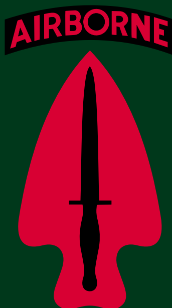
Assessing Revolutionary and Insurgent Strategies

CASE STUDIES IN INSURGENCY AND REVOLUTIONARY WARFARE—PALESTINE SERIES

VOLUME II—THE PALESTINIAN ARAB INSURGENCY (1890–2010)



United States Army Special Operations Command

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VOLUME II—THE PALESTINIAN ARAB INSURGENCY
(1890–2010)

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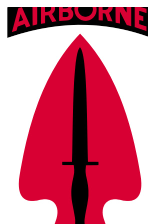

United States Army Special Operations Command

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ASSESSING REVOLUTIONARY AND INSURGENT STRATEGIES

The Assessing Revolutionary and Insurgent Strategies (ARIS) series consists of a set of case studies and research conducted for the US Army Special Operations Command by the National Security Analysis Department of the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory.

The purpose of the ARIS series is to produce a collection of academically rigorous yet operationally relevant research materials to develop and illustrate a common understanding of insurgency and revolution. This research, intended to form a bedrock body of knowledge for members of the Special Forces, will allow users to distill vast amounts of material from a wide array of campaigns and extract relevant lessons, thereby enabling the development of future doctrine, professional education, and training.

From its inception, ARIS has been focused on exploring historical and current revolutions and insurgencies for the purpose of identifying emerging trends in operational designs and patterns. ARIS encompasses research and studies on the general characteristics of revolutionary movements and insurgencies and examines unique adaptations by specific organizations or groups to overcome various environmental and contextual challenges.

The ARIS series follows in the tradition of research conducted by the Special Operations Research Office (SORO) of American University in the 1950s and 1960s, by adding new research to that body of work and in several instances releasing updated editions of original SORO studies.

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LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

What makes a people?

Must a people be tied to a land; a territory that can be claimed as home? Or must a people have a historical common identity based on religion, ethnicity, or cultural beliefs and practices? Can a series of dramatic geopolitical events coalesce populations into a single people with a shared identity, an identity that could be said to make that people a nation?

Palestine is an area, a country, with a recorded history that stretches back millennia. Many nations of people have lived, farmed, built, warred, and died in the area the world has known as Palestine. The borders of this territory have also shifted over history both ancient and more recent, sometimes stretching north into modern day Lebanon, south into the Sinai Peninsula, and east across the Jordan River deep into the contemporary Hashemite Kingdom of Jordon. Today, Palestine refers to a group of people, a nation perhaps, that has long resisted first the formation and later the continued existence of Israel, with undergrounds, guerrillas, terrorists, and governing bodies that have waged a generations-long military and political insurgency against the modern Jewish state. Yet this insurgency, one of the most intractable and notable of both the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, continues to fail to reach either its military or political goals. Why is that? Is it a lack of sufficient external support? Or extremely effective counterinsurgency practices on the part of Israel? Or is it the absence of a strong common identity and narrative for the nascent nation of Palestine?

The creation of the State of Israel by the pre-state *Yishuv* Jewish population of Palestine and Jews fleeing the horrors of World War II along with the subsequent displacement of hundreds of thousands of Arabs, mostly Muslim but also Christians and Druze, was one of the defining geopolitical events of the twentieth century. Modern day Israel and the Palestinian territories together are but a small sliver of land along the Mediterranean coast of the Middle East. The combined populations of Israel and the Palestinian territories, just shy of thirteen million, are smaller than seventy-five other nations and about equivalent to the population of Pennsylvania. Yet the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and resulting political conundrum have been at the forefront of world events for more than half a century. The region's religious, cultural,

and strategic significance, along with the powerful regional and global allies each side in this conflict leverages, all contribute to the importance of this ongoing crisis that is without an end in sight.

