian people. This authority is exercised through an organized system for issuing or denying permits or licenses which are necessary for almost every activity. This system and structure operates as part of a pre-determined policy aimed at controlling the population through 1) segmenting the society and separating the citizens from one another, 2) creating economic dependency and making citizens economically dependent on Israel, 3) changing or utilizing certain sectors of the population and turning them into collaborators. These factors are intended to render the citizens incapable of effective opposition to the occupation authorities.

c. The Palestinian citizens are at loss for leadership, since they are separated from their natural and accepted representatives on the outside. Similarly, their local leadership is under control and strict scrutiny by the authorities. Any attempts to form an organized local leadership like the guidance committee, and any attempts to unify their public activities have failed so far. Similarly, the mayors, who are the more prominent local leaders, face considerable obstacles since the occupation authorities have limited their activities and freedom of movement. The result of this is that the majority of the local population is effectively without a daily clear leadership, while their genuine leadership and their sole legitimate representative, the PLO, is on the outside.

d. There is an Israeli plan for changing the character of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and Judaizing. The authorities are presently actively pursuing this plan. The effect of this plan is that they impose themselves daily on the land, waters, institutions, and rights of the Palestinian people. In executing these plans, a comprehensive system has been set up for the Jewish settlements, and with every passing day this policy of Judaization is being implemented. The military government and the Jewish extremists and the Israeli government itself are proceeding relentlessly with this plan and very little is being done to stop, delay, or hamper it.

e. The methods used to implement this plan are varied, and they rarely depend on brute force. Most of the methods used are built on exercising the Israeli authority through slow, subtle, well-planned methods which are irresistible, because they are built on the absolute authority of the military government and the legislation that it creates and economic and other pressures as well as the existing departments of the established order, much more than they are built on power of weapons and the army (but the army continues to lie constantly at the back of this authority and interferes only in order to 'maintain the peace' when the departments and systems of the occupation are facing a challenge). In this method the plan of Judaization is being implemented under the very noses of the Palestinians who feel utterly impotent to resist or delay these plans despite their awareness of it and feeling of the danger it poses for them.

f. There are no immediate prospects for the liberation of the occupied territories. The hope that salvation may come from the outside is very weak. The military branches of the PLO are presently incapable of liberating the occupied territories by force and the Arab governments appear presently unable or uninterested in entering into a broad military confrontation with Israel aimed at liberating the military areas by force.

g. Under these conditions, any attempt to halt or delay or obstruct the plan of Judaization must come from those Palestinians presently living in the occupied territory.

3. The Thesis of the Study
The thesis that is proposed in this study is that for the Palestinians who are living in the West Bank and Gaza during this particular time period, the most effective method of struggling is the strategy of nonviolence. This does not effect the methods open to Palestinians on the outside, neither does it constitute a rejection of the concept of armed struggle. Neither does it negate the possibility that the struggle on the inside may turn into an armed struggle at a later stage. Simply put, the thesis is that during this particular historical period and with regard to this particular sector only (the 1.3 million Palestinians living under the Israeli occupation), nonviolence is the most effective method for waging the struggle and the only method available to them to obstruct the policy of Judaization referred to above. I will attempt to show that this struggle:

a. utilizes the largest possible amount of the potential and resources of Palestinians presently on the inside.

b. offers all sectors of the Palestinian society an opportunity to actively engage in the struggle, instead of observing it passively, by listening to the radio for example.

c. neutralizes to a large degree the destructive power of the Israeli war machine.

d. enlists in the service of the cause, or at least neutralizes large and important sectors of the Israeli society.

e. focuses and increases any effect that public international opinion may have.

f. reveals the racist and expansionist features of the Zionist movement and denies it the justification built on its purported ‘security’.

g. removes the irrational fear of ‘Arab violence’, which presently acts like a glue which cements Israeli society together. By removing this fear, it contributes to the disintegration of Israeli society.

h. helps isolate Israel politically and morally.

4. The Assumptions

The above thesis is based on the following assumptions:

a. The nonviolent struggle is a full and serious struggle and is nothing short of a real war. The enemy in this battle is very serious and ferocious. There is no assurance and we cannot expect that he will himself be nonviolent. On the contrary, there are great sacrifices that are expected in the nonviolent struggle. Martyrs and wounded will fall and Palestinians will suffer financial losses, as well as losses to their interests, jobs, and possessions. A nonviolent struggle is a real war and is not an easy alternative.

b. Nonviolent struggle is not a negative or passive method. It is an active affirmative operation. It is a form of mobile warfare. It will require the enlistment of all resources and capabilities. It requires special training and a high degree of organization and discipline. It is likely that secrecy must be maintained in planning, organizing, and coordinating the different operations and campaigns.

c. Most nonviolent activities will be illegal according to the laws and military orders.
presently imposed on the population.

d. The Israeli soldier is an ordinary human being. He is not a frightening beast, nor an animal devoid of conscience and feeling. He has a conscience and an understanding of right and wrong to which it is possible to appeal. Similarly, he can be demoralized because he constantly needs a reasonable justification for his activities. On the other hand, he is not an angel either. He has the potential for evil and oppression like every other person. He is often an intolerant racist and shares with his government most of its evil assumptions and principles.

e. The Israeli government is also sensitive to public opinion, both local and international. This is partially due to the fact that it constantly needs international support and aid, and also partially because of the image it constantly wishes to project. At the same time, this sensitivity is limited because the Israeli government is willing to carry out its plans and oppression regardless of the views of the international community. Nonetheless Israel does not possess the internal resources which will enable it to bear international isolation for a long time, as is the case with the racist government of South Africa, for example.

f. Suffering and pain can be useful sometimes. At a minimum they unify the Palestinians in resisting oppression. They also achieve for the Palestinians moral superiority over the occupiers and put into motion historical factors which insure the survival of the Palestinian people and their eventual victory. The Palestinian revolution was built on the blood of the martyrs and the suffering of our people. When a nonviolent person accepts this suffering voluntarily in defence of his principles instead of having this suffering imposed upon him involuntarily, he will be increasing and accentuating these benefits.

g. There is no assurance that a nonviolent struggle will be victorious any more than there is an assurance that the armed struggle will achieve its end.

h. Victory and success in a nonviolent struggle can not [sic] be measured by early observable, external, objective criteria. Often the nonviolent struggle achieves its goals and effect upon the hearts and minds of the Israeli soldiers, for example. Such an effect cannot be easily measured, although it often manifests itself by a higher ratio of Israeli emigration, by a loss of fighting spirit for the Israeli soldier, by their complaints and protests against the actions of the Israeli government, and by other such results which are difficult to quantify with objective criteria. Similarly, the increasing moral and political isolation of Israel abroad is difficult to measure by objective criteria, but it is a real and important phenomenon with definite consequences.

5. The Political Positions of the Nonviolent Movement

The strategy of nonviolence does not impose or indicate a particular political position. It is not necessary that such a position be politically moderate. For example, there is nothing requiring the nonviolent movement to prefer a solution based on a two-state solution to a secular democratic state on all the Palestinian homeland. Nonetheless, all participants in the nonviolent struggle must share a minimum of common political beliefs and must stay within the framework of the consensus of the Palestinian people and must work towards the goal of self-determination for the Palestinian people, the legitimacy and singleness of the representation of the Palestinian people through the PLO, the popular national positions towards settlement, land expropriation, control over land and water resources, and the unified Palestinian goal of the return of the refugees to their homeland.
6. Points of Contact

One of the most important aims of any nonviolent movement is to find points of contact between the citizens and authorities which highlight the evil and oppression on the one hand, and which lead to a useful and meaningful confrontation on the other hand. The importance of finding such points of contact becomes clear when we observe two common phenomena:

a. The constant attempts of the authorities to distance themselves from the citizens and to interpose Arab intermediaries or ‘civilian employees’ whenever they carry out their most evil practices, economic or otherwise. This is coupled with the policy of calling in the army, as another face of the occupation, which only acts ‘to preserve security’ when the population rejects these practices.

b. The instinctive need of demonstrators to draw the Israeli army into a confrontation with them. The method most commonly used presently is to burn tyres, throw stones, set up stone roadblocks. Sometimes, protestors even whistle at soldiers to draw them into a confrontation. In some cases, demonstrators have called up the army by telephone. Some Israeli politicians (such as Moshe Dayan) realized the wisdom of reducing these confrontations by minimizing the military presence, particularly in the cities. Such a wise policy (from their point of view) does in fact reduce the points of contact and confrontation, without improving the position of the Palestinians. Therefore it is necessary for any nonviolent movement to seek points of contact and to select among them the useful points which can lead to fruitful and successful confrontations.

