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## ARTICLES

## The Intifada: Causes, Consequences and Future Trends\*

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The generally accepted date for the outbreak of the *Intifada* is 9 December 1987. On that day most of the Jabelia refugee camp did not go to work. Instead they went to the streets to demonstrate. This came as a reaction to a terrible accident that occurred a day earlier in Gaza. A truck driver recklessly made a turn and hit a Palestinian car. Four of its passengers were killed. Others were wounded. A rumour spread that the accident was intentional, that it was planned as an act of revenge for the death of Shlomo Sekel, an Israeli who was stabbed two days earlier in the market of Gaza. It did not matter that no facts were found to establish a connection between the two incidents. Rumours have a life of their own and in the existing atmosphere it served as a trigger for mass rioting.

Yasser Arafat coined the term *Intifada* which means shuddering, a shivering fever. He thought that this was merely another spasm that would end in a few days. Arafat was wrong. The uprising began some three years ago and there are still no signs to suggest that it is coming to an end. Shortly before his death Abu Jihad offered another term to characterise the uprising – *Haba*, meaning: 'storm'. However, the term *Intifada* remained, to mean awakening, shaking oneself.

The *Intifada* opened a new chapter in the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It introduced a new form of struggle: not war, nor terror, but mass civil violence in which firearms are rarely in use. This chapter was not opened in one blow. The accident of 8 December 1987 was only the trigger. It was certainly not the cause. The aims of this essay are to analyse the causes and consequences of the *Intifada*, and to focus on some of the trends which are likely to play an important part in shaping the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the

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coming years. In the first part of the article I shall reflect on the main causes of the uprising, explaining why it took place only after more than twenty years of occupation. The claim I wish to pursue is that during the mid-1970s the Palestinians were on the road towards an uprising, but Sadat's peace initiative shuffled the cards. Then I shall make two further contentions: first, that the Lebanon War caused a psychological change in the Palestinians' framework of mind, and induced them to open a civil rebellion. Second, that also of significance were the socio-economic conditions of the refugees, which put them in a position where they simply had nothing to lose.

The second part of the essay analyses the effects of the uprising on the Palestinians, Israel, and the PLO. It also reflects on the PLO's change of status in the international arena. I shall argue that at the end of 1988 the PLO had a good opportunity to gain significant achievements leading to the establishment of a Palestinian entity, but this opportunity was wasted. I close by drawing attention to three parties whose positions are of growing importance in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. These are the Islamic fundamentalist movement, Syria, and the Israeli-Palestinians.

### The Causes of the Intifada

In considering the factors that brought about the uprising we first have to look at the major events that were taking place from 1967 onwards, which shaped the Palestinians' hopes and aspirations. In addition it is also important to probe the socio-economic conditions of the inhabitants of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The reasoning here is that we should think in terms of a long process, which was building up and gained momentum as years went by. Like a snowball running downhill, taking all there is in its track, so feelings of animosity and deprivation grew bitter until the eruption of 1987.

### Historic analysis

In June 1967, after the Six Day War, the Palestinians of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip found themselves under Israeli occupation. The dream of destroying the Zionist entity by a unified Arab force under the leadership of Nasser was shattered. They were the ones who had to pay the full price for Nasser's ambitions. Disappointment, frustration and fear replaced feelings of excitement and of ecstasy. In those circumstances, it is no wonder that the PLO's plan, coordinated with Syria, to induce an uprising in the occupied territories did not materialise. By the beginning of 1968 this plan was abandoned. Most of the infiltrators into the West Bank from Syria via Jordan were captured by the security forces. The passive support of the inhabitants in the

territories was not sufficient. The expectations were that they would take an active part in the struggle against Israel, but the Palestinians were in no position to supply the goods. They were awakening from their dream, trying to accommodate themselves to the changing reality and to establish a *modus vivendi* with the new rule.

The decline of pan-Arabism had a positive influence on the PLO. Shukeiri, who before the 1967 war objected to the terrorist activity of the FATAH, realised that a unified Arab force to settle the Palestinian problem by destroying Israel was no longer possible and that the PLO had to take initiative. He acknowledged that the method of establishing bases in the Arab countries and launching attacks on Israel from them would gain the support of the Arab world and put the PLO on the map as an independent organisation. Indeed, in contrast with the defeat of the Arab armies, the Fedayeen operations received wide attention and overwhelming publicity. Since then the Palestinian terror has been a perpetual threat to any peace settlement, and the PLO established its position as a major factor in the process towards the completion of such a settlement.

In 1973, after the Yom Kippur War, the PLO decided to change its strategy. It started to set in motion a process of gaining political legitimisation by endorsing the interlocked formula or the 'phase strategy': the main emphasis was still on the armed struggle, but now it was accompanied with an urge for a political process so as to establish the PLO not only in the terroristic sphere, but also in the diplomatic arena. The final aims were still the destruction of Israel and the liberation of the entire land of Palestine<sup>1</sup>, but their achievements would be stage by stage. In opposition to that decision, a 'Rejectionist Front' was organised within the PLO.<sup>2</sup> The Front continued its terroristic attacks.

The Yom Kippur War also opened a new phase in the relationships between Israel and the Palestinians in the territories. This was mainly in psychological terms, i.e., in the way that the Palestinians conceived their enemy. The Israeli Army, which showed a firm hand in carrying out martial rule, was during the early stages of the war on the threshold of collapse. On the other side, the Palestinian representative body abroad was gaining power. The PLO was not only terrorising Jews wherever they were, but also came to be recognised by the Arab world as the 'sole representative of the Palestinian people'.<sup>3</sup> In addition, the change of its policy from seeing the armed struggle as an overall strategy, and not merely as tactics<sup>4</sup>, to the formula of 'the sword with the olive leaf', made the PLO a guest in the political corridors of Europe. In view of the vulnerability of the IDF (Israeli Defence Forces), and the growing legitimisation of the PLO, new hopes emerged in the Palestinian camp.

The change of conscience, which is a precondition for any political struggle, started to crystallise.

After 1974 there was an increase in the number of disturbances in the territories. Yet in 1976 Jewish settlers could still walk in the market of Hebron and in the casbah unarmed.<sup>5</sup> The tension reached its peak in 1977, when no fewer than 1,000 incidents were counted in the West Bank alone.<sup>6</sup> The Palestinians were then on the road towards uprising. This was despite improvements in their socio-economic welfare. However, they suffered a great drawback as a result of President Sadat's visit to Jerusalem in November 1977. The strongest Arab country explicitly recognised the existence of Israel; moreover, Egypt signed a peace treaty with Israel. This was the first (and until now the only) peace treaty ever signed between an Arab state and Israel. The Palestinian aspirations were frustrated before any real achievement. The PLO decided to counter-attack Sadat's initiative by escalating terrorist activities in Israel and abroad. Thus, in 1978, 367 civilians and military personnel were killed or wounded in attacks in Israel, including the West Bank and Gaza. In 1979 the toll was a little lower: 339 Jews were killed or wounded in attacks in Israel.<sup>7</sup> However, the trend towards civil uprising, which was gaining power between 1974 and 1977, was reversed.

The most important event, which had a major influence in inducing Palestinians to go on the streets, was the Lebanon War (known also as Operation 'Peace for Galilee'). The aim of the war (as declared by Prime Minister Begin) was to destroy the terrorist bases in Lebanon. He also said that the operation would end within three days. However, the war lasted three years (1982 to 1985) during which Israeli society, as well as Palestinian society, underwent considerable changes. The Lebanon War deepened the political and ideological polarisation in Israel. It contributed to the radicalisation of political opinions of Jews and Arabs, and within the Jewish population it widened the split between the left and the right wings. As the war continued and every day more names were added to the list of casualties, feelings of hostility and hatred towards Arabs were fuelled. The war also drove a wedge between the leadership and wide sectors of the population. Israeli society, tired of the vague promises of their leaders, was more willing to accept radical solutions of here and now. At the same time it expressed its desire for a wall-to-wall government, comprised of the two major parties, Likud and Labour.<sup>8</sup>

As for the Palestinians, the war and its results clarified two things: first, the Palestinians acknowledged that nobody was going to do the job for them. The PLO had to evacuate its forces to distant places, thus the inhabitants of the occupied territories understood that the burden was now on them. Second, the Palestinians found out that there was a way

to fight the IDF, which was now seen more vulnerable than ever. In 1973 they drew encouragement from seeing that the IDF was vulnerable to attacks conducted by an organised army. In 1982 the Palestinians realised that it was not necessary to have a big, well-equipped army in order to harm the 'best army in the Middle East'. Terrorist acts, guerrilla warfare, or mass civil violence could make enough damage. The lessons were put into practice immediately. From 1982 onwards, there was a significant increase in the number of terrorist activities in the territories. Furthermore, the intensification of hostility resulted in more protests against Israeli occupation. The Lebanese swamp brought about the change of conscience, essential for any uprising. Thus in 1982-3 there were 4,850 disturbances,<sup>9</sup> and after then the unofficial situation did not calm down until the official outbreak of the *Intifada* on 9 December 1987.<sup>10</sup>

Looking back, Arafat claimed that the uprising started to gather force in 1986, although it became much more powerful late in 1987.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, during the last months of 1986 and all through 1987, there were many signs to suggest what was about to come. A study, carried out in the Civil Administration after the start of the *Intifada*, showed that during 1987 there was a significant increase in the number of violent activities. Altogether, between April 1986 and April 1987 there were 3,150 disturbances.<sup>12</sup> In addition, there were 65 terrorist attacks (knives, firearms, and explosives) and 150 incidents in which Molotov cocktails were thrown. Somehow, the Intelligence refrained from seeing those incidents within a framework, as a pattern that suggests a new form of struggle. Instead explanations were sought for every incident in itself. This is not to say that Intelligence ignored these figures; rather that it analysed the events separately. No one saw the entire picture. Furthermore, the danger of an uprising was never raised in Intelligence forecasts.