The study of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict is of critical interest for the student of resistance movements. Israel was largely founded by a decades-long Zionist insurgency that culminated in the 1948 Arab–Israeli War and Israel's independence. This successful insurgency exhibited valuable lessons for nearly all facets of revolutions and insurgencies, including the phases of nonviolent and violent resistance movements, the nature of underground organizations, the importance of external support and state sponsorship, and the criticality of narratives that articulate the character of resistance movements. That "half" of the Israeli–Palestinian insurgency story is the subject of the first volume of this series. This second volume explores the nature of the other half of the story. The Palestinian Arab resistance movement has taken many forms over the last seventy years with roots that extend further back to Arab resistance against the *Yishuv* and the foreign powers that once governed Palestine. This Palestinian Arab insurgency provides as equally compelling a case study of resistance as Zionism.

The Palestinian Arab insurgency against the founding and subsequent growth of Israel is a fascinating and tragic example of the phenomenon of resistance. This cross-generational conflict has itself defined a "new people," the Palestinians, with a narrative that has morphed over the decades as political and military realities on the ground have and continue to evolve. The insurgency has also transitioned from violent to nonviolent and back again, mixing terrorism, urban guerrilla warfare, conventional interstate warfare, competing external support, multidomain warfare, partial governance over defined territories, and many fractures within the resistance movement itself. The Palestinian Arabs who actively resist Israel and the occupation of the Palestinian territories have formed numerous competing and at times warring movements that matured and shifted over generations. Meanwhile, many Palestinian Arabs live peacefully in a democratic Israel, even serving in the national parliament, the Knesset, of the Jewish state.

The authors of this second volume of the Assessing Revolutionary and Insurgent Strategies (ARIS) case study of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict explore the history and nature of the Arab resistance, first against Jewish immigration to the region and later against the creation and continued existence of the Israel, from the perspectives and

understandings of resistance movements developed by the U.S. Army Special Operations Command and the ARIS project. If the post-Cold War years have taught us anything about the future of warfare, it is that resistance movements, including violent insurgencies, will likely dominate global battlespaces for the foreseeable future. The United States will continue to depend upon its students and practitioners of unconventional warfare to provide security for the American people and their allies. A study of the Palestinian Arab insurgency and Israel's counterinsurgency efforts allows the student of resistance to explore the development and conduct of unconventional warfare and insurgency in both depth and breadth.

The goal of this volume is to provide that student of resistance a deeper understanding of what makes an insurgency a success or a failure.

Mathison Hall
ARIS Project Leader

PREFACE

The long-lived Arab–Israeli struggle continues to command the attention of the world. At the root of the issue is the simple but incontrovertible fact that two groups of people want the same piece of land. The conflict has, since 1947, occasionally boiled over into full-scale war. However, between those episodes, it continued to manifest as a multifaceted Arab insurgency against Israel.

The Palestinian insurgency presents the soldier, leader, strategist, and scholar with an example of a resistance movement that has heretofore fallen short of achieving its goals. The principal reason for its failure has been disunity among the leaders of the insurgency and their sponsoring states. From the beginning of the Zionist enterprise, Arab Palestinians who were gradually divested of lands their ancestors had farmed for generations found themselves pitted against each other as often as against the Zionists. The search for a compelling and unifying narrative that could serve as a foundation for a sustained and successful insurgency was never found. In its place were a series of spirited attempts by various manifestations of pan-Arabism, Palestinian nationalism, Islamism, socialism, and communism. None of these ideas—even when sometimes mixed together—could garner the sociological and psychological strength to draw together the various Arab stakeholders.

Instead, the Arab insurgency against Israel played out in overlapping, often conflicting campaigns by various factions, each vying for legitimacy in the eyes of the Palestinian people, the surrounding Arab powers, and the international community. From Nasser's call for pan-Arab unity and a decisive reconquering of Palestine, to the bizarre admixture of political and religious terror and insurgency groups that came together under Yasser Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organization, to the latest permutation of Islamism found in Hamas today, each attempt at resistance and eradication of "the Zionist entity" withered because of its failure to create unity. The various groups often pursued campaigns that followed a similar pattern: extreme, radical insistence on destroying Israel; insistence that the group would never compromise or negotiate with Israel; and a gradual relaxation of extremist policies in the face of Israel's resilience and international connections. As each of these groups eventually morphed from ideological extremism into political pragmatism, they instantly gave birth to a new group

of wild-eyed ideologues competing for legitimacy. The result has been systematic disunity.