7. Methods for Nonviolent Resistance

The longest list of methods that have been used in nonviolent resistance is found in Gene Sharp’s book The Politics of Nonviolent Action. [In the Arabic version of this paper, a list of 121 of these methods was included as an appendix.] I will mention here a few of these methods as they have been used or as they may be used in the occupied territories.

a. Demonstrations

This is the most commonly used method in the occupied territories up until now. The aim of demonstrating is usually to educate, express positions, indicate solidarity and support, protest, and make demands. It is in other words a form of expressing a point of view. Therefore the most successful demonstration is one where the organizers have asked and answered in advance the following queries: What is the message that we wish to express? Who is our target audience that we wish to reach with our demonstration? The international press? Local Palestinians? The military government? The Israeli public? It may be necessary for us to try to reach the common Israeli soldier with our message as well. It goes without saying that we must attempt to understand the psychology of the target audience and to use this understanding in formulating the content and method of the demonstration.

In using the method of demonstration, creativity and innovation are important. The gathering of a large number of people and making marches and raising the Palestinian flag is an excellent thing, but after 16 years of occupation we need new creative ideas for demonstrating. Some ideas can be protest prayers, fasts, silent demonstrations, using powerful symbols such as yellow armbands (which the Nazis had forced the Jews to wear), concentration camp costumes, commemoration services for martyrs, guerrilla theatre, as well as affirmative and constructive activities such as giving gifts to commemorate national
occasions, giving prizes to honour fallen martyrs and the like. One of the successful demonstrations was the clean-up campaign which the youth of al-Bireh and Ramallah undertook in protest to the dismissal of the mayors and the closure of the municipalities. A demonstration can be creative, strange, or even humorous, but it succeeds in delivering its message. An example of this is the activity of blowing whistles and car-horns in Ramallah to protest the closure of Bir Zeit University. That method of demonstration frustrated the Israeli army in Ramallah until it stopped later. It is interesting to note that the authorities pursued the demonstrators and the whistlers with the same vigour that they use to pursue stone-throwers, with the exception that in this case they were denied the explanations and the justifications which soldiers used in the past to pursue stone-throwers and beat them and humiliate them.

Needless to say that since delivering a message is one of the major aims of demonstrations, proper contacts with the press, tact, and a knowledge of languages are very important to the organizers of demonstrations.

b. Obstruction

The goals of the occupation authorities are generally at the opposite end from the interests of the population. This is very clear in the activities of building settlements, opening roads, and land confiscations. These operations, however, can be obstructed and effectively prevented. It has happened before that Palestinians have thrown their bodies before bulldozers in order to prevent them from carrying out their functions. The reader may consider this a foolhardy activity, but this method has in fact accomplished something in the past and may indeed be extremely successful. Palestinians on the inside can attempt to block the roads, prevent communications, cut electricity, telephone, and water lines, prevent the movement of equipment, and in other ways obstruct the tools of the government in carrying out its unjust and evil plans. If this obstruction occurs violently (such as by throwing stones or closing the road with a roadblock without staying in its vicinity), the reaction of the authorities will also be violent and the authorities will find in the population’s violence a ready excuse to proceed with its plans and to redouble its efforts. Soldiers will shoot, claiming self-defence. New forces will be called in under the pretence of ‘protecting’ the innocent civilian plans from troublemakers and attackers and such other justifications. However, if the obstruction occurs in a nonviolent fashion, and the obstructors openly declare that they do not wish to injure anyone, but that they are merely obstructing a plan which injures them and their interests, then repression will also follow and soldiers will shoot in this case as well. But the situation will be entirely different. Palestinians in this case will be accepting the suffering, the sacrifices, and even the martyrdom as a price they are as a sign of their love for that land and their resistance to injustice and oppression. This message will also be very clear to the Israelis: ‘This people loves its land and is willing to sacrifice and die in martyrdom for it’. They can not in such a case accuse anyone of anti-Semitism or hatred for Jews. Neither will they be able to use the excuse of ‘terrorism’ or to claim that the disturbances are the creation of a small, hateful minority of troublemakers, cowards, and provocateurs who inflame the rest of the population. All these myths will be revealed for the lies that they are. Instead this fedayii operation (within the true meaning of ‘a man of sacrifice’), these self-sacrifices will achieve their maximum effect. Its influence will not only fall on the public opinion, but will also touch concerned Israelis and Palestinians. The focus will center around the immediate issue (the particular parcel of land being confiscated, the specific settlement which is being built, the family which is being deprived of its house, the building which is being destroyed . . . ) instead of having the discussion be lost in the complexities of seeking a solution for the entire problem.
At a minimum, the Palestinians will in this fashion be able to record in an unequivocal manner their steady position (for which position they are willing to sacrifice and suffer consequences) towards the particular action which they are trying to obstruct.

c. Refusal to Cooperate

This method is similar to the method of obstruction described above, but it is built on the fact that Israel cannot govern the West Bank and the Gaza Strip without the agreement, approval, and cooperation of the subject people. This approval and cooperation is usually obtained by force, threats, violence, and punishments (individual and collective). Yet in spite of all this, the oppressed people always have the option of rejecting the oppression and refusing to cooperate with it if they are willing to pay the price.

Syrians in the Golan Heights have taken such a decision. They have clearly indicated that their identity is an internal matter and no amount of external force or persecution can force them to be anything other than what they are—an occupied Syrian people. In the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, refusal to cooperate can take several forms, each with its own potential and its own problems. I will list them here briefly without entering into the details. These are a sample of the possibilities and are not comprehensive. Please bear in mind that conditions may not be presently suitable for carrying out some or all of them and that each of them requires thorough study and planning before it is attempted.

1) Refusal to work in building Israeli settlements or opening roads or any of the other Judaization construction projects.

2) Refusal to work in Israeli factories.

3) Refusal to fill out any forms, give any information, or give any cooperation to the authorities (the police or the army).

4) Refusal to carry or produce identity cards.

5) Refusal to pay fines, thereby filling the already overcrowded gaols and disrupting the entire judicial and ‘security’ apparatus.

6) Refusal to submit requests for the many licences and permits which are required under different laws or military orders.

7) Refusal to appear when summoned, to the offices of the police, the civilian administration, or the military government.

8) Refusal to cooperate with or contact the officers employees of the military government or the civilian administration that operate in the fields of health, education, agriculture, or others.

9) Refusal to sign or fill out any forms or documents that are printed or written in Hebrew.

10) Refusal to participate in any celebrations or activities initiated by the members of the military government, or the civilian administration, or known collaborators, or in which activities such people participate.
11) Refusal to work as an employee of the structures of the military government or the civilian administration.

12) Refusal to pay income taxes.

13) Refusal to pay the value added tax or any other tax.

14) Refusal to abide by house arrest orders or restrictions on travel or orders declaring an area to be a closed area, or curfew orders.

15) Collective social boycott to traitors and collaborators.

All the examples mentioned above are activities that are within our own power to execute. They are, in the first place negative activities that are based on refusal or rejection. It is elementary that Palestinians can only carry out such activities selectively, whereby they decide to carry out one or several of these activities for a limited or permanent period based on the objective conditions prevailing at each particular stage. The existence of broad mass support for any activity reduces the dangers and sacrifices that any one individual would have to make in order for that activity to succeed. This method of resistance, at a minimum, forces the authorities to utilize a very large number of employees and soldiers to rule the occupied territories. Similarly, this refusal to cooperate overburdens the governing system and may even cause it to be totally paralysed.

It is also obvious that some of the activities listed above are impractical or unwise at the present stage and must await a later stage in the struggle.

d. Harassment

This method is different from the methods of obstruction or refusal to cooperate in that it concentrates on the psychological aspects of harassing the Israelis, their employees and collaborators during their carrying out of their duties in the occupation system.

Since this method is a form of psychological warfare, it must be exercised after a thorough understanding of the Israeli mentality and after carefully selecting the suitable tactics at each stage. Persistence is a basic element in the method of harassment. Hot/cold tactics may be utilized. This means a quick switching between protest and denunciation on the one hand and appeals and affirmation of good will on the other hand. It is possible under this method to use the telephone, letters, whistling, calling, provocation (but avoid curses and unjustified humiliations), slogans, hand gestures, body motions, and the like. The idea here is never to allow the existence of any quiet or calm that may be interpreted as an acceptance of the prevailing situation. The person being harassed must be constantly suffering from and demonstrating [sic] against. It is possible that this harassment may increase until it reaches the level of obstruction, or negatively, until it reaches the level of non-cooperation. However, the distinctive feature of this method is that it is constantly active, affirmative, always taking the initiative, and aimed against the morale and the psychology and the mentality of the oppressor.

e. Boycotts

One of the major themes of the occupation is the subjugation of the economy of the West Bank and Gaza to the Israeli economy and these occupied areas have become a large consumer market for Israeli goods and services. During the past sixteen years Israeli goods
have flooded the Arab markets and have even taken the place of the traditional means of production and consumption. Tnuva dairy goods, for example, are found everywhere, and the governmental bus company, Egged, runs its buses on several Arab lines. 'Elite' chocolates, Israeli cigarettes, soft drinks, soaps, and many other goods are commonly found in Arab homes and markets. The initial call for a boycott of all Israeli goods and services which was made at the beginning of the occupation was unorganized and impractical. Today, however, it is possible to boycott one particular product or company, and to link that boycott to a single goal or demand which is reasonable. Such a limited boycott will be very effective and can accomplish intermediary gains upon which it is possible to build and proceed to further gains.