However, it would be misleading to analyse the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the causes for the uprising strictly according to the political events that took place. It is no less important to pay attention to the socio-economic conditions of the territories' inhabitants and their day-to-day relationships with Israel. I have said that during the mid-1970s the Palestinians were on the road towards an uprising. The fact remains that the eruption came when there was no glimpse of hope, in any sphere, for the Palestinians. It seems that during the early 1970s, the socio-economic benefits enjoyed by the Palestinians had moderating effects on the momentum leading to an uprising. Then there were at least hopes of escaping the status of refugees.

Having said that, the national aspirations appear to have been strong enough to outweigh other considerations and to pave the way

for an active national struggle. Sadat's initiative leaves us only with speculations as to whether or not an uprising would have started at that time. In the mid-1980s the Palestinians were left without any hope both in the political sphere and in the economic sphere. In the next section I shall contend that during the 1980s the implementation of social benefits was done on a limited scale and at a slow pace. The developments in the political, as well as in the socio-economic sphere, convinced the Palestinians of the need to resort to violent means in order to change their position.

### Socio-economic considerations

Most of the Palestinian population care first and foremost for their daily needs in supporting their families. Their immediate concern is to secure food, shelter, raiment and jobs. A close examination of the Palestinians' standard of living shows that it has improved since 1967. In this context it may be useful to reflect on the following data:

#### *Working places*

In 1968 only 5,000 residents of the occupied territories were employed in Israel. The number rose to 20,000 in 1970, and to 70,000 by 1974. In 1985 there were 90,000 Palestinians working in Israel,<sup>13</sup> and until the outbreak of the *Intifada*, well over 100,000 Palestinians from the territories used to work in Israel every day. In turn, the opening of Israel's markets for goods and labour served to enlarge the markets for local products and expand incomes and purchasing power, thereby stimulating the growth of local output. Hence, between 1970 and 1985 export volume climbed by an average of 8.5 per cent per annum and import volume by 7 per cent annually.<sup>14</sup>

#### *Standard of living*

Since 1967 the number of private cars increased tenfold; telephone lines multiplied sixfold, as did electricity facilities.<sup>15</sup> Two thirds of the families in the West Bank and more than three quarters of those in the Gaza Strip now own refrigerators; only a small fraction of the population in these areas had the use of this appliance in 1967.<sup>16</sup>

#### *Health*

With the installation of running water systems, the introduction of food standards regulation and growing access to, and utilisation of, preventive and curative health services, the health situation in the territories has improved, indicated by a rise in life expectancy from 48 years in 1967 to 62 years in the mid-1980s.<sup>17</sup> The infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live

births) has decreased from 33.6 to 29.4 and the number of community clinics more than doubled.<sup>18</sup>

### *Education*

Under Israeli rule education has undergone a vast transformation. In the early 1970s only half of the population of the West Bank and Gaza had ever attended any sort of school, and only 19 per cent had been educated for nine years or more.<sup>19</sup> By the early 1980s only 28 per cent had never been to school, and 38 per cent had finished nine years.<sup>20</sup> With regard to higher education, until 1967 Jordan and Egypt refused to permit the setting up of universities. Today there are seven universities in the territories. The ratio of people in the West Bank with an education of 13 years or more has increased tenfold under Israeli rule. In the Gaza Strip it has increased 20 fold.<sup>21</sup>

### *Social and community development*

Israel asserts that it introduced a comprehensive social services system including the provision of a minimum income to those in need of public assistance. It maintains that it 'encouraged the expansion of rural development projects, neighbourhood development projects, and the activities of public charitable organisations'.<sup>22</sup> However, it has to be noted that Israel did not make any effort to develop any private enterprises or factories in the territories.<sup>23</sup>

During the 1970s, the above-mentioned developments had a tranquillising effect on the inhabitants. In comparing their lives after occupation to their lives before Israeli rule, they acknowledged the positive changes in their standard of living. These changes calmed the feelings of animosity that any people living under occupation are likely to develop against their conqueror. However, as time went by, the Palestinians became less and less satisfied with the situation. There was no significant improvement in their civil rights, and in the socio-economic sphere the pace of changes was too slow.

It is useful to bear the following data in mind. In the Gaza Strip, which is a narrow piece of land, 45km long (390 sq km), there are some 700,000 Palestinians. The West Bank is about 120km long (5,450 sq km) in which 1.1 million people live. The density of population in Gaza is 1,600 people per square km<sup>24</sup> (compared to Israel, where the density is 186 people per square km). Forty per cent of the Gazans live three people to a room (compared to 1 per cent of the Israelis). That is, one can have television, refrigerator, an electric stove, and even a washing machine, but neither liberty, nor privacy. More than half of the Gazans are refugees (365,000), in the West Bank just under 35 per cent are refugees (370,000). Significantly, in Gaza 44 per cent (160,000) of the refugee

population live in the refugee camps under appalling conditions, while in the West Bank a relatively smaller number, 25 per cent (92,000), live in the camps.<sup>25</sup> Under those conditions there is little wonder why in Gaza the trends of radicalisation were, and still are, the strongest.

Israel continuously speaks of the improvement in the Palestinians' standard of living compared with their situation under Jordan and Egypt while ignoring that, first, their 'significant other', i.e., their subject of reference, had changed; and second, that the Palestinians did not escape the status of refugees. With regard to the first point, the Palestinians in the early 1970s had compared their situation to the one before occupation, or to the situation of their brothers in the refugee camps in Jordan and Lebanon; whereas from 1974 onwards they became more involved in Israeli society and, as a result, their significant other came to be Israel. There was no comparison between their standard of living and that of the Israelis. Their frequent encounters with Israelis enlarged existing gaps and created new ones, instead of bridging them. Feelings of alienation, of hostility and of jealousy were cultivated.

In addition, the Palestinians recognised that their chances of escaping the degrading status of refugees were very slim. Hardly any building took place in Gaza. The rehabilitation program, which began in 1971, came almost to a standstill during the 1980s. Until 1984 only ten neighbourhoods of varying dimensions had been constructed, housing some 6,500 families.<sup>26</sup> Until the eve of the *Intifada*, only 8,600 refugee families received flats. At this pace, it would take at least another 55 years to solve the problem of the other 33,000 families.<sup>27</sup> Adding to that the birth rate figures, it is more likely that the population of the refugee camps would increase and that the density problem become more acute. Israel was aware of these problems, but it did not have the resources to invest in the camps, or, to use another phrase, the refugee camps were not put higher enough on Israel's list of priorities.<sup>28</sup> Israel prefers to repeat its call for an international effort to solve the refugee problem.

The importance of the housing factor for easing tensions is evident from looking at the profile of the people who first went to the streets, initiating the *Intifada*. At the start of the uprising, those living in the rehabilitated neighbourhoods were the last to participate in the disturbances.<sup>29</sup> Although afterwards, as the uprising continued, they could not afford to stay at home and on some occasions they set an example for the rest, still, there is reason to think that Israel could have diffused the accumulating anger and bitterness by improving the refugees' housing conditions.

Here it is relevant to mention results of a research conducted by the IDF immediately after the first wave of disturbances. These results seem to confirm our supposition. The aim of the research was to depict a

profile of the rioters who were detained by the security forces. It found that most of them did not have former records as political activists and that many participated in demonstrations for the first time in their lives.<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, the research showed that the most basic principles of politics did not mean anything to almost all of those detained. They were not familiar with the Palestinian Covenant, and some even did not know about its existence. The picture is probably different with regard to the leaders, but the masses went to the streets because they had nothing to lose.