The Arab insurgency against Israel is fundamentally a struggle of self-identity. Who are the Arabs who live in the Gaza Strip, the occupied West Bank, the refugee camps, the worldwide diaspora, and within Israel itself? Arab leaders from presidents to militia leaders to Islamic scholars to literary elites to vicious terrorists have attempted to answer that question and failed. Unable to convince the world and more importantly the Palestinian Arabs themselves of the right answer, each of these men and women thereupon found himself or herself unable to garner the political and military strength to dislodge Israel from territories that the Israeli Defense Forces conquered. If the legendary Chinese military philosopher Sun Tzu correctly observed that to succeed in war you must first know yourself, this wisdom is nowhere manifested so clearly than in Palestine.

This second volume of the ARIS study of Palestinian insurgency thus examines and analyzes in detail the nature and course of a resistance movement that has yet to fulfill its goals. The student or practitioner of insurgency can therefore learn by seeing and understanding why. The authors have sought objectivity in a topic that is a crucible of subjective passions. However, the skill of the analyst—hopefully reflected in this study—is to transcend passions while simultaneously accounting for them. By assimilating the political, sociological, psychological, cultural, religious, and military factors that came together to create the Palestinian insurgency, we can illuminate the very nature of resistance

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CHAPTER 1.
INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

The league wants . . . to form an Arab empire stretching from the Tigris and the Euphrates to the Suez Isthmus, and from the Mediterranean to the Arabian Sea.

—Negib Azoury, *Program of the League of the Arab Fatherland,* 1905

BACKGROUND

The purpose of the Assessing Revolutionary and Insurgent Strategies (ARIS) series is to produce academically rigorous yet operationally relevant research to expand on and update the body of knowledge on insurgency and revolution for members of the US Special Forces. We began this work with a rigorous assessment of all known insurgent or revolutionary activities from 1962 through the present day. To conduct this assessment, we agreed on a basic definition of revolution or insurgency.[1, 2] For the purpose of this research, a *revolution* is defined as:

> An attempt to modify the existing political system at least partially through unconstitutional or illegal use of force or protest.[3]

Next we developed a taxonomy to establish a standard structure for analysis and to facilitate discussion of similarities and differences. We classified events and activities according to the most evident cause of the revolt. The causes or bases of revolution were categorized as follows:

- Those motivated by a desire to greatly modify the type of government
- Those motivated by identity or ethnic issues
- Those motivated by a desire to drive out a foreign power
- Those motivated by religious fundamentalism
- Those motivated by issues of modernization or reform

After applying this taxonomy, we selected twenty-three cases, across the five categories above, to be researched for inclusion in the *Casebook on Insurgency and Revolutionary Warfare Volume II: 1962–2009*.[4] For each of the twenty-three revolutions or insurgencies, the casebook includes a summary case study that focuses on the organization and activities of the insurgent group.

Subsequently, we selected several of the cases for a more detailed treatment that would apply a broader and more holistic analytical perspective, considering factors such as the social, economic, historical, and political context. Within the ARIS research series, these studies are referred to as “ARIS Tier 1 Insurgency Case Studies.” This case study on Israel–Palestine is one of these works.

PURPOSE OF THE CASE STUDY

This case study presents a detailed account of revolutionary and insurgent activities in Palestine from 1890 through 2010. The first volume examines the conflict with a focus on the Zionist movement and insurgency through the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 and the Zionists' transition to governance through 1950. This second volume attends to the Arab resistance against the Ottoman Empire, the British Mandate, and the State of Israel from 1890 through 2010. It is specifically intended to provide a foundation for Special Forces personnel to understand the circumstances, environment, and catalysts for revolution; the organization of resistance or insurgent organizations and their development, modes of operation, external support, and successes and failures; the counterinsurgents' organization, modes of operation, and external support, as well as their effects on the resistance; and the outcomes and long-term ramifications of the revolutionary/insurgent activities. This foundation will allow readers to distill vast amounts of material from a wide array of campaigns and extract relevant lessons, thereby enabling the development of future doctrine, professional education, and training.