Resources must also be aimed at creating alternatives to the Israeli goods, and towards a return to natural foods in home consumption, for example. At any rate, natural foods are tastier and more beneficial, from the nutritional point of view, than the pre-packaged and canned products of Tnuva.

The importance of boycotting Israeli goods and services is well known. What is required is organizing limited partial boycotts against some of these goods and linking them to specific demands, and creating reasonable alternatives for these products and improving the Arabic goods and services (for example, making the buses run on time) in order for the boycott to succeed.

Boycotts are a very effective method, since there is no law and there can be no law which forces Palestinians to buy or use Israeli goods and services, particularly if the Palestinians are willing to sacrifice by giving up such goods totally (assuming there are no alternatives). It is important to note here that the residents of the Golan Heights did in fact boycott all Israeli goods and foods which they found it possible to do without, and have returned to reliance on local goods, plants, herbs, and other popular foods.

f. Strikes

Strikes are a form of refusal to cooperate (see above) which have been tried by the Palestinians for a long time. This method must be improved, particularly with respect to the period and length of the strike, when and how it is utilized, and how it can be used against achievable intermediary goals. Therefore, declaring an open strike, calling for 'the end of the occupation', for example, is a grievous error.

g. Support and Solidarity

Acts of support and solidarity are an important method to accomplish the following:

1) To demonstrate and deepen the unity and cooperation among Palestinians.

2) To reduce the effect of Israeli oppression and penalties by distributing it to a large number of people.

3) To escalate the confrontation with the authorities and create 'points of contact' (see page five above) in a manner that helps the Palestinian struggle.

The Israeli policy of punishments and suppression is built on the principle of isolating anyone who opposes the laws or policies of Israel, and labelling such individual as 'troubblemaker' or 'inciting element', then punishing him severely as a 'lesson' to the others
so that they will not oppose the occupation. Therefore, all activities of solidarity and support for such an individual eliminate the effect and defeats the aims of this policy. Some of the many, many examples of this method are:

1) The activities of the society in rebuilding five homes in Beit Sahur which were destroyed with the excuse that the owners' children had thrown rocks at an Israeli army vehicle.

2) When an Israeli court attempted to try six Syrian Druze in the Golan Heights for failure to possess and produce an identity card, several thousand Druze congregated outside the court to hand themselves in, insisting that they were all guilty of the same 'crime' since they also refused to carry Israeli identity cards.

It is clear that in both these cases and in the many other examples of support and solidarity, that the authorities have been prevented from achieving their aims from the punishment, which, on the contrary, had created a strong sense of solidarity and a deeper unity and a more stubborn rejection of the Israeli practices.

h. Alternative Institutions

Perhaps one of the most important methods of nonviolent resistance to the occupation is the creation and building of alternative institutions and methods to replace the present unjust institutions of the occupation. This occurs in three separate ways.

1) The building of an entire infrastructure independently of Israel (universities, factories, institutions, libraries, hospitals, schools, etc.). (This infrastructure becomes the necessary nucleus for the coming Palestinian state.) The creation of these institutions obstructs the process of annexation and Judaization and makes possible a political solution built upon the Israeli withdrawal and the creation of an independent Palestinian state. It is also, in the long run, the best guarantee for the continued steadfastness and survival of Palestinian nationalism and the Palestinian people upon its land.

2) The process of creating alternative social institutions or specific methods of solving problems or offering particular services regarding which the population must presently turn to Israeli-run institutions or for which permits and licenses issued by the military authorities are necessary. An example of this is the corrupt system of courts to which Palestinians must turn to solve their problems. Here it may be possible to create an alternative by strengthening and developing the process of arbitration or traditional law (after removing the backward aspects of that system). Similarly, it is possible to create alternatives for the health insurance (Kopat Holim) and others.

3) Making plans and enlisting resources and setting up committees to provide the needs of the population in case individual or collective punishments are imposed during the struggle. An example of this is making plans to care for the needy families of detainees. Also creating alternative curricula and programs for studying in case schools and universities are closed, making arrangements to meet in homes for study, storing foodstuffs, water, fuel, and candles to be used during prolonged curfews and economic siege and when the electric current is cut off; arranging for alternative methods of contacting the foreign press and outside world, receiving and transmitting news, in the eventuality that a certain area is declared to be a closed area; setting up popular committees to do the functions of the municipalities when they are closed or when they are turned over to Israeli officers or collaborators, in order that the population will continue to receive the necessary services
during that period from the alternative institutions.

It is important to note here that new methods of channelling funds (other than the bridges and the Joint Committee) must be found and better utilization of local resources must be made to fund projects in case the authorities prohibit or delay the entry of monies from the outside.

In pursuing this method, all attempts must be made to utilize existing loopholes and legal opportunities in creating new institutions and in utilizing existing licensed institutions and developing them, as well as creation of unofficial institutes and unregistered bodies, such as ad hoc popular committees which meet to coordinate, but then proceed to act separately without a recognized legal structure. The opportunity of Arabs in East Jerusalem to set up societies or companies under the more liberal Israeli law could be utilized. Such bodies can then proceed to operate in the West Bank and Gaza if they were ‘Israeli’ bodies.

i. Civil Disobedience

Civil disobedience usually comes at a much later and developed point in the nonviolence struggle. It involves a conscious and deliberate commission of illegal acts and violation of known military orders and laws. This form of direct action must be carefully contemplated. A nonviolent person utilizing this method must be willing to take the full legal consequences of his actions. This could be done by prominent individuals deliberately accepting punishment as a form of demonstration to highlight the injustice of the law in question, or it could be a mass movement aimed at paralysing the particular law and maybe eliminating it by showing that it cannot work without the consent of the population.

In embarking upon civil disobedience, the planners must anticipate different responses by the authorities, ranging from ignoring the protest, to selective enforcement against leaders or prominent individuals, down to massive and brutal repression. During civil disobedience, nationalist leaders may choose to declare as one of their goals the filling up of all the gaols. This would be relatively simple to achieve, since gaols are already crowded. If such a declaration is made, and actively pursued, it could prove to be extremely effective. It will first rob the gaols of their effectiveness in frightening the population and in ensuring compliance, since every additional person gaolod brings the leaders one step closer towards achieving their goals. Secondly, pursuance of this goal will strengthen solidarity among the Palestinians and will make gaol, for those who are gaolod, a symbol of victory and success, rather than a feared punishment. Thirdly, it is evident that if there is mass support for the call, the law in question can be easily rendered ineffective since the Israeli authorities cannot afford to use up all the gaol space simply to enforce just one military order or law.

One aspect of nonviolence that is worth emphasizing in this respect is that the Palestinians would be voluntarily accepting and rejoicing in the persecution and suffering inflicted on them. To bravely and steadfastly accept persecution for one’s belief brings one very close to the power of nonviolence. It neutralizes the effectiveness of the instruments of repression and improves the internal steadfastness and power of the resister. The greatest enemy to the people and the most powerful weapon in the hands of the authorities is fear. A Palestinian who can liberate himself from fear and who will boldly accept suffering and persecution without fear or bitterness or striking back has managed to achieve the greatest victory of all. He has conquered himself, and all the rest will be much easier to accomplish.
8. Conclusion

It is the thesis of this paper that nonviolence is the most effective method of resisting the Israeli occupation in the West Bank and Gaza today. The methods, tactics, and strategy of classical nonviolence must of course be modified to meet the present circumstances, but they have a lot of applicability in this situation. Moreover, these methods can be successfully utilized, at least in part, by individuals who are not necessarily committed to nonviolence and who may choose at a different stage to engage in armed struggle. In the meanwhile, nonviolent struggle continues to offer Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza and [sic] excellent opportunity for struggling toward liberation.
Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence
25 January 1986

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS
IN THE TREE PLANTING ACTION AT QATANNA

The action of planting olive trees in the Qatanna fields from which olive trees had been uprooted is a nonviolent action that is intended to be a constructive action for peace. This means that it is done in a special spirit and to ensure that, the following principles must be adhered to by all participants, regardless of their views:

1. Under no circumstances may a participant throw rocks or use violence or attempt to defend him/herself through violent means, no matter what the provocation from the soldiers and/or any others.

2. No action that is intended to provoke or irritate the authorities may be undertaken. The participants will treat any soldiers or authorities who may try to obstruct us with respect and dignity and will strive to preserve a calm atmosphere at all times.

3. Only the preselected spokespersons may address the authorities or the press. This is important so that our views, as well as our intentions may not be misinterpreted or misunderstood.