The demonstrators were in the main young working people, between 20 and 30 years old. Only a small number of them were students. Almost all of them had jobs in Israel and spoke Hebrew. When asked why they took part in the disturbances, they answered that they felt discriminated against by the Jews in their working places, and that they were wrongly treated. Much emphasis was put on the injustices caused to them: that they were payed unfairly, did not enjoy any social rights and suffered verbal insults. Stories were told about occasions when they were ridiculed and even slapped and beaten. The detained spoke of tens of incidents, especially at the road-blocks, when they had to wait for hours in unending queues after long working days. Many times they were subjected to a humiliating body search; sometimes money was taken from them without explanation. Those road-blocks, which from an Israeli viewpoint are a necessary security means, became a constant source of degradation for the Palestinians.<sup>31</sup>

The leaders of the *Intifada* are very young. As a matter of fact, close to 80 per cent of the population is under the age of 34.<sup>32</sup> This is thanks to the high birth-rate amongst the Palestinians and the reduction in the infant mortality cases. Thus, every year the population increases by 4.3 per cent. The young population, especially the post-1967 generation, is significantly different from that of their parents. They never lived under the Jordanian and the Egyptian occupation, nor did they witness the humiliating defeat of the Arab forces in the Six Day War. They are more radical than the older generations and they have the energy, as well as the will, to shape their future for the better. Hence for them frustration of national aspirations has been more difficult to live with, and they have also been more aware of the socio-economic disparity.<sup>33</sup> We should bear in mind too that many of the leaders were well trained in Israeli prisons, which are probably the best schools there are for leading an uprising. The prisons are the 'melting pot' for making people better terrorists, or freedom fighters (depending on one's outlook). Here it is relevant to mention the exchange of prisoners between Israel and the PFLP-GC in May 1985, in which three IDF soldiers were freed, and 1,150 Palestinians were released from Israeli prisons. Some 600 of them

returned to the territories. Those well-trained activists played a crucial part in organising the *Intifada*. Many of the 'popular committees' were established under their guidance.

In addition, the Jewish settlers added to the growing tension by their provocative illegal actions. In many incidents the IDF forces did not manage to maintain peace and to keep the situation under control. The Arabs witnessed the disgraceful attitude of settlers towards soldiers and were influenced by that attitude. When an atmosphere of anarchy is created, it is difficult for the law enforcers to say that what is permissible for one group is illegal for another.<sup>34</sup> On occasion the settlers used their weapons against Palestinians; sometimes they were not even prosecuted for their deeds, and when they did stand for trial, in most cases they received very lenient sentences from the courts of justice.<sup>35</sup> This, of course, aroused outrage and anger among the Palestinians.

At this point I wish to go on and consider the effects of the *Intifada* on the Palestinians; on Israel; and on the PLO. The Palestinians and Israel suffer a great deal every day of the uprising. The PLO adopted a more moderate line after 1987 and achieved significant political gains. However, it shall be argued that many of those gains were lost and nowadays, some three years later, the PLO is in crisis and its position on the international arena is again in a low state.

### The Consequences of the *Intifada*

#### *Its effects on the inhabitants of the territories*

In the first two years of the *Intifada* there were 60,243 disturbances (an average of 110 a day); 2,071 Molotov cocktails were thrown; 140 explosive charges were set; and there were 715 attempts to start fires.<sup>36</sup> The Palestinian collective effort made the PLO an indispensable partner in any negotiation process. The ongoing implementation of the struggle reinforces the Palestinians' sense of identity and it promotes their cause for self-determination. The entire burden of keeping the flame, securing the gains achieved until now, and bringing the Palestinian issue to the negotiation table, is put on the inhabitants of the territories. The toll they are paying is very high.

In terms of their standard of living, this fell 30–40 per cent as a result of the loss of working days.<sup>37</sup> Workers have to support their families with salaries of 10–15 days of work. The number of Palestinian workers in Israel was reduced by more than 25 per cent. Merchants are frequently ordered by the 'popular committees' to close their shops. In addition, Israel put restrictions on imports and exports from the territories. It also resorts to punitive measures in an effort to suppress the uprising.

More than 50,000 Palestinians were arrested in the first two years of the uprising. Of these, 1,558 people were put under administrative detention for at least six months. There is hardly a household in which at least one of its members was not detained. If we add to that the number of those killed or injured, then we receive a picture of the scale of the *Intifada*. In December 1989, two years after the outbreak of the *Intifada*, reports of BEZELEM revealed:<sup>38</sup>

- 593 Palestinians were killed, among them 131 under the age of 16.<sup>39</sup>
- 37,439 Palestinians wounded.
- 58 Palestinians were deported (37 in the West Bank; 21 in Gaza).
- 381 houses were demolished.<sup>40</sup>

We also have to bear in mind that from the beginning of the uprising until mid-July 1989 there were 1202 attacks by Arabs against Arabs.<sup>41</sup> Up to February 1990 some 170 Arabs suspected of collaboration with Israel have been brutally murdered and thousands have been intimidated or beaten at the direction of the *Intifada*'s leadership.<sup>42</sup>

The effects of the *Intifada* on the Palestinian residents of the territories cannot be measured only in terms of the number of dead and wounded, the number of houses that were demolished and the reduction in the standard of living. The *Intifada* is not only a national rebellion against Israel. It is also a social rebellion.<sup>43</sup> Leaders of the local establishment found themselves 'hanging on', trying to swim with the tide. The prestigious families, with whom people used to consult, were left aside. Rich families started to make efforts to conceal their wealth. Traditional conventions were infringed as the youngsters of the poor classes of society dictated the pace of events and shaped the uprising. The masses became the dominant power.

It is not yet clear whether the uprising will change traditional codes of the Palestinian nation, but it would certainly leave some marks on the Palestinian social life. The authoritarian family style – in which the father has the last word, on many occasions the only word – has cracked. Boys aged 12–13 rebel against their parents when they prohibit them from going to the streets. Women not only go out of their homes; they stand in the forefront of the demonstrations. Girls take part in violent incidents without being afraid that their dresses will be torn and parts of their bodies will be exposed.<sup>44</sup> The organisers of the demonstrations acknowledged the important role that women can play in bringing the Palestinian issue to world attention. This, however, does not yet mean that a real change in the woman's social status is taking place. Women may be of equal importance to men in the streets, but not at home. The question is whether these lines can be clearly marked, without making some impact on a woman's stand within her family.

Nevertheless, one thing is clear. At least the same standard of decency is required and demanded from them. The growing popularity of religious fundamentalism, and the fact that youngsters are, to a great extent, those who govern the streets, put women under constant scrutiny. Tens of incidents were reported in which women were killed after being accused of 'permissive conduct'.

#### *The effects of the Intifada on Israel*

The Palestinians are not the only ones who pay a high price. Israel pays a considerable price as well. The Palestinian uprising causes Israel severe damage, much of which is not tangible. The *Intifada* de-legitimises Israel and lowers its position in the international arena. It raises important questions of law and order not only in the territories (especially regarding the behaviour of settlers toward Arabs) but also within the Green Line.<sup>45</sup> We are witnessing the penetration of undemocratic values into society. More people express their disappointment with the democratic regime, thus seeking a 'strong leadership' that will create order without being dependent on elections. Currently 45 per cent of the population express this view.<sup>46</sup>

Many yearn for 'a strong hand' who will suppress the uprising and who will make the West Bank and the Gaza Strip closed territorial zones as far as the media is concerned. Being aware of the damage caused to Israel's image by the media, many people see reporters and photographers as their enemy. Hence, a study showed that 46.4 per cent of the population think that newspapers enjoy too much freedom of expression, and 61.2 per cent maintain that the extent of freedom of speech given to the newspapers threatens state security.<sup>47</sup> The majority of the Israeli-Jewish population (54 per cent) also think that Jews who are involved in illegal acts against Arabs should be treated in a more merciful way than Arabs who act in the same way against Jews. The view accordingly is that the law of the state is not binding when it conflicts with principles such as 'eye for an eye' and the concept of revenge,<sup>48</sup> and that there is one law for the Jew and another for the Arab. In addition, the idea that Arabs should be induced to leave Israel is more popular today than ever.<sup>49</sup> In this atmosphere racist ideas abound, and notions of discrimination against Arabs become legitimate.

As far as material damages are concerned, in the economic sphere the former Minister of Finance, Shimon Peres, estimated that every year of the uprising costs the Israeli economy between 1.5 to 2 billion dollars.<sup>50</sup> There is a reduction of 20 per cent in the number of working days as a result of the constant need to call up reservists. The most considerable losses are caused to the textile and building industries. Moreover, exports to the territories were cut by 34 per cent. And there

is a reduction of at least 14 per cent in tourism.<sup>51</sup>

The effects of the uprising on the IDF are also notable. It demands soldiers to do police work and many times to act against women and children. Some soldiers find this situation difficult to cope with. Thus at least 65 soldiers refused to serve in the territories. Furthermore, the IDF does not carry out its operations as planned. The *Intifada* demands vast resources at the expense of those formerly devoted to other things, such as training and the securing of borders. In these circumstances, it is hard for the IDF to maintain its high standard as a fighting force, whose main aim is to have the upper hand in a case of a war. With regard to casualties, during the first two years of the uprising eight soldiers and eleven civilians were killed: 1,635 soldiers and 803 civilians were wounded.<sup>52</sup>

At different stages there were hopes that the *Intifada* would die away and that life would return to its normal routine. Until now these hopes proved to be no more than wishful thinking. In July 1990 alone there were 10,075 incidents of stone throwing; 6 incidents of shooting; 43 incidents of Molotov cocktails; 2 incidents of hand grenades; and 25 incidents of arson.<sup>53</sup> As a result 104 Jewish soldiers and civilians were injured. The situation has become much worse after the Temple Mount incident of 8 October 1990. Following the killing of 19 Palestinians the *Intifada* entered a new stage of stabbing, use of explosives and firearms.<sup>54</sup> This brought many Israelis to raise their voices, calling Israel to put a stop to this continuous bloodshed by taking the initiative. Some call for extreme measures of punishment against Palestinians who commit violent incidents. The suggested measures include deportations, demolishing of houses, and collective punishment. Others call on the government to take a diplomatic initiative, leading the way to a peace process.

*The effects of the Intifada on the PLO's status in the territories and in the international arena*

In the first year of the *Intifada*, the Palestinian problem was brought to the focus of international media and, thus, to the knowledge of a wider range of countries and people all over the world. The Palestinians received more favourable consideration and sympathy than ever before. The Lebanon War started a process in which Israel became Goliath and the Palestinians David. The *Intifada* established this transformation of image and at the same time it established the PLO's position as the most important organisation in the territories. The PLO had become 'the sole representative of the Palestinian people' not only in a declarative sense but also *de facto*, as a direct result of King Hussein's decision to withdraw his claims over the West Bank.

Hussein's disengagement helped Arafat to establish himself as the popular leader of the Palestinian people not only in the Arab world, but also in the entire international arena. The King saw that the natural inclination of the population in the West Bank is to the PLO, and that his pictures were not the ones which were raised by the young leaders of the 'Shabiba'.<sup>55</sup> At some point the PLO concentrated its efforts to take control of the situation and then connections with Jordan were conceived as a double loyalty. Hussein lacked the required strength needed to back his people and, as a result, many of them left the West Bank for long periods of time. Local municipalities, headed by Hussein's men, were put under the control of the 'popular committees'. Hussein hoped that a moderate local leadership would emerge, one which would identify itself with the PLO, but which would still keep contacts with Jordan. Alternatively, he may have thought that Israel would suppress the *Intifada*. Both hopes were dashed. Israel deported many of the authentic, young leaders of the uprising, thus it helped the PLO to strengthen its influence.

On the military front, the IDF showed confusion in dealing with the uprising. In addition, at that time the diplomatic option of finding a solution to the conflict through negotiation with Israel was already non-existent from Hussein's view. The King realised that he had no partner to deal with on the Israeli side. This was crystal clear to him after watching Shimon Peres's hopeless attempts to keep his side of their agreement, reached at the London summit.<sup>56</sup> Looking back at this historic meeting we can only regret that such a golden opportunity to take the first steps on the road to peace had been wasted.

Furthermore, Hussein was also aware that feelings of hatred and radicalism did not stop at the border. The refugee camps in Jordan were awakened: demonstrations were held as a sign of identification with the brothers in the West Bank. Voices denouncing the Hashemite kingdom were heard as well. There were rumours that the Palestinians thought of importing the methods which proved themselves against the IDF into the kingdom. Hussein acknowledged that the good old Jordanian stand that had proved itself for so long, the one of not doing a thing, of remaining a spectator, was no longer appropriate, and that he was losing points in the process. The King had to take an active stand to show that he still had a voice, and that the parties involved cannot ignore his presence, despite the PLO's increasing role in the territories since the *Intifada* began. He realised that first a distinction had to be made between the West and the East Banks. Hitherto the policy was to blur the border lines between the two Banks, so as to leave the door open for a possibility of reunification; now there was a need to establish clear demarcation lines. Otherwise the uprising might spill over into Jordan.



In July 1988 Hussein announced the breaking of judicial and administrative ties with the West Bank. That decision helped Arafat to establish his position as the popular leader of the Palestinian people in and out of the territories. It also posed a challenge for the PLO, who had to take full responsibility for its people. The PLO had to prove that it was capable of filling the vacuum created by Hussein. Nevertheless, the King did not want to rule out altogether the possibility of future confederation with the West Bank. For that reason the Jordanian banks continue to operate; the Jordanian passports of the West Bank inhabitants are still valid, and the borders are open. Hence, Jordan still plays a prominent role in the conflict and the PLO always has to seek ways to maintain a *modus vivendi* with Hussein. Jordan and the PLO are like a couple who cannot live together, nor without one another. They have a dual relationships which neither party can escape. Like Siamese twins, they are doomed to live together. Their relationships are bound to result in a happy end, even if their story is comprised of bloody chapters of mutual destruction. In the end, they always have to return to each other's arms.

The *Intifada* not only established the PLO's position in the territories but also abroad. Under its impression the PLO adopted more flexible guidelines. The leaders in Tunis knew that the Palestinians in the territories needed to draw inspiration from some achievements in order to continue their struggle. Without some sort of political gains the uprising might wither away. Therefore, they decided to accept the calls for moderation which, in turn, made the PLO a legitimate guest in almost every forum in the world.

The first significant resolutions were adopted in the 19th assembly of the Palestinian National Council (PNC), which was held in Algeria (11–15 November 1988). In a 253 to 46 decision the PLO declared its recognition of UN Resolutions 242 and 338 as a basis for an International Peace Conference.<sup>57</sup> By accepting these resolutions, the PLO implicitly recognised Israel. The PNC also expressed its rejection of all forms of terrorism, and it declared the establishment of the Palestinian state. The Declaration of Independence was based on a paper made by a Palestinian leader from East Jerusalem, Feisal al-Husseini,<sup>58</sup> according to which the Palestinian state will be established within the borders described in the partition decision (UN Resolution No.181 from 1947), and the Palestinian capital will be Jerusalem. More than 60 countries announced their recognition of the Palestinian state.

The Algiers resolutions expressed recognition of Israel, and *ipso facto* an acceptance of a two-state solution in terms more explicit than had ever been pronounced in the past. However, these resolutions and the 'phase strategy' are not mutually exclusive. Abu-Iyad explained that the PNC resolutions pave the way for a Palestinian state. 'In the

beginning it is small, but with Allah's help, it will become larger and greater'. He maintained that in September 1988 he would not even consider Resolution 181, since he wanted the whole of Palestine. But, so Abu-Iyad admitted, he was a fool: 'I want the liberation of Palestine – but how?', and the answer is 'step by step'.<sup>59</sup>

The PNC rejected terrorism but in the very same sentence of its political statement reiterated PLO's commitment to the Cairo Declaration of 7 November 1985.<sup>60</sup> Moreover, the PNC resolutions kept many of the crucial questions open. It used phraseology which enabled the PLO to play with all possible cards on the table. Thus, they spoke of 'the right of the Palestinian Arab people to return'; the right to 'exercise self-determination'; and the acceptance of 242 and 338 in conjunction with all other UN Resolutions since 1947 pertaining to the Palestinian issue. As long as the right of return (*Uda*) is not qualified Israel interprets it to mean that some three million Palestinians, the refugees of 1948 and their families, would have the right to come to Israel and bring its end as a Jewish state.

In turn, self-determination may come to mean that the Palestinians would have a right to determine their future wherever they are. Self-determination is not identical to the idea of a Palestinian state. It is not based on the UN Resolutions and therefore it lacks any territorial definition. Lastly, speaking of accepting 242 and 338 'in conjunction' with all other UN Resolutions gives the PLO latitude for manoeuvres. For some of these Resolutions run directly counter to 242 and seek to delegitimise Israel's right to exist. Most notable are the Resolutions which equate Zionism with racism, and which stress the Palestinian right of return to all of Israel.<sup>61</sup> Bearing all this in mind, it is difficult to see how the PLO will agree to set its state alongside Israel, whose image is of 'a racist, fascist, settler state based on the usurpation of Palestinian territory and the extermination of the Palestinian people'.<sup>62</sup>

Nevertheless, the Algiers resolutions denote an important milestone from the PLO's viewpoint. They constituted clear signs of moderation and the world did not ignore them. The PLO's position as the sole representative of the Palestinian people, and as a major factor in every peace process, was strengthened. More importantly, these decisions have established the organisation as a legitimate player in the diplomatic arena, on the one hand, and Arafat's leadership within his organisation, on the other. Arafat proved that he knew how to manipulate his opponents and to pass resolutions by which legitimation and acceptance of the PLO could be assured.<sup>63</sup> Thus at that point it seemed that the PLO had succeeded in transforming its status in the western world. The PLO's image crossed the delicate border line that distinguishes between a terrorist body and a freedom fighter organisation.

Arafat's next step came one month later in Geneva. Here Arafat followed to the letter the demands of the United States in order to gain its recognition.<sup>64</sup> The road for an American-Palestinian dialogue was paved. On 16 December 1988, the first meeting of United States officials and PLO representatives was held in Tunis, and the EEC ministers were quick to follow this move by sending their own delegation to conduct talks with the PLO.