4. All planting activity must be done at the direction and undertaken at the instruction of the land owner of the particular plot in question. There shall be no paternalism allowed or permitted. We are there in solidarity with these land owners and acting in their service as their guests and helpers.

5. Every attempt will be made to have the activity [be] a joint activity between the Israeli and Palestinian participants. For this reason individuals who come to the site in groups must be willing to split up so that they will share the work with land owners and the villagers in a true spirit of joint cooperation.

6. This is not a political demonstration nor a political rally. Full respect for the views of others must be maintained at all times. Our actions will speak much louder than our words.

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1This text is identical to the original in the PCSN records, including minor errors.
MESSAGE TO SHAMIR ON MUBARAK AWAD

1. **ENTIRE TEXT**

2. PLEASE DELIVER THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY TO PRIME MINISTER SHAMIR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE BUT BEFORE ANY ACTION CAN BE TAKEN TO DEPORT MUBARAK AWAD, WHICH WE NOW HEAR IS PLANNED FOR MONDAY, MAY 14.

3. BEGIN MESSAGE:
   - DEAR YITZHAK,
   
   - AS A CLOSE FRIEND, I URGE YOU TO RESCIND THE ORDER TO DEPORT MUBARAK AWAD AND TO RELEASE HIM FROM INCARCERATION. HIS DEPORTATION WILL NOT SERVE OUR MUTUAL INTERESTS IN RESTORING CALM IN THE AREA AND IN FOSTERING AN ATMOSPHERE OF RECONCILIATION.
   
   - BEST REGARDS AS ALWAYS,
   
   SINCERELY YOURS,
GEORGE

4. THERE WILL BE NO SIGNED ORIGINAL YY
TO: The Secretary  
FROM: NEA - Richard W. Murphy  
SUBJECT: Demarche to Prime Minister Shamir on Mubarak Awad

ISSUE FOR DECISION

Whether to send the attached message to Prime Minister Shamir asking the GOI to refrain from deporting Mubarak Awad.

ESSENTIAL FACTORS

Prime Minister Shamir has ordered the deportation of Mubarak Awad. He is a Palestinian - American who advocates non-violent resistance to the occupation. His wife is an American and the director of the Friends School in the West Bank.

Awad is a vocal advocate of non-violent Palestinian resistance to the Israeli occupation. Last November, we intervened to prevent the GOI from deporting him but the GOI said it retained the right to deport him if it wished. The GOI also told us that if Awad left voluntarily he would not be permitted to return. Awad's situation has attracted wide public attention in the United States and, we understand, will be the subject of the "Nightline" broadcast on May 6. We understand that the GOI plans to deport him Monday morning, May 9.
Awad's deportation will cause a loud public outcry in the U.S. We will also be subjected to criticism for not acting on behalf of an American citizen and advocate of non-violent solutions to the Palestinian - Israeli dispute.

The attached draft message asks Shamir not to deport Awad on the basis that it will counterproductive to both Israeli and U.S. interests.

RECOMMENDATION

That you approve the attached cable instructing Tom Pickering to pass the message contained therein to Shamir.

MAY - 9 1988

Two attachments:
1) Draft cable
2) Cable from Tel Aviv
TO: [Name of person or entity]

SUBJECT: Israeli Court Issue Decision

RE: Appeal Order

I am writing to update you on the latest developments in the case involving [Name of individual]. The Israeli Court has issued a decision in this appeal case.

The Court's decision is expected to address the following points:

1. The Court's verdict on the appeal of the deportation order against [Name of individual].

2. The Court's stance on the appeal of [Name of individual].

3. The implications of this decision for future cases.

I have attached the full text of the Court's decision for your review. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or need further clarification.

Best regards,

[Your Name]

[Your Position]

[Your Contact Information]
Department of State

END TEXT.

BEGIN TEXT OF ATTACHMENT 3:

PRESS GUIDANCE FOR USE IF THE COURT OVERTURNS THE
DEPORTATION ORDER

— We are pleased that the court ruled in Mr. Awad’s
favor. We hope no further action will be taken to
attempt to restrict his ability to reside in Jerusalem or
the West Bank, or to travel to and from the area as he
wishes.

END TEXT.

BEGIN TEXT OF ATTACHMENT 4:

DEMAND TO PRIME MINISTER SHAMIR IF THE COURT OVERTURNS
THE DEPORTATION ORDER AGAINST MAHMAH AWAD OR IF THE
DECISION IS ANNUAL

O As I have said in the past, I strongly oppose Awad’s
deposition and any restrictions on his freedom of
movement. His deposition will not serve our mutual
interests in encouraging moderate Palestinians to engage
in a dialogue for reconciliation.

O On the contrary, it will strengthen radical elements
who believe that violence will further Palestinian aims,
and will damage Israel’s image among her supporters.

O Many members of Congress and the American public will
not accept that Awad’s deposition is necessary or
justifiable.

O The court’s decision to reject Awad’s appeal
motivates me, I urge you to send a strong positive
signal of Israel’s willingness to listen to moderate
Palestinians by exercising your authority and refraining
from deporting him.

END TEXT.

BEGIN TEXT OF ATTACHMENT 5:

DEMAND TO SHAMIR IF THE COURT OVERTURNS THE DEPORTATION
ORDER AGAINST AWAD

O I was pleased to learn that the court has overturned
Mahama Awad’s deportation order. We must encourage
moderate individuals, such as Awad, to step forward and
participate in a dialogue for reconciliation between
Israelis and Palestinians. Otherwise, the extremists
will predominate and progress toward peace will be
impossible.

O I hope no action will be taken against Awad to
restrict his freedom to reside in Jerusalem or the West
Bank, or to travel freely to and from the area as he
wishes.

END TEXT. NOT CORRECT

ALERT COPY

UNCLASSIFIED

553
23 May 1988

Statement Issued by the Unified National Leadership Command of the
Uprising in the Occupied Territories

Civil Disobedience

To our great people,

Your glorious uprising is continuing with its fruitful results and is encouraging our people toward more sacrifices. The martyrs, wounded, detainees and deportees have forwarded our goal toward ending the occupation and establishing our national independence.

There is no doubt that civil disobedience will be considered an advanced stage of the uprising and its most effective means to weaken the occupation and to quicken the way toward establishing our people’s rights to return to self-determination and to the establishment of our independent state led by the PLO, our sole and legitimate representative.

Your glorious uprising continues to escalate despite the difficulties and obstacles that have risen in carrying out some of the slogans raised by the uprising. But there is unanimous national and public opinion not to retract. For backing down will mean our destruction which nobody will accept. There is also a popular and national consensus that the uprising is proceeding its steps towards full civil disobedience in all the occupied territories. In order for us to avoid the pitfalls and obstacles we have to know what is civil disobedience, what are its goals and its instruments.

Civil disobedience means the full separation from the occupation and all its affiliations. It also means rejecting to obey any of the occupation’s laws or directives. This means that we need to challenge these laws and to strengthen the national popular administration that is independent from the occupiers through the following:

1. Boycott all kinds of dealings with the occupation authorities, ie. the military courts, civil administration departments, summonses, appointed village councils and municipalities.
2. Replace the occupation’s services (police, health, social services, education ...) with popular authority that would run needed services.
3. Boycott Israeli products and markets and depend on national products and the national popular economy.
4. Abstain from paying taxes and fines to the occupation authorities.
5. Boycott jobs in Zionist establishments and projects.
6. Burn all Israel ID cards during a latter more developed stage of the civil disobedience.
7. The civil disobedience campaign should be followed in every accelerating stage with a unique struggle of the people from all sectors.

Participating in civil disobedience will not be an easy process and our people will have to go through this process in all its stages with full determination and willingness to

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1This text is identical to the original English translation in the PASSIA archives, including its syntactical and grammatical errors, although the spelling has been standardized.
make grave sacrifices of all kinds of luxury items and to make do with the basic necessities. The present easy life that our people are enjoying will have to be replaced by a simple life. Such a life will be needed for two reasons: first because a major part of income will be cut as a result of not working in Zionist industries or even local factories. Secondly, because the authorities might take certain steps as punishment or in reaction to the civil disobedience campaign. This might mean cutting off supplies of fuel, electricity and basic kinds of fuel like wood or on wells and natural springs for water. The authorities will also widen the scope of oppression using the tradition occupation means.

The responsibility of our people and their national groupings is to put on the top of their list of priorities the need to establish the basic needs to allow the civil disobedience campaign to succeed. This will mean preparing the main instruments of civil disobedience which are:

1. Passing around the spirit of cooperation, sacrifice and equality among people. This feeling will increase with the willingness to give and to clash with the occupiers and to continue to challenge them regardless of the sacrifices. Also our people need to get used to conserve in spending, to save basic products only like rice, flour, children's milk, sugar, vitamins, kerosine, wheat and all kinds of seeds.