Apart from Arafat's agreement with the points formulated by the Americans, the then Secretary of State George Schultz looked a long time for a way to break the deadlock. The decision to open a dialogue with the PLO was influenced not only by the Palestinian initiative, but also by the lack of any positive activity from the other major players in the area. Hussein decided to withdraw from the West Bank as a tactical move, while Israel showed signs of stagnation regarding any peace initiative. No serious move was made by Israel to solve the Palestinian issue; furthermore, its peace with Egypt became a 'cold peace'. Thus, the PLO was left as the only major player that was active towards reaching any kind of settlement.

At that point, the PLO was holding the reins. Then Arafat's saying: 'The current of history is not on [the Israeli] side. We are with the current of history'<sup>65</sup> seemed to be very true. In many places Arafat was receiving the welcome usually kept for head of states. From December 1987 he was winning on every possible front: the Palestinian, the Arab, and the international community. Arafat's decision to dictate moves proved risky from Israel's viewpoint, endangering its position in the western world at large and its special relations with the United States in particular. Prime Minister Shamir, at some later point, understood that the name of the game was no longer the 'sacred' *status quo*. The *status quo* was bad for Israel from the first day of the *Intifada*, but then Shamir was still hoping that his "'No" plan' could work for some more time. Arafat could have pushed Shamir to the wall by demanding mutual recognition, and pressing to open direct negotiations with Israel without any preconditions. He failed to do so and in the past two years the momentum stopped and Arafat lost his most important achievements.

In part, this was not Arafat's fault. As time went by, the Palestinian issue lost interest and the *Intifada* was not as 'news-worthy' as it used to be in its first weeks and months. The Palestinian issue was further pushed aside as world attention shifted to the dramatic changes in Eastern Europe. Gorbachev's initiatives materialised and changed the map of international relations. Hence, there is much truth in saying that the settlers in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip should build a statue in honour of Gorbachev.<sup>66</sup> In addition, *Glasnost* brought the opening of Soviet gates to Jews who wish to make *aliya* and immigrate to Israel. This

development may change the demographic future of Israel. No wonder that the Palestinians show great concern regarding this trend.

However, Arafat is also to blame for bringing the momentum to a halt, and reversing the situation from the Palestinian perspective. This is mainly for two reasons: his lack of authority in the PLO, and his association with Saddam Hussein. As for the first reason, Arafat was able to pass resolutions in the PNC, but he is not able to control the extremist factions within the PLO. The United States Government, in discussion points in Tunis presented by Ambassador Pelletreau, made it clear that its demand from the PLO to renounce terrorism meant that no American administration could sustain the dialogue if terrorism by the PLO or any of its factions continued. This entailed the PLO disciplining the extreme elements within it and ensuring that they obey the directives of the leadership. The PLO cannot disassociate itself from the activities of its factions, exactly as a prime minister of a state cannot claim that he is not accountable for the deeds of his defence minister.

Between December 1988 and December 1989 alone there were 17 attacks on Israel. These attacks took two forms. Either 'Katyusha' rockets were fired on civilian targets, or they were terrorist infiltration attempts across the borders. The attempts were carried out by the PLF (Palestine Liberation Front - Abu al-Abbas and Tala'at Ya'akub's faction); the PFLP (George Habash); the PFLP-GC (Ahmed Jibril); the PSF (Popular Struggle Front-Samir Ghosha); and the DFLP (Hawatmeh). There were another 13 acts of terror against civilians within Israel's pre-1967 borders involving explosives, hand grenades and Molotov cocktails. These acts were committed by FATAH, led by Arafat himself.<sup>67</sup>

While these incidents can be interpreted as showing a lack of authority on Arafat's account, his public association with Saddam is a gross mistake. When Saddam decided in August 1990 to occupy Kuwait he was denounced and condemned by almost all members of the international community. The only leaders who supported Saddam were Arafat and Qaddafi. By doing this Arafat aroused against him not only the western and the eastern countries, but also many Arab leaders. President Mubarak went so far as to condemn Arafat as a liar and hypocrite, suggesting that it is time for the PLO to replace him with a more credible leader. Voices within the PLO followed suit.<sup>68</sup> It is hard to see the United States now resuming dialogue with the PLO or to imagine Arafat receiving the same hearty welcomes in western and eastern capitals as he used to only two years ago. The Palestinians in Israel and Jordan expressed identification with the PLO's position, but the inhabitants of the occupied territories and the Gulf suffered immediate damage. Almost all leftist organisations in Israel cut off

their connections with the Palestinians. Some leaders of the *Intifada* privately expressed their hopes that Arafat will review his position and show more moderate support for Saddam.<sup>69</sup> With regard to the Gulf states, Qatar, Bahrain and Oman are among those who decided not to renew Palestinians' staying permits. As a result, at least 20,000 people were forced to leave those countries.<sup>70</sup>

In the final section of this article I wish to draw attention to some of the future trends that may take place and put their mark on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The discussion will be focused on the growing Islamic movement in the territories; on the role of Syria in the conflict; and on the delicate position of the Israeli Palestinians.

### Future Trends

#### *The growing popularity of Islamic fundamentalism*

The increasing power of the religious fundamentalists in the territories gives extra thrust to the engines of the uprising. While in the PLO some moderate elements can be discerned, in the ' Hamas' movement no such elements exist.<sup>71</sup> The activists of the ' Hamas' and the ' Islamic Jihad' are known for their self-sacrifice; pride in living modest lives; blind discipline to whatever the Imams are saying, and an absolute and principled rejection of any idea of speaking with Israel. Israel is conceived as the first and foremost problem of the entire Muslim world. As the *Intifada* continues, it is more and more evident that orders and instructions are also given by Imams in the mosques, and not only by the PLO. Currently the PLO is not facing any really strong opposition to its leadership. But one cannot ignore the fact that many of the youngsters are looking for routes to Islam, inclining to emphasise the religious sides of their identity. Furthermore, it is better not to ignore the tension between the ' Hamas' and the PLO. From an Israeli stance, it may be good to see splits within the enemy's lines. However, if Israel sincerely wants to find a solution to the conflict, then these splits constitute obstacles on the road to peace.

Looking at the relationships between these two organisations since the outbreak of the uprising, it is apparent that for many long months the ' Hamas' movement did not coordinate its activities with the PLO. Nowadays, it still acts independently. ' Hamas' announces different days for strikes (connected with Islam), thus putting additional burden on the public.<sup>72</sup> In November 1988 Arafat stated that ' the " Hamas" Movement and the " Islamic Jihad" are in coordination with FATAH on the basis of a certain agreement within the Unified Command of the uprising in the occupied territories',<sup>73</sup> but in fact this assertion is more of an expression

of hope and political wisdom than one based on clear evidence. ' Hamas' competes against the Unified Command of the *Intifada* for control over the lives of the inhabitants as part of its drive to establish an Iran-style Islamic state in ' all of Palestine'. In the long run, the fundamentalist factor might grow and develop, especially when the connection between the ' Hamas' in Israel, and the other fundamentalist movements in the Arab world is reinforced. Of special concern is the growing power of the Shi'ite community in Lebanon (the Hizbullah movement), and that of the Sunni fundamentalism in Egypt (Muslim Brotherhood). Fundamentalist trends can also be discerned in Jordan, Tunis, Algeria and Sudan. There is, indeed, a great difference between the Sunni and the Shi'ite ideologies but nevertheless, fundamentalist beliefs of any kind are a verified scheme for pouring fuel on the flames of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Moreover, if this trend is to strengthen then Islamic fundamentalism will not only be of concern to Israel, but will also become the concern of the entire world.

#### *The role of Syria*

Syria has control over one terrorist organisation (SAIQA). It also has strong influence on Jibril and Abu-Mussa, and to a lesser extent on Abu-Nidal. Until recently it used to have close contacts with George Habash as well.<sup>74</sup> Syria is probably one of the few countries (if not the only) that can put a stop to their terrorist activities and consequently pave a more actual and visible way for peace. Without resources, weapons, and bases from which they could launch their attacks, no terrorist organisation can survive. But as long as Syria continues to supply the goods, and to pose a permanent threat to Israel, then it is plausible to think it will be very difficult to sign any peace treaty with the Palestinians. Furthermore, even if such an agreement was signed, it is questionable whether in the long run it will be worth the paper it is written upon. The role of Syria in the conflict is no less important than that of Jordan, assuming that the peace between Israel and Egypt will be kept.

For many long years, Syria showed a determined unwillingness to participate in the peace process or in any enterprise in this direction, no matter who was conducting it. At some stage of the Lebanon War it seemed that there was a possibility of reaching some sort of understanding between Israel and Syria. This opportunity, however, was wasted. As often happens in the course of history, a third salient party had made this opportunity possible. An understanding could have been reached that Syria would gain control over Lebanon and would be its puppet master; in return Assad would accept Israeli hold on at least part of the Golan Heights. ' Lebanon to Syria, Golan to Israel' could have paved the way for reaching at least a certain understanding and a *de*

*facto* status of non-belligerency between Israel and Syria, if not peace between the two countries. But, as we all know, the Israeli cabinet was at that time preoccupied with thoughts about creating 'a new order in Lebanon', ignoring the basic characteristics of that troubled country, and the deep involvement and interests of Syria in it, so that potential achievement has sunk into the drain, like other opportunities that were put on the agenda throughout the last decade.