Continuation of improving the independent national and popular economies for the service of the uprising. This can be done by domestic economy, and productive neighbourhood cooperatives. In this regard there is importance in establishing and strengthening the local committees and the specialized sub committees. These committees are the instrument of steadfastness for civil disobedience and the national instruments which are independent from the occupation. Its job is to make sure that the activities of the uprising and of the civil disobedience are successful and to carry the following responsibilities:

a. Service related duties: in other words whatever is needed for daily life. This will be done by establishing the following:

1. Guard and security committees to protect the people and their properties.
2. Popular education committees to compensate for our students as a result of the occupiers closing our schools.
3. Health committees to meet the health needs of the local neighbourhood and to deal with emergencies. This will require the establishment of advanced clinics - nearly a hospital - in every quarter.
4. Food supplies committees to supervise the stockpiling of needy items and its distribution to the needy in time of need.
5. Agricultural committees to care for plantations, to advise the people on the best way of getting good products.
6. Family sponsorship committees.
7. Media and conscious raising committees — they have to work on defeating rumours created by the occupiers.

b. Support services: this includes the supervision of warehouses that have basic food supplies, filling wells with water and making sure to have reserve. Providing lamps and saving large quantities of kerosine in case electricity is cut off. Having a supply of hand held flashlights [torches]. Surveying the entire neighbourhood to make sure that everyone has the needed supplies.
c. Direct action: when the committees are established and working well in such a way as to provide the need for the population and ability to resist for a long period, also after having overcome the fear of repressive and revengeful acts by the authorities. These committees can become an effective tool of struggle in the hands of the unified command. It will also be possible to widen the scope of resistance to the occupiers so as to include all sectors of our society and the popular committees will be asked to carry out actions like closing roads, raising the Palestinian flag, standing up to the fascist occupiers when they attempt to enter a particular quarter to make an arrest. They will also be ready for mass popular protest marches and sit ins as will be called for by the Unified Command.

To our people:

The Unified National Command assures you that you are on the steps of civil disobedience, that the civil disobedience is not a magic wand that the authorities will listen to its demands as soon as it is declared. Civil disobedience is an advanced stage of struggle that will have a strong effect on the racist occupiers and their allies the lead of which are the American imperialists. The civil disobedience will be effective on the way to gaining our people’s legitimate national rights in the return, self determination, and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.

Unified National Leadership Command of the Uprising in the Occupied Territories
Appendix 11

Study of First Seventeen Intifada Leaflets

The Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence

INTIFADA: PALESTINIAN NONVIOLENT PROTEST

An Affirmation of Human Dignity and Freedom

Since the beginning of the intifada, seventeen appeals signed by the United National Command of the Uprising/PLO (a coalition representing all political streams in the Palestinian community) have been issued which called for specific community actions of resistance to the occupation. These directives focus on two levels of community activity: resistance to the occupation through civil disobedience and institution-building. In the 17 leaflets to date, 163 actions were called, the overwhelming majority of which were specifically nonviolent in nature. Of the 27 methods of demonstrating resistance to the occupation, 26 of these are nonviolent. The following is a list of those activities, according to the frequency of occurrence.

1. Strikes. During the first six months of the intifada, a general strike was called a total of 32 times. This represents 19.6 per cent of all activities called by the National Command, and includes time-limited and localized strikes. A general strike, time-limited strike and local strike is characterized by total non-movement of all vehicles (except in emergencies) and the complete shutdown of commercial and school activities. A strike is usually called in commemoration of an important Palestinian holiday or occasion, or to demonstrate total community noncompliance in response to Israeli activities against the Palestinian community.

2. Support activities. Support (solidarity) activity was requested on seventeen occasions, accounting for 10.4 per cent of all resistance activity to date. Such activities acknowledge the many contributions various sections of the community are making toward the intifada, and express appreciation for those contributions. Support activities take several forms:
   a) Spiritual support: The acknowledgement of great sacrifices made for the community and expression of appreciation to the families of those who have given their lives in the intifada. The community is asked to visit the families and the graves of those killed during the intifada.
   b) Financial support: A request for financial help for Palestinian institutions or a call for thriftiness.
   c) Moral support: Visits to imprisoned persons and those injured during the intifada.
   d) Labour support: Calls to work on the land with planting, harvesting or land reclamation projects.

3. Demonstrations and Marches. There have been 14 calls for demonstrations and marches, or 8.5% of all community activities. Demonstrations and marches involve the non-violent participation of people of all ages who carry banners and chant slogans calling for an end to the occupation.

1 This text is identical to the PCSN original, including its minor syntactical and grammatical errors.
4. **Praying and Fasting.** These activities account for 6.7% of all activities called by the National Command which, to date, number 11 occasions. These activities usually take the form of special prayers during Muslim and Christian services or special days set aside to fast in observance of the community-wide determination to end the occupation.

5. **Alternative Institutions.** A total of 9 requests were made to create alternative institutions to supplant the existing Israeli structures with institutions created by and to benefit the Palestinian community. These 9 occasions represent 5.5% of the calls made for community-wide action.

6. **Withholding Taxes.** This direct action was called a total of eight times, or 4.9 per cent of the actions requested by the National Command. The community was asked to stop paying all taxes to the occupation authorities.

7. **Boycott of Israeli Products.** On 8 occasions the Palestinian community was asked to boycott Israeli products and to further develop Palestinian production of goods. The figure represents 4.9% of all calls to the community in support of the intifada.

8. **Raising the Palestinian Flag or Black Flags.** There were 8 calls to raise the Palestinian flag, or to raise black flags to mourn the death of Palestinian leaders, which is 4.9% of the calls for community action.

9. **Violent Confrontation.** These activities, involving stone-throwing or the use of petrol bottles, account for only 4.9%, or 8 calls, of all the activities called for by the National Command. Community response to these calls were slight in comparison to the great response to calls for civil disobedience and nonviolent activities.

10. **Boycotting Israeli Employment.** A total of 7 calls were made for the community to boycott employment in Israel, and on Israeli projects and settlements, during the first six months of the intifada. This represents 4.2% of the calls made by the National Command for resistance activities.

11. **Resignations.** Seven calls were made for the resignation of Palestinians in occupation administration institutions, municipal committees and appointed local councils in the West Bank and Gaza, as well as members of the Jordanian Parliament. This call represents 4.2% of the calls made to the community.

12. **Defy School Closures.** The government of Israel ordered all schools in the West Bank closed. In response, the National Command asked the community to return to school in defiance of this order a total of 7 times, or 4.2% of the total number of actions.

13. **Condemnation of the Occupation.** The community was asked 4 times to express condemnation by communicating their refusal to accept occupation through newspaper articles, petitions, writing slogans on walls, etc., and making their sentiments known publicly. These calls total 2.4% of the calls made for community-wide response.

14. **Non-cooperation.** On 3 occasions, or 1.8% of calls made, the National Command asked the people to refuse to cooperate with Israeli occupation activities.

15. **Symbolic Funerals.** The community was asked on 2 occasions to conduct symbolic funerals for those killed during the intifada. This involved carrying caskets covered with Palestinian flags, and accounted for 1.2% of calls made.
16. Ringing Church Bells. This activity was requested twice, or 1.2% of all the activities called for by the National Command.

17. Refusal to Pay Fines. On 2 occasions, or 1.2% of the actions called, people were asked to refuse to pay fines levied by the Israeli military courts against those charged with demonstrating or other intifada activities.

18. Breaking Curfews. Communities placed under curfew by the Israeli military were asked on two occasions to break the curfews in camps, villages and areas in the cities. This figure represents 1.2% of all actions called by the National Command.

19. Ostracism of Traitors. Collaborators with the Israeli occupation faced ostracism from the community, when on 2 occasions, their collaboration was publicly called into account. This request occurred 1.2% of the time in the intifada leaflets.

20. Blocking Roads Into Settlements. Two calls were made for the community to close the roads into Israeli settlements to prevent movement by Israeli settlers and military. These calls occurred 1.2% of the time.

21. Demonstrations at Churches and Mosques. Two calls were made for demonstrations to commence at the close of Muslim and Christian religious worship. This figure represents 1.2% of the calls made for community-wide activity.

22. Rewrite Occupiers' Signs. A call was made once for Palestinians to paint over signs written in the occupier's language, or, 0.61% of all actions called.

23. National Mourning. one call came forward from the National Command for all people in the community to mourn publicly by flying black flags, or 0.61% of the total calls made.

24. Cancel Holiday Celebrations. The community was asked on one occasion to cancel holiday celebrations in deference to the intifada. This request occurred 0.61% of the time in the leaflets.

25. Boycotting Newspapers. The leaflets asked once for the community to boycott newspapers, representing 0.61% of the calls made for community response to the occupation.

26. Memorial Pictures. The community was asked on one occasion to publicly memorialize those killed during the intifada by displaying their pictures, or 0.61% of all calls made by the National Command.

27. Ignoring Rumours. The community was also asked once to ignore rumours perpetrated by those distributing counterfeit 'National Command leaflets' which criticized certain Palestinian personalities. This occurred 0.61% in all the calls made by the National Command.

Summary  From this breakdown of the various kinds of actions requested of the Palestinian community by the United National Command of the Uprising/PLO, we can see that violent confrontation played an insignificant role in organized community resistance to Israeli occupation. Acts specifically nonviolent in nature represent the overwhelming majority of community actions requested by the National Command, or 95.1%.
Statistics on Persons Killed during Intifada

9 December 1987-25 April 1988

The following statistics reveal patterns and trends concerning the level of Israel military violence against the Palestinian residents in the West Bank and Gaza Strip during the months of December, 1987 through April 25, 1988. The figures do not include the many suspected deaths of fetuses due to spontaneous abortion attributed to the improper use of tear gas. The figures represent children, youths, men and women who were killed by live fire, beatings, electrocution or other means as a direct result of Israel's military activities to deter the community-wide rejection of the occupation. Sources of the statistics are Dr. Ron Stockton (University of Michigan), al-Awdah magazine, and local newspapers.

Figure 1.

Breakdown By Age and Sex

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td># Killed</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Av. Age</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>23.3</td>
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<td># Females</td>
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<td>4</td>
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Figure 1. A breakdown by month of Palestinian deaths reveals an increase in military violence in response to the popular uprising. The death toll dramatically increased in number despite the Israeli government's assertion that the situation had 'calmed down'.

For example, during the month of December the number of deaths reached 24; in April the death toll climbed to 46. This represents a 92 per cent increase in the number of persons killed by the military over the two-month period. As well, with the exception of the month of January when 17 Palestinians died, the total rose substantially every month -- with a dramatic jump of 153% between the months of January and February. During the month of February, 43 Palestinians were killed by the Israeli military; since this dramatic increase the death rate has remained at a similarly high level every month, with 47 deaths in March alone. A 48 per cent monthly increase in military killings is noted.

Another interesting trend is revealed in the steady rise in age of those who died over the 5-month period. Noting the average age of Palestinians killed by the Israeli military was 21.5 years in December and steadily rose to an average age of 26 years in April, the figures suggest that not just the very young participate frequently in the uprising.
### Figure 2.

**Breakdown by Region and Camp/Village Residency**

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<tr>
<td>Deaths</td>
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<tr>
<td>Camp Residents</td>
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<td>Non-residents</td>
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<td><strong>Gaza Strip</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Deaths</td>
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<tr>
<td>Camp Residents</td>
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<td>Non-residents</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>51</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Camp Deaths as % of Total</strong></td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gaza Deaths as % of Total</strong></td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>35%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2. Although there are Israelis and others who believe Israeli military violence in response to the uprising is concentrated mainly in refugee camps (where Palestinian discontent may be more understandable to them) the statistics in Figure 2 reveal that most of those killed had lived and died in villages and towns and not in refugee camps. In the West Bank, for example, out of a total of 116 killings by Israelis, 99 occurred in cities or villages and only 17 in refugee camps. Even in Gaza, which has a higher percentage of refugee camp residents, only 10 deaths of camp residents is noted out of a total of 61 killings. Up until April 25, 1988, 35 per cent of all those killed by the Israeli military, settlers or Shin Bet were Gazans.
It is also interesting to note that the percentage of Gazans killed declined between the months of December, representing 63 per cent of all those killed, and the April total which represents 43 per cent of the overall number of deaths. These figures infer a correspondent increase in West Bank deaths.

Figure 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Days When No Deaths Occurred</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of Days with no deaths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3. Another interesting fact revealed by these statistics is the decrease in days per month when no deaths occurred; in December, 13 days, or 56 per cent of the days in that month noted no deaths, whereas in April, only 12 days, or 36 per cent of the month, no deaths occurred. There are more daily-killings in recent weeks than in the early days of the uprising.

Figure 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Deaths by Weekday*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Day of Week</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mondays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesdays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesdays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursdays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fridays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturdays**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sundays**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These totals include 9 women killed mentioned in Figure 1. **15 killed following the assassination of Abu Jihad

Figure 4. The number of Palestinians killed, broken down by day of the week, negates the Israeli government's contention that Muslim religious worship on Fridays is an
especially 'violent' period. This assertion is frequently used as a rationale for restricting movement of the population in certain areas, for imposing curfews, and for disrupting or preventing Muslim religious services. The figures above reveal the percentage of killings that occur on Fridays to be far less than those occurring on Saturdays, Wednesdays and Mondays, respectively. Fridays are, according to Figure 4, quieter than at least half the rest of the week.

Figure 5.

Pattern of Killings by Age*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number Killed</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10-12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17-18</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-21</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-25</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-36</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37-39</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70+</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*One additional woman was killed but does not appear in these figures as her age was not known.

Figure 5. The figures in this chart indicate the average age of people killed by the Israelis during the uprising; 80 per cent of all Palestinians killed were between the ages of 17 years and 36 years old.

CONCLUSION

This statistical report on the nonviolent activities used by the Palestinian community in the intifada, and the violent Israeli response (in addition to the more frequent use of collective and administrative punishments) suggest [sic] an understanding of the importance of nonviolent protest both by the United National Command of the Uprising/PLO and the Palestinian community which continues to respond in ever-increasing numbers to the calls for community actions. The figures also show an increased determination of the government of Israel to put an end to the intifada at any cost.
During the *intifada*, two Israelis were killed: an Israeli soldier in the West Bank, and an Israeli girl was killed by accident in the West Bank by her armed Israeli escort. The rising number of deaths and the increasing number of prisoners in Israeli prisons and detention centres suggest that far from ‘calming down’, the *intifada* continues to increase in intensity, in determination and in number of participants.

PO Box: 20317  Tel. (02) 285061
Occupied Jerusalem
via Israel

May 1988
INTIFADA: PALESTINIAN NONVIOLENT PROTEST

An Affirmation of Human Dignity and Freedom

Part 2

Analysis of leaflets 18–39
(including the work of the popular committees)

EAST JERUSALEM, OCCUPIED PALESTINE

The Palestinian struggle to end the Israeli occupation of lands seized during the June 1967 war has been given increased media coverage since the beginning of the intifada in December, 1987. While much attention has been given to the violence associated with the intifada, the vast majority of the acts being called for by the United Command for the Intifada/PLO, and carried out by the Palestinian people, are nonviolent. The Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence recently undertook an analysis of the leaflets issued by the United Command for the Intifada/PLO during the course of the past year. What follows is an examination of the appeals for action and the work of the popular committees.

It must be understood that there are several problems with a study of this type. The major problem has to do with translating the Arabic leaflets into English. There are subtle nuances of language that are lost in the translation. For example, the Arabic word ‘tadamon’ loosely translates to mean solidarity, but in Arabic it means so much more. Related to the problem of translation is the problem of interpretation. While the Arabic word ‘mowajaha’ means confrontation, it doesn’t necessarily mean violent confrontation. For the sake of accuracy and objectivity, this study uses the most violent interpretations of the appeals.

It also must be emphasized that this is merely a study of the leaflets issued by the United Command for the Intifada/PLO, not including leaflets issued by other groups, such as Hamas. It does not evaluate the overall success or failure of individual appeals or actions, nor does it examine the actual events that have taken place during the intifada. It is designed solely to gain an understanding of the methods and motives of the United Command for the Intifada/PLO, whom Palestinians widely accept as the underground leadership in the territories and who, in all probability, will eventually make up the pool from which the leaders of the new State of Palestine are democratically elected.

FUNCTIONS OF THE POPULAR COMMITTEES AS MENTIONED IN 18–39

From the beginning of the intifada the United Command for the Intifada/PLO has directed that Palestinians form committees to act as an alternative to the Israeli civil administration. These committees, established in defiance of the Israeli occupation authorities, serve

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1This text is identical to the PCSN original, including its minor syntactical and grammatical errors, although spelling has been standardized.
individual local Palestinian communities. While operating independently, each committee seems to be in contact with committees from other areas. Below is a general listing of the functions of popular committees as mentioned in the leaflets.

1. To educate the population.
2. To act as an alternative to the Israeli authorities for resolving problems among Palestinians.
3. To carry out the activities called for by the United Command.
4. To find markets for local agricultural products.
5. To develop the necessary programs to improve the intifada.
6. To improve or develop the authority of the Palestinian population.
7. To provide the needs of the people.
8. To insure the rights of labourers and find more opportunities for them.
9. There are other specialized and specific functions for each committee covering all aspects of the people's daily life.