Nowadays, Syria and Israel still have a very delicate relationships and each party tries not to tread on the other's toes. Hence, when dealing with the future of Lebanon, both sides acknowledge the interests of the other for their involvement in its affairs; here there are possibilities for bridging gaps, conducting some sort of policy that the opponent is willing to accept, and making compromises through various forms of communications. But it is a totally different story when it comes to the relationships between the two parties, concerning their own future, and not Lebanon's. Although in the last two years or so Assad made some comments which were interpreted as signs of moderation, still the official position is that there is nothing to speak about. The firm stand remains total rejection of Israel, and unwillingness to recognise its right to exist.

Hence Syria, today as before, might take up arms and wage war against Israel. Looking ahead, one of the scenarios that we have to examine very carefully is one of military cooperation between Syria and one, or more, Arab country against Israel. In the long run, having the support of countries such as Iran, or Iraq, and maybe both, Syria might consider the militant alternative even in the absence of Egypt, and without the support of the Soviet Union. Knowing how valuable pragmatism is in the Arab world, the possibility of a Syrian-Iraqi coalition is quite visible. The decision regarding Israel depends, to a great extent, on the inner position of the Alawii sect inside Syria and on the struggle between the key figures on the leadership in the post-Assad era. These are the two most important factors in the Syrian side which determine Israel's relations with its northern neighbour.

Let me close by considering another factor which might influence the future of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. That is the position of the Israeli Palestinians regarding the ongoing *Intifada*, and the efforts of their brothers in the territories to free themselves from Israeli occupation.

#### *The identification of the Israeli-Palestinians with the uprising*

In Israel there are between 700,000 to 800,000 Arab citizens, of which 600,000-650,000 are Muslims. The vast majority of this population defines itself as Palestinian. In the first days of the *Intifada* the Israeli-Palestinians kept silent. It took them some time to understand the scale

of the disturbances, and then on 21 December 1987, they declared a one-day general strike. Most participated in this identification act, and in some places there were more radical activities. Thus, for example, in Jaffa stones were thrown at an Israeli bus; in Lod there were public demonstrations, obstructing transportation; in Nazareth the local police station was attacked; and in Umm El-Fahm, demonstrators blocked the main road opposite the Arab town. From then on we witness an increase in the number of nationalistic events. In 1988 there were 717 incidents, compared with 170 in 1987.<sup>75</sup> This increase in the number of nationalistic incidents cannot be explained merely on grounds of the solidarity that the Israeli-Palestinians show with their brothers in the territories. Here it is useful to reflect on their status in society.

The present situation in Israel can be described by the distinction between 'formal' citizenship and 'full' citizenship. The notion of citizenship is commonly perceived as an institutional status from within which a person can address governments and other citizens and make claims about human rights.<sup>76</sup> All who possess the status are equal with respect to rights and duties with which the status is endowed. The Israeli Jews can be said to enjoy full citizenship, i.e., they enjoy equal respect as individuals, and they are entitled to equal treatment by law and in its administration. The situation is different with regard to the Israeli-Palestinians, who constitute today some 18 per cent of the population. Although formally the Israeli-Palestinians are considered to enjoy the same liberties as the Jewish community, in practice they do not share and enjoy the same rights and burdens. They are considered as 'second rate' citizens, conceived by many as hewers of wood and drawers of water. They also have to live with limitations on their freedoms which the Jewish majority do not bear.<sup>77</sup> For example, Israeli Palestinians pay more income tax than Jews since they do not enjoy discounts given to those who serve in the army. Arabs will find it more difficult than Jews to receive licences for extending their flats, or for building new ones. They also find it difficult to buy, or even to rent a flat in a Jewish neighbourhood. Furthermore, budgets of Arab municipalities stand no comparison with those of Jewish municipalities. There are not enough classes in Arab towns and villages. Arabs who graduate find it difficult to get a job in government offices.<sup>78</sup> In addition, being a Palestinian Arab in many cases 'guarantees' that a worker's salary would be lower than that of a Jew who is doing the same work.

The tension between Jews and Arabs deepened after the Lebanon War, and the hostility between the two sides was further intensified after the outbreak of the *Intifada*. The identification that the Israeli-Palestinians are showing with the uprising is tacit in the main but it could, in certain circumstances, take more radical form and be translated

into active steps and initiatives. There is a substantial difference between uprising in the occupied territories, and an uprising within the big cities of Israel. Floods of blood would be needed to stop this kind of an inner uprising. Israel has to watch very carefully what are the prevailing notions within its Arab population. It has to control and restrain any trends of radicalisation, and it should try to build bridges whenever gaps exist between Jews and Arabs. In order to reach *modus vivendi* and to calm tensions down, Israel needs to resort to educational means at all levels and to implement political solutions which would change the image, as well as the status of the Arab.

Most of the Palestinians do not want to leave their homes in Israel, even if a Palestinian state were to be established.<sup>79</sup> The majority of them (83 per cent) believe in the possibility of mutual existence between Jews and Arabs. This is despite the fact that almost half (45 per cent) of the Israeli Palestinians do not feel 'at home' in Israel; and that 69 per cent feel that discrimination against Arabs occurs frequently.<sup>80</sup> Israel should learn the lessons of the *Intifada* and make them feel at home. Otherwise the uprising might spread into the Green Line as well.

#### A Look Ahead: The *Intifada* and the Crisis in the Gulf

The *Intifada* is not likely to fade away. The Israelis should acknowledge that the wheels of history cannot be reversed, and that the Palestinians in the territories now know that even the PLO will not do the job for them. They have to do it themselves. The question is, however, what political gains they will be able to achieve in the process.

Currently the gap between the two sides is very wide. Therefore it will take a long time to bridge. The distance between Jerusalem and Cairo is about an hour's flight, but it took 29 years for Sadat to make this journey. Only very optimistic people hope that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict could find its solution within the same length of time. As long as the uprising was carried on outside the Green Line, the Israelis seemed to learn how to live with the situation, in the same way that they have learned to live with the road accidents (number one killer in the country) without taking substantial measures to prevent them. The Israeli population is very flexible. Israelis have proved that they know how to accommodate themselves to changes that either their government, or outside factors, force on them. But they could not live with an inner uprising, nor with frequent stabbings occurring in the streets of Tel Aviv. However, if the Israeli Palestinians show more active support for their brothers in the territories, and/or the killings will continue inside the Green Line, then the price for both sides would be very high indeed – for Jews as well as for Arabs.

Looking ahead, I find it very difficult to see any solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the near future. The *Intifada* deepened the hatred between the two nations and the extremists on both sides are dictating the tones. On the Israeli side, the government's official line is that there will not be negotiations with the PLO, and that land is not to be given for peace. On the Palestinian side, the moderates within the PLO are not able to control the extremists in and out of the PLO. Too many individuals and groups show reluctance in accepting Israel. To name some of them, Jibril, Habash, Abu al-Abbas, Samir Ghosha, Abu-Mussa, Abu-Nidal, the Islamic Jihad, and the Hamas movement – all of these groups are not willing to recognize Israel and are determined to continue the armed struggle. Key figures in the PLO leadership, like Abu-Iyad and Arafat, continuously resort to double language: one in western newspapers, another in Arab ones. This, of course, does not help to ease Israeli suspicion of the PLO.

As I said, the main task for the PLO is to translate their efforts into political gains. Here Shamir's election proposal may serve as the base for future achievements. At least it is a starting point on the road to self-determination. In the current atmosphere in Israel, which favours a Likud government, I find it difficult to believe that the Palestinians are likely to achieve a better start. The majority in Israel wants peace, but it does not want to give land in return. The process is bound to be slow, but it has to start somewhere. Frankly I do not think that the Palestinians have another choice but to accept Shamir's plan. Unless they wish the endless bloodshed to continue.

Anyway, what has to be solved first is the crisis in the Gulf. Nothing will move before that. As long as this crisis is not settled, the Palestinians have little hope that any step towards finding a solution to their problem will be made. Saddam's 'linkage idea', of connecting the evacuation of his forces from Kuwait with the evacuation of Israeli forces from the occupied territories was baseless, at least as far as Israel was concerned. Indeed there is a difference between occupying land during the fighting of a defensive war, and the swallowing of a defenceless country in order to rob its resources and land. The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait was condemned by the entire world (apart from Libya, Yemen, and the PLO). Only a few regarded the Six Day War and its results as unjustified. Connecting the two separate issues together meant that infringing international law pays, that blackmail wins. Israel felt insulted by the idea and would question the friendship of those who are willing to entertain this proposal. Furthermore, apart from moral considerations there is also a practical one. Israel will never allow Saddam to harvest such a gain, for this would be the perfect victory which would make Saddam the unquestionable leader of the Arab world.

At the time when these lines are written (November 1990), a military confrontation in the Gulf seems to be unavoidable. Knowing the character of the two leaders that are orchestrating the conflict in the Gulf, Bush and Saddam Hussein, it does not appear that either of them will give in without a fight.<sup>81</sup> For both of them the stakes are too high. In the first stages of the crisis it seemed that the American administration handled the situation in a skilful manner. The two major decisions that President Bush took, the blockade of Iraq and the sending of troops to defend Saudi Arabia, seemed to be in order. Later President Bush found out what his predecessors learned in the past: that the decision to send troops is easier than maintaining them, and that these two decisions are relatively easier than the decision to return the troops home. If the Secretary of State, James Baker, is serious in his intention to create 'a new political order for the region',<sup>82</sup> then I am afraid that the United States is going to enter a new Vietnam. With this view in mind, the US administration is likely to create such a situation by its own decisions. To start with, the moderate friendly nations of today, first and foremost Saudi Arabia, are likely to become in the long run – if American soldiers stay in the region – bitter enemies of this 'western colonialist power'.

As far as Iraq is concerned, Saddam will do his utmost to resolve the conflict with some gains on his side. The most sensible thing for him is to divert the tension towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It also seems that the sensible thing for him was (and still is) to exert pressure on King Hussein so as to allow Iraqi troops to enter Jordanian territory. Both Husseins know that Israel would have regarded this as a *casus belli*. Israel cannot afford such a threat so near to its borders. The lessons of history were enlightening enough. However, as far as Saddam is concerned, by this move he could have succeeded in diverting world attention to Israel. Many are not aware of Israel's sensitivity to this issue and might view an Israeli reaction with unfavourable eye. One who knows what might be Israel's reaction is King Hussein. It may as well be that Saddam tried to force the King to allow his troops to enter Jordan but failed to succeed. The King after all knows that the better scenario from Saddam's viewpoint is the worst one for him. This is why he was willing to co-operate with Saddam, showed his reluctance to participate in the blockade, and allowed transportation of goods into Iraq. He even ordered his air force to conduct observation flights across the Saudi and Israeli borders and supplied the Iraqis (though we may assume after some filtering) with information.<sup>83</sup> The sensible King is well aware of the limited room for manoeuvre that is open to him, so he plays his cards close to his chest, doing his utmost to keep his country out of the conflict. If he fails, and Saddam will continue to hold his place, then the region might be drawn into an all-embracing military confrontation.

Thus it seems, sad as it is, that the road for a war has already been paved. Saddam went too far and now military confrontation appears to be unavoidable. It will take place in the very near future, or the more remote. The early 1990s are likely to be no less dramatic than the years concluding the previous decade.

## NOTES

1. Cf. *Article 21 of the Palestinian Covenant*.
2. The main parties of the Front were the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP); the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front; the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine – General Command (PFLP-GC); and the Arab Liberation Front (ALF).
3. Rabat Summit of October 1974.
4. *Article 9 of the Palestinian Covenant*.
5. Cf. Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers* (N.Y.: Beit-Shamai Publications, 1988), p.164.
6. In comparison with 1974/5, when there were 221 disturbances; and with 1975/6, 558 disturbances. Cf. Aryeh Shalev, *The Intifada: Causes and Effects* (Tel Aviv: Papyrus, 1990), p.209 (in Hebrew).
7. Compared with 143 in 1977; 79 in 1976; and 231 in 1975. Cf. Ariel Merari, *PLO: Core of World Terror* (Jerusalem: Carta, 1983), p.15.
8. The American Council for Foreign Relations conducted a research in 1984/85 about Israeli society. Its conclusions were that the people are emotional and indecisive, deeply split in regards to their political, material, and spiritual preferences. It also asserted that the gaps within the Jewish population, not to mention the gap between Jews and Arabs, had deepened. In addition, the research warned against the danger of fundamentalist Jews breaking the law. (*Yedioth Ahronoth*, 10 May 1985, Pol. Sup. p.2.)
9. In previous years, the number of disturbances was significantly smaller. In 1981/2 there were 1500 disturbances; in 1980/1: 534; and in 1979–80: 427. Cf., Shalev, *The Intifada: Causes and Effects* p.209.
10. The uprising was sparked by the hang-glider incident of 25 November 1987, in which a Palestinian gunman killed six soldiers near Kiryat-Shmone.
11. Interview to *Jerusalem Post*, 12 February 1989.
12. There was an increase of more than 100 per cent in disturbances in comparison to 1986; an increase of 133 per cent in the number of demonstrations (268 in 1987; 114 in 1986); an increase of 178 per cent in the cases of burning tyres (478 incidents in 1987 and 172 in 1986); an increase of 140 per cent in incidents of stone throwing (418 in 1987; 174 in 1986); an increase of 68 per cent in the cases of barricading roads (82 in 1987; 49 in 1986). Cf. Itzhak Rabichye, '3150 disturbances in a year. This is a civil war', *Yedioth Ahronoth*, 13 September 1987, p.17; Zeev Schiff and Ehud Ya'ari, *Intifada* (Tel Aviv: Shoken, 1990), p.26. (in Hebrew); and Shalev, p.282.
13. Cf. *Labour and Employment in Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza District* (Jerusalem: Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, 1987), pp.10–11.
14. *Labour and Employment in Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza District*, p.3.
15. Schiff and Ya'ari, *Intifada*, p.77.
16. *Labour and Employment in Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza District*, p.7.
17. *Judea, Samaria and the Gaza District Since 1967* (Jerusalem: Israel Information Centre, 1986).
18. *Programmes for Peace* (London: Britain/Israel Public Affairs Committee 1987), p.14.
19. *Programmes for Peace*, p.5.
20. *Programmes for Peace*, p.5. It is of interest to note that Israel operates the system in accordance with both Jordanian and Egyptian curricula.
21. Asher Susser, *The PLO and the Palestinian Entity* (London: The Anglo-Israel



- Association, 1989), p.2.
22. *Labour and Employment in Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza District*, p.8.
  23. For further data on welfare, land, economy, etc., see Meron Benvenisti (ed.), *The West Bank Data Project* (Washington DC: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1987).
  24. For example, in Shatti Refugee Camp in Gaza there are 6,000 families in a space that should house only 1,000.
  25. Shalev, *The Intifada: Causes and Effects*, p.22.
  26. Nadav Anner, *Will There Always Be Refugees?* (Jerusalem: Israel Information Centre, 1985), p.43.
  27. Schiff and Ya'ari, *Intifada*, p.78.
  28. The estimates speak, of an investment of at least 1 billion dollars.
  29. Cf. Schiff and Ya'ari, p.78; Shalev, p.22.
  30. Schiff and Ya'ari, pp.73-75.
  31. One story was about a wedding convoy, which was stopped by soldiers who ordered the groom to remove the seats of the car and its wheels. This, of course, in front of his bride and her family. Cf. Sheef et al. *Intifada* p.75.
  32. Susser, *The PLO and the Palestinian Entity* p.1.
  33. Cf. Ariel Merari et al, who contend that the age factor is of crucial importance for understanding the causes of the *Intifada*. 'The Palestinian *Intifada*: An Analysis of a Popular Uprising After Seven Months'. *Terrorism and Political Violence* Vol.I, No.2 (April 1989), pp.177-201.
  34. Two incidents are worth recalling, both happened in 1987: at one time, a group of 'Gush Emunim' ('Block of the Faithful'), headed by the secretary of the Gush Daniela Weiss, shattered Arab cars in Kalkilia; on another night, a group of settlers from Kiryat-Arba opened fire in the direction of Daheisha refugee camp.
  35. The settlers admit that there was an atmosphere of anarchy. They see the government's policy and the incompetence of the security forces as the major factors conducive to this atmosphere.
  36. Reports which summarise two years of *Intifada* (9 December 1979 to 9 December 1989), as published in the Israeli newspapers.
  37. Schiff and Ya'ari, *Intifada*, p.274.
  38. BEZELEM is the Israeli Centre of Information Regarding Human Rights in the Territories. The data summarises two years of *Intifada* (9 December 1979 to 9 December 1989).
  39. According to BBC Television 700 Palestinians were killed up to September 1990 (Panorama, 10 September 1990). According to BEZELEM, in October 1990, 31 Palestinians were killed. This figure includes those who were killed in the Temple Mount incident (*Yedioth Ahronoth*, 2 November 1990, p.3).
  40. The official figures, published by the Israeli authorities, are lower. According to them 533 Palestinians were killed (338 in the West Bank; 195 in Gaza); 244 houses were demolished (161 in the West Bank; 83 in Gaza); and 116 houses were blocked (70 in the West Bank; 46 in Gaza).
  41. Israeli police, Sabotage Department.
  42. *PLO Fails to Sustain Its Renunciation of Terrorism* (London: Information Department, Embassy of Israel, 4 February 1990). Estimations made in November 1990 state that one third of the Palestinians killed were murdered by their own brothers.
  43. See Khaled al-Hassan in 'Two Years of *Intifada*: CSIS Conference Excerpts', *American-Arab Affairs* No.31, (Winter 1989-90), pp.43-45.
  44. In the past, a soldier could make first signs that he intended to take his trousers off to scare girls off.
  45. The pre-1967 Israeli borders.
  46. In the last decade every year a poll is conducted to reflect on the extent that democratic values are rooted in Israeli society. The results repeatedly showed that some 30 per cent of the Jewish population hold anti-democratic views. The *Intifada* led to a significant change, with the effect that, in January 1990, 45 per cent expressed willingness to have 'strong leadership that will not be dependent on elections'.