Some of the specific functions of the committees include:

COMMITTEES FOR POPULAR EDUCATION:

These committees were designed to fill the void left in Palestinian society by the Israeli orders to close schools in the occupied West Bank. The committees give lessons to primary and secondary students. Mosques and churches and other institutions were to be converted into schools. While the Israeli occupation authorities have waged a severe campaign against this operation, these committees have succeeded, although some areas of the West Bank and Gaza had greater success than others.

GUARD COMMITTEES:

Their main task has been to protect Palestinian property from Israeli occupation authorities, settlers and other robbers. They were intended to fill in the void left by the resignation of the police. For example, in one village, guard committee members have arranged for a long steady flashlight beam to be used to signal an attack on the village by soldiers during the night. If the village is attacked by settlers the signal will be short flashing lights. During the day whistles will be used. Knowing the identity of their attackers will allow the people to prepare themselves accordingly; allowing women to gather stones and onions (to counter the effects of tear gas).

CULTURAL COMMITTEES:

These have been designed to educate popular committee members, who will in turn educate the Palestinian population.

MERCHANTS' COMMITTEES:

Their main task is to coordinate the merchant's efforts during the intifada, such as non-payment of taxes and conducting strikes. The existence of these merchant committees refutes Israeli claims that merchants were striking out of fear of youths. It clearly shows that the merchants are striking in solidarity with the intifada.
MEDICAL COMMITTEES:

These are designed to provide clandestine medical treatment for those injured during the intifada, treating them in caves to avoid arrest by Israeli authorities. They also provide medicine and first aid lessons to local populations.

COMMITTEES TO SUPPLY FOOD:

These are set up to transport food and other necessities to the needy in the besieged areas. Anata village, north of Jerusalem, provides one example of how these committees can operate creatively. A donkey was used to transport food to the nearby Anata refugee camp. Food was loaded onto the donkey, which was trained to take the food from their village to the refugee camp by itself. When the Israelis discovered this they shot and killed the donkey.

COMMITTEES FOR SELF SUFFICIENCY:

These committees are to teach Palestinians, in cities, villages and camps, the most efficient uses of home gardens. They show people ways to achieve self-sufficiency through raising chickens and rabbits. They also provide information on food storage such as pickling and drying. These committees distribute detailed booklets on home economics. Palestinian women have begun to create cooperative and agricultural committees, helping reduce Palestinian dependency on Israeli products.

STRIKING FORCES:

These committees help organize the intifada activities, and confront Israeli troops and settlers. They also are designed to punish traitors.

COMMITTEES FOR SOCIAL REFORM:

These committees are designed to replace the Israeli courts by settling disputes between individuals and families. These provide an alternative to the Israeli civil administration. In some cases, these committees have prevented family clashes in villages.

COMMITTEE TO CONFRONT THE TAX:

These are to confront and expel Israeli tax collectors, who often accompanied by Israeli soldiers.

COMMITTEES TO RESCUE CHILDREN FROM POLICE CAPTURE:

These have been created by women in the Gaza strip. The committees confront Israeli soldiers in the streets and rescue children who face beatings. While on the surface it may appear that these women are reacting spontaneously, some of these committees are well organized, and have specific goals.

ANALYSIS OF LEAFLETS 18 – 39

In April, 1988, The Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence issued its first study of the leaflets of the intifada, in which it analysed leaflets 1–17. This study is of the leaflets...
18–39, signed by the United Command for the Intifada/PLO that have been issued since the original study. These leaflets contained 291 separate calls for specific actions which have been categorized into four nonviolent classifications: political, economic, protest, and other.²

Economic methods attempt to strain the Israeli economy, and raise the cost of the occupation to the occupiers. The political activities promote Palestinian withdrawal from Israeli political and civil institutions and create alternative Palestinian institutions. Protest methods are specific means of Palestinians expressing their opposition to continued Israeli rule. The ‘other’ category involves the United Command for the Intifada/PLO communicating directly with the Palestinian people, to either praise their efforts in the struggle or to inform and warn Palestinians of Israeli attempts to weaken the intifada. In addition to these nonviolent classifications, a category for appeals for violent confrontation was necessary.

The actual organization of each individual leaflet slightly complicated this study. Each leaflet began with a general statement, usually commenting on recent developments in the region, such as Shamir’s election plan, followed by specific appeals for actions and individual days of protest. For the sake of continuity, this study only evaluated the text of these specific appeals.

THE APPEALS

1. Strikes (63 appeals/21.7%) ECONOMIC

Appeals for strike days were the most frequent, averaging almost three per leaflet. Many of the calls for strikes were to commemorate Palestinian ‘national’ occasions, such as the 1967 war or Land Day (commemorating the 30 March 1976 riots). The 9th of each month was always a strike day to commemorate the beginning of the intifada. Strike days were used to protest the occupation, but since they involved the interruption of economic activity in the territories and the disruption of the Palestinian labour force inside Israel, their economic impact was more significant than their impact as an act of protest. Therefore, they have been counted as an economic method.

2. Praise (33 appeals/11.3%) OTHER

The leaflets often praised individuals and groups for their participation in the intifada. The recipients were those who had resigned from civil administrative positions, like the police force, and also merchants participated in strikes and followed the schedule of opening and closing hours. The leaflets have also praised Palestinian National Council decisions, as well as the executive committee of the PLO. Since praising did not directly call for specific action, they have been counted as ‘other’.

3. Noncooperation (28 appeals/9.6%) POLITICAL

Another frequent call made was for noncooperation with civil authorities. Appeals were made for Palestinians not to pay taxes and fines. Israelis have linked the payment of taxes and fines directly to civil proceedings through which Palestinians obtain benefits such as travel documents or car licences or even ID cards. This category included six direct appeals

for noncooperation with civil administration. Nonpayment of taxes represented an economic loss to the Israeli government, but more significantly, the noncooperation called for by the United Command for the Intifada/PLO represented wrestling political control away from the occupation authorities. These appeals were therefore classified as political.

4. Confrontation (22 appeals/7.5%) VIOLENT

Calls were made to confront Israeli troops and settlers by throwing stones and Molotov cocktails. Included was recent call for a 'unique day of anger' in which 'Molotovs and knives' were to be used 'in revenge of the Nahalin martyrs', from Leaflet no. 39.

5. Alternative committees (21 appeals/7.2%) POLITICAL

Appeals were made to create and develop new alternative committees to improve the popular Palestinian authority. These committees represented the Palestinian community creating alternatives to Israeli control of their everyday life, and therefore were classified as political.

6. Demonstrations and marches (21 appeals/7.2%) PROTEST

Calls were made for protest marches to show unity and determination among Palestinians within the territories. Also, twice the call went out for protest marches to be held outside the territories to show sympathy and unity between Palestinians inside and outside of the West Bank ans Gaza.

7. Boycott Israeli products (13 appeals/4.5%) ECONOMIC

These calls were made to reduce the Palestinian role as a major market for Israeli products. They included a call for Palestinian papers and magazines to boycott advertising Israeli products and a call for a boycott of Israeli tourist sights.

8. Provide aid (12 appeals/4.1%) ECONOMIC

Palestinians were urged to provide aid, both material and medical, for those who have made sacrifices during the intifada. This included providing gifts to the children of martyrs and food to those who have resigned positions in Israeli occupation institutions. It also included 3 calls to rebuild houses demolished by the Israeli Defence Forces.

9. Defy school closures (10 appeals/3.4%) POLITICAL

In an attempt to normalize the education process, appeals were made to defy the closing of Palestinian school, including a call to provide education in the homes, filling the gap the Israeli ordered school closures left. Included were 4 calls for popular education committees to continue to educate all sectors of Palestinian society on the ways of the intifada.

10. Raising flags (10 appeals/3.4%) PROTEST

Calls were made to fly Palestinian flags to commemorate 'national' occasions, and black flags to show 'national' morning. For example, Palestinian flags and black flags were called for after the assassinations of Abu Jihad, the PLO commander of the intifada, in Tunisia. The Palestinian flag, an important symbol to the people under occupation, represented Palestinian nationalism and defiance of the Israeli authorities. The flying of the Palestinian flag or even the wearing of its colours in the territories had been banned by the occupation
authorities. While symbolically representing a withdrawal from Israeli political authority, flying the Palestinian flag has been an important act of protest.

11. Resignations (8 appeals/2.8%) POLITICAL

Palestinians were urged to resign from all Israeli institutions administering the occupation. Palestinian resignation from such institutions as the department of civil administration, the police and tax collection administration, was requested to erode Israeli political control, by making it more difficult for the Israelis to conduct day to day activities in the territories.

12. Fasting and praying (7 appeals/2.4%) PROTEST

In the tradition of Gandhi, Moslems and Christians were urged to fast and to pray for an end to the occupation. This included a fast in solidarity with prisoners in administrative detention.

13. Condemning (7 appeals/2.4%) PROTEST

People were urged to write articles in Palestinian newspapers, distribute pamphlets, and write graffiti condemning the occupation. There were also calls for massive public condemnation of the United States for its support of Israel, and for its veto of the UN Security Council resolution denouncing Israeli human rights violations in the territories.