47. Dov Goldstein, 'Democracy Goes Bankrupt', *Maariv*, 25 January 1990; and Itzhak Ben-Horin, 'Democracy Goes Down', *Maariv*, 10 February 1990.
48. This view is commonly shared by people who identify themselves with the political right in Israel. On the other side, there are people from the left who explicitly advocate to refuse obeying the law on conscientious grounds, when the demand is to serve in the occupied territories or in Lebanon. Members of this group, 'Yesh Gvul' ('There Is A Limit') do not resort to violence, and surely do not advocate discrimination. But like rightist extremists they argue that there are some values that stand beyond the law. By adhering to this claim, they help undermining the rule of law and order in Israel. (On this issue see Itzhak Zamir, 'Boundaries of Obedience to Law', in A. Barak [ed.], *Essays in Honour of Shimon Agron* (Jerusalem, 1986) pp.119-128 (in Hebrew).
49. A study from June 1988 showed that 41 per cent of the Jewish citizens support the idea of transfer. The research also indicated that 27 per cent of high school pupils declare their intention to emigrate and 45 per cent think that Israel is too democratic. (Cf. Amos Keinan, '41 per cent, 45 per cent, 27 per cent'. *Yedioth Ahronoth*. 10 June 1988. Political supplement. p.17). However, I should say that much is dependent on the way that the question is phrased. *Yedioth Ahronoth* reported on 16 November 1990 that 20 per cent support the transfer (Pol. Sup., p.3).
50. *Ha'aretz*, 2 June 1989.
51. Schiff and Ya'ari, *Intifada*, p.275. For further discussion on the impact of the *Intifada* on Israel, see Don Peretz. 'The *Intifada* and Middle East Peace', *Survival* Vol. XXXII, No.5 (1990), pp.393-397. I would say that now the reduction in tourism is much higher than 14 per cent.
52. Official numbers, after two years of *Intifada* (9 December 1987 - 9 December 1989).
53. *Yedioth Ahronoth*, 12 August 1990, p.11.
54. Leaflet no.65 of the Hamas was initiated after the massacre, calling to open a new stage in the uprising. A similar leaflet was published by the PLO.
55. 'Shabiba' is the Palestinian youth organization in the territories.
56. On 11 April 1987, Prime Minister Peres and King Hussein met in London. The main principles of this agreement were:
  - The opening of an international conference with no coercive potential or some kind of veto rights to any of its participants. These will be the parties to the conflict and the five permanent members of the UN Security Council.
  - The conference will be followed by direct negotiations between Israel and a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, on the basis of UN Resolutions 242, and 338.
  - Peres and Hussein agreed that only those Palestinians who will be approved by Israel will be appointed to the delegation. It was hoped that the PLO will give its silent consent to this arrangement.
- In early May, this document was discussed in the Israeli Cabinet. The result was, as usual in such crucial matters, a draw, and the whole process stuck.
57. Resolution 242 of 22 November 1967 speaks of the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the occupied territories, and the recognition of the sovereignty of every state in the region. It affirms the necessity 'for achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem'. Resolution 338 of 22 October 1973 calls for a cease-fire and to start immediately the implementation of 242 so as to establish 'a just and durable peace in the Middle East'.
58. Cf. *Yedioth Ahronoth*, 7 August 1988, p.1.
59. Interview to *Al-Anbaa* (Kuwait, 18 December 1988). The Chairman of the PNC, Abd El-Hamid El-Saih, spoke in another occasion in a similar fashion. He stated: 'we will take what we can, and afterwards we will demand the rest of the territory. We are not opposed to obtaining a state which would encompass one quarter or one half of our territory, and afterwards we will demand the rest'.
60. The Declaration, we may recall, disallowed terroristic acts only outside of Israel, and this for tactical reasons. Arafat acknowledged that these acts hurt the PLO's image in the world and, therefore, they should be maintained only in the occupied land, i.e. in Israel and the territories.
61. UN Resolutions 3379 and 3236.

62. PNC's political statement from 15 November 1988, as broadcast by PLO's central radio in Baghdad. Cited in Shalev, *The Intifada: Causes and Effects*, p.243.
63. Arafat passed the resolutions despite strong opposition that was formed against him. George Habash and the 'Hamas' movement in Israel were among those who rejected the resolutions.
64. Arafat clearly affirmed PLO's acceptance of the two UN Resolutions; explicitly recognized Israel and its right to exist; and totally and categorically renounced all forms of terrorism.
65. *Time*, 7 November 1988.
66. This is Professor Ben-Rafael's remark, made in a private discussion with him.
67. A report made by Yigal Carmon, the Israeli Prime Minister's Adviser for Countering Terrorism. Cf. *PLO Fails to Sustain Its Renunciation of Terrorism*, p.2.
68. Cf. *Yedioth Ahronoth*, 4 September 1990, p.13.
69. *Yedioth Ahronoth*, 28 August 1990.
70. *Yedioth Ahronoth*, 4 September 1990, p.13; 11 September 1990, p.3 ('Mamon' supplement).
71. 'Hamas' - the Islamic Objection Movement. As a word *Hamas* means courage, enthusiasm. The most influential leader of the movement is Sheik Achmed Ismail Yassin.
72. Recently, 'Hamas' declared 6 September 1990 as a day of strike. The PLO, on its part, declared a strike on 9 September 1990.
73. *Al-Ussbu' Al-Arabi*, Lebanon, 28 November 1989.
74. Habash decided to move his headquarters from Damascus to Baghdad as a reaction to Syria's position regarding the crisis in the Gulf.
75. Data of the Israeli police, as cited by Shalev, *The Intifada: Causes and Effects*, p.175.
76. Cf. Herman van Gunsteren. 'Admission to Citizenship'. *Ethics*, Vol.98, No.4, (July 1988). pp.731-741. See also T.H. Marshall's classical essay *Citizenship and Social Class*. (Cambridge University Press: 1950).
77. A research from July 1987 showed that 50 per cent of the Jewish population are not willing to regard the Israeli-Arabs as equal citizens (Eli Tavor, 'Israel is too democratic', *Yedioth Ahronoth*, 20 March 1988, p.17).
78. Cf. Sheef et al. *Intifada*, pp.215-217.
79. A study from June 1989 showed that most of the Israeli-Palestinians want to live in Israel (75 per cent), even if a Palestinian state is established; 88 per cent believe that Arafat wants peace with Israel. Cf. *Yedioth Ahronoth*, 25 August 1989, p.10. (Pol. Sup.)
80. *Yedioth Ahronoth*, 25 August 1989, p.10. (Pol. Sup.)
81. One important question that is yet to be answered is: how did it happen that the US intelligence was caught by surprise on 2 August 1990? A plausible answer is that it really did not. We may speculate that Saddam and Bush reached a certain understanding that Iraq would take over a few oil-fields and maybe one or two islands. However, on the day Saddam ordered his troops to conquer the whole of Kuwait, leaving Bush furious and frustrated.
82. Cf. Andrew Rosenthal's item in *International Herald Tribune*, 8 October 1990, p.1.
83. As reported by Chief of IDF Intelligence Amnon Shahak, *Yedioth Ahronoth*, 5 October 1990, p.2.

## Varieties of Counter-insurgency Activities: Israel's Military Operations against the Palestinians, 1948-90

STUART A. COHEN and EFRAIM INBAR

It is generally agreed that the required governmental response to violent revolutionary insurgency is an integrated strategy, which combines military and civilian-administrative components. 'Guerrilla' wars of that type, runs the argument, cannot successfully be defeated by measures appropriate to conventional interstate conflicts. Rather, counter-insurgency requires governments and their forces to adopt policies and operations more specifically tailored to the needs of the case.<sup>1</sup>

In the military sphere, the measures which counter-insurgency is consequently deemed to necessitate are often lumped together under the rubric of 'low intensity' operations. This concept has begun to generate a particularly rich literature.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, however, it is becoming something of a catch-all term. Indeed, it now encompasses so wide a range of applications of force that it threatens to obscure the individuality of the many counter-insurgency actions which it purports to describe.

This essay will attempt to be more specific. Drawing on examples taken from the extended history of Israeli operations against Arab insurgency, it aims to demonstrate the variety of military options available to governments which confront a challenge of that sort. It will argue that even when the data base is limited (as will here be the case) to instances in which violence is actually employed, the choices available to governments are more numerous than is commonly suggested. They are also amenable to synoptic analysis and examination.

### I

Of the many considerations which make the Israeli experience especially interesting, perhaps the most significant is the disparate nature of the insurgencies against which the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) have been required to take military action. Arab (and especially Palestinian Arab) activities against Israel have not been unitary in form. True, all