14. Attacking traitors (6 appeals/2.1%) VIOLENT

When the intifada began, the United Command for the Intifada/PLO urged traitors and collaborators to repent and join the struggle. As time went on Palestinians were told to follow and harass those who continued to cooperate with the Israelis. These appeals gradually changed to calls for social ostracism, and finally have become calls to ‘cleanse’ the Palestinian community of traitors.

15. Ignoring rumours (6 appeals/2.1%) OTHER

Palestinians were urged to ignore Israeli rumours being spread to divide Palestinians in an attempt to stop the intifada. This included a call to boycott Israeli media for spreading false information. Since these appeals were primarily informative, like method two, praise, they were classified as “other.”

16. Boycott Israeli employment (6 appeals/2.1%) ECONOMIC

Calls were made to boycott working on Israeli projects. This boycott included work done in Israeli and in the settlements in the occupied territories. This was designed to eliminate the inexpensive Palestinian labour force the occupation has provided Israelis, further reducing the economic incentives for Israel to continue occupation.

17. Increase productivity (5 appeals/1.7%) ECONOMIC

These appeals were made to cover the gap in the Palestinian marketplace left by the boycott of Israeli products and to compensate for lost production time during strike days.
18. Pressure for release of prisoners (3 appeals/1.0%) PROTEST
Palestinians were urged to write letters, articles and graffiti demanding the release of Palestinian prisoners.

19. Cancel holiday celebrations (2 appeals/0.7%) PROTEST
Annual joyous religious celebrations for Christians and Moslems were cancelled in protest of the occupation.

20. Appeals to businesses (2 appeals/0.7%) POLITICAL
Palestinian merchants were asked to discipline themselves to follow a schedule of business hours that ensured the needs of the society were maintained. Specifically targeted were pharmacies and bakeries. By following the recommendations of the United Command for the Intifada/PLO, merchants were not only benefiting Palestinian society, but also demonstrating their solidarity with the leadership of the uprising, giving their leadership greater political legitimacy.

21. Warning of Israeli tactics (1 appeal/0.3%) OTHER
A warning in one of the leaflets alerted Palestinians that Israeli policemen were discussing themselves as journalist to help them recognize and arrest Palestinian stone throwers.

22. Family unity (1 appeal/0.3%) POLITICAL
This was a call to strengthen family ties, including not only immediate family ties, but also extended family ties such as uncles, aunts and cousins. This call was designed to allow the strengthened family unit to replace Israeli civil authorities in settling disputes.

23. Boycott elections (1 appeal/0.3%) POLITICAL
Palestinians in East Jerusalem were asked not to participate in the Israeli municipal elections, reaffirming their withdrawal from the Israeli political system.

24. Set clocks ahead (1 appeal/0.3%) POLITICAL
As another action to demonstrate Palestinian independence, Palestinians were asked to set their clocks ahead to summer time two weeks before Israel went on summer time.

25. Rename streets and schools (1 appeal/0.3%) POLITICAL
Palestinians were urged to demonstrate their political independence by renaming their streets and schools with Palestinian names.

26. Increase solidarity (1 appeal/0.3%) POLITICAL
A general statement, difficult to translate into English, called on Palestinians to increase their solidarity with the intifada.
CONCLUSIONS

In a study of leaflets 1–17 of the intifada, the Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence noted that only 4.9 per cent of the appeals made by the leaflets were for confrontation which could be considered violent. During the year following that study, the twenty-two leaflets issued by the United Command for the Intifada/PLO calls for violent confrontation with Israelis have risen to 7.5 per cent of the appeals, and calls for violence against collaborators made up another 2.1 per cent.

Yet still, the overwhelming majority of the appeals for action were of a nonviolent nature. The major source of communication between the United Command for the Intifada/PLO and Palestinians in the territories is the leaflets. If one accepts the notion that the frequency of appearance of certain types of appeals aimed at specific goals correlates with the importance the United Command for the Intifada/PLO places on achievement of these goals, then a clear programme begins to emerge; a programme that is an expression of a growing Palestinian nationalist sentiment.

Number one priority has been given to increasing the cost of the occupation to the occupiers through methods of economic resistance. Strike days, and boycotts of employment and products, are meant to reduce the economic incentive for Israelis to continue occupying the West Bank and Gaza. In addition to the cost of these strikes and boycotts, the actual day-to-day administration of the occupation is putting an untold drain on the Israeli economy. Israeli government sources are deliberately vague about the actual cost of the occupation and the intifada, and no official government figures exist. One Palestinian economist recently estimated that the cost of the Palestinian boycott of Israeli products alone has been over $300 million. 3

Ranked second are acts of political defiance. Through its appeals for withdrawal from Israeli political institutions and through the creation of alternative Palestinian institutions, the United Command for the Intifada/PLO are determined to build an infrastructure for the new State of Palestine, much in the same way the Jewish Agency did for Jews during the British Mandate.

Thirdly, through acts of nonviolent protest, such as raising flags, fasting and praying, marches and demonstrations, the United Command for the Intifada/PLO are calling on Palestinians to continue demonstrating, to Israelis and to the rest of the world, their determination for self-governance. By constantly proclaiming their desire to be free of the occupation, Palestinians are increasing the pressure, both internally and externally, on Israel to move away from the status quo and seek a resolution to the occupation.

Way down at the bottom of the list of actions called for are acts of violence. This indicates that, while getting most of the media attention, violence is not the most important aspect of the program of the United Command for the Intifada/PLO.

It must be considered whether or not the United Command for the Intifada/PLO could stop the violence against Israelis associated with the intifada, even if it wanted to. It is generally accepted that the intifada began as a spontaneous expression of rage against the Israeli occupation. The rock throwing against Israeli troops, while soon becoming part of the ritual of confrontation associated with the intifada, initially was unplanned. It even caught the

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3 A footnote to the original reads, 'Figures by Hisham Awartani, and quoted in an article by Joshua Brilliant "Intifada: the Economic Dimension", Jerusalem Post, 17 April 1989'.

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PLO by surprise. Israeli occupation authorities maintain that youths throwing stones at troops pose a potential life-threatening situation that should be responded to by force. To Palestinians, throwing stones is a symbolic act of defiance; an act that has caught the imagination of the rest of the Palestinian community and provided dramatic newspaper, magazine, and television pictures to the rest of the world. These pictures portray rage and determination.

Then there is the recent violence perpetrated by Palestinians against Palestinians. Palestinian sources maintain that the call for violence against traitors has been issued only as a last resort. In an article that appeared in the 8 May 1989 Jerusalem Post, Bir Zeit University professor Sari Nusseibeh said, ‘A killing is usually the end of a long process’.

This study has not proven that the intifada is a nonviolent struggle, only that violence is not necessary for the intifada to continue. Even though the violence, while not on the high scale historically associated with the region, is an intricate part of the intifada, this examination of the leaflets has revealed that if it were to stop tomorrow, the intifada could continue—through economic actions, creation of new political institutions, and nonviolent expressions of protest—to struggle to affirm the nationalist aspirations of the Palestinian people.

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## APPEALS BY CATEGORY

### ECONOMIC
- **63** STRIKES 21.7
- **13** BOYCOTT PRODUCTS 4.5
- **12** PROVIDE AID 4.1
- **6** BOYCOTT EMPLOYMENT 2.1
- **5** INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY 1.7
- **99** TOTAL ECONOMIC 34.1

### POLITICAL
- **28** NONCOOPERATION 9.6
- **21** ALTERNATIVE COMMITTEES 7.2
- **10** DEFY SCHOOL CLOSURES 3.4
- **8** RESIGNATIONS 2.8
- **2** APPEAL TO BUSINESSES 0.7
- **1** FAMILY UNITY 0.3
- **1** BOYCOTT ELECTIONS 0.3
- **1** EARLY SUMMERTIME 0.3
- **1** RENAME 0.3
- **1** SOLIDARITY 0.3
- **74** TOTAL POLITICAL 25.4

### PROTEST
- **21** DEMONSTRATIONS 7.2
- **10** RAISING FLAGS 3.4
- **7** FASTING AND PRAYING 2.4
- **7** CONDEMNING 2.4
- **3** PRESSURE FOR PRISONER RELEASE 1.0
- **2** CANCEL CELEBRATIONS 0.7
- **50** TOTAL PROTEST 17.2

### OTHER
- **33** PRAISE 11.3
- **6** IGNORE RUMOURS 2.1
- **1** WARNING OF TACTICS 0.2
- **40** TOTAL OTHER 13.8

**263 TOTAL NONVIOLENT METHODS 90.4%**

### VIOLENT
- **22** VIOLENT CONFRONTATION 7.5
- **6** ATTACK TRAITORS 2.1
- **28** TOTAL VIOLENT METHODS 9.6

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May 1989
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