Like all products in the ARIS series, this study examines revolutions and insurgencies for the purpose of identifying emerging trends in operational designs and patterns, including elements that can serve as catalysts and indicators of success or failure. Building on an understanding of the general characteristics of revolutionary movements and insurgencies, this study examines ways that organizations or groups adapt to overcome various environmental and contextual challenges.

ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

ARIS Tier 1 Insurgency Case Studies are organized in five major sections:

1. Introduction and Summary
2. Context and Catalysts of the Insurgency
3. Structure and Dynamics of the Insurgency
4. Government Countermeasures
5. Conclusion

This *Introduction and Summary* presents an introduction to the ARIS series and a brief description of how the content in each particular case is presented. Refer to the *Technical Appendix* for a discussion of the types of sources and methods that were used to gather and analyze the data, as well as any methodological limitations encountered in the research. Lastly, this section includes a synopsis of the case study on Palestine.

The section *Context and Catalysts of the Insurgency* is divided into four chapters that address various aspects of the context within which the insurgency takes place. This section looks at the following elements:

1. Physical environment
2. Historical context
3. Socioeconomic conditions
4. Government and politics

The organization and inner workings of each of the primary insurgent groups are analyzed in the *Structure and Dynamics of the Insurgency* section. Varying slightly from other ARIS case studies, this volume looks at the Arab resistance through twelve chronological chapters (6–17), each corresponding to a period in the development of the resistance. This analysis considers various characteristics, including the following:

- Leadership and organization
- Ideology
- Legitimacy
- Motivation and behavior
- Operations
- External actors and transnational influences
- Finances, logistics, and sustainment

We also varied from the standard format for the *Government Countermeasures* chapter. Rather than isolate this material in a distinct chapter, we included it in each chronological chapter when appropriate so that the reader can better understand the interaction of the various actors during the insurgency. Sections on government countermeasures examine the political, military, informational, and/or economic actions taken by the government and by external forces in support of the government to counter the efforts of the insurgency.

Central questions that emerge from a study of the Palestinian Arab resistance are: what is Palestinian nationalism, and when did it appear?[5] Advocates for the resistance insist that the Arabs of Palestine constituted a nation (if not a state) from an early date, and based on their national character, they should have a sovereign state in all or some of Palestine. Opponents claim that Palestinian Arab nationalism is a fiction deliberately created as an ideological foil against Zionism and that Palestine remained a divided, undergoverned, and largely unproductive backwater until the Zionist immigration began. This study traces the roots of Arab nationalism and examines how it manifested into resistance movements against the various authorities that controlled Palestine.

The study concludes with a look at the civil war that broke out in 2007 between the two strongest rivals for control of the Palestinian people: Hamas and Fatah. It demonstrates the conflicted course of Arab resistance and the fundamental disunity that plagued the various movements from the beginning of the struggle. The final chapter also looks at Operation Cast Lead as an example of the reach and limitations of the government of the State of Israel in its fight against the Arab resistance. Volume I concluded with the culmination of Zionism in the creation of the State of Israel in 1948. There is no such end point for the Arab resistance. As of this writing, the bloodshed, frustration, and disunity that characterized the Arab resistance continues with no end in sight. The student and practitioner of irregular warfare can gain unique and powerful insights into the dynamics of insurgency—its centripetal and centrifugal forces—by investigating the Arab struggle.

SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

This volume looks at the Palestinian Arab resistance from the final years of the Ottoman Empire through 2010. Throughout this period, indigenous Arabs struggled to deal with Turkish overlords, absentee Arab landlords, British imperialists, and Zionist invaders. The ravages of the Middle Ages left Palestine a divided land, and the diplomatic machinations that followed World War I aggravated the problem by introducing a colonial power—Great Britain—whose leaders had made conflicting promises to both the Jews and the Arabs there. As the Arabs rose to oppose British policy and Zionist encroachment, an embryonic idea of nationalism began to emerge, but from the start, it contended

with competing ideas. Syria continued to believe that Palestine was part of its territory, while Egypt's reach included Gaza. Zionist leaders put forward various claims that ranged from the portions of land that their earlier settlers developed—the Jewish communities along the Mediterranean coast, in the Jezreel Valley, near the Sea of Galilee, and in parts of Jerusalem—to unsustainable claims to the entirety of Palestine. In the interwar period, the colonial powers complicated matters by creating a Hashemite regime in the Transjordan that also claimed land on the West Bank of the Jordan River.

The Arab resistance thus played out within the context of enduring questions regarding who truly owned (or should own) the land of Palestine. The indigenous Muslim and Christian Arabs had on their side the palpable fact that their ancestors lived on and worked the land since antiquity. The Zionists arrived in the late nineteenth century, claiming even older ties to Palestine and appealing to the cultural and religious traditions, history, and myths related to ancient Israel. European anti-Semitism, culminating in the East European pogroms and finally in the Nazi Holocaust, propelled the Zionist claim to legitimacy, but the indigenous Arabs insisted that they must not be made to suffer for the sins of others against the Jews. Unfortunately for the early Arab insurgents, their enemies were better organized, better financed, and better armed.

Centripetal and Centrifugal Forces

Throughout this study, we refer to centripetal and centrifugal forces within the Arab resistance. Centripetal forces are those factors that tended to unify the Arabs. Centrifugal forces, on the other hand, are those factors that caused (or could have caused) division. An insurgency, like any social phenomenon, is constantly acted on by these forces. Successful groups are those for which the centripetal (unifying) forces remain stronger than the centrifugal (divisive) forces. One of the most salient features of the Arab resistance was its leaders' inability to overcome centrifugal forces and unify the people. Throughout its history, persisting to today, Arab fought Arab in addition to contending with the occupation.

Figure 1-1. Centripetal and centrifugal forces.

To understand the interplay of centripetal and centrifugal forces within the Arab world, and within Palestine in particular, one must begin with defining the term "Arab." Arabs constitute significant populations in some eighteen countries who speak Arabic. Hence, the primary distinction of Arab people is not ethnicity, but language. The term also connotes cultural and in some ways political outlooks as well. Throughout the Arab world, one finds a variety of dialects as well as cultures and ways of life, but the subject populations still identify themselves as part of a larger Arab community. About 95 percent of Arabs are Muslim, with the remaining 5 percent mostly Christian. (Still, Arab Muslims compose only about 20 percent of the world's Muslims.)[6]

Centrifugal forces among Arab peoples included religion, economics, and tribal competition. The vast majority of indigenous Arabs in Palestine were Muslim in the nineteenth century, but there was a substantial minority of Christians as well. Most of the Muslim Arabs were Sunni, but in the modern period, elements of the Arab resistance reached out to the Shiite regime in Iran for funding, training, and arms. Thus, both Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), though originally associated with the Sunni Muslim Brotherhood, had ties to Shia Islam.

Class distinction also bore on the course of the resistance. The Arab world includes three basic social classes—upper class, middle class, and lower class. The upper class includes royalty, influential families, and

sometimes the very wealthy. The middle class includes professionals, government and military officials, merchants, and landowners. The lower class includes peasant farmers and urban poor. Bedouins lie outside of the class system as a special category unto themselves.[7] One of the fundamental failures of the Arab struggle was the gap between the elites and the Arab streets. The politically important classes contended with the governing powers, with each other, and with adjacent Arab states, and they attempted to portray themselves as legitimate representatives of the greater Arab population. However, the middle and lower classes, including impoverished tenant farmers, were struggling to survive, and their interests did not often align with those of the elites. The failure to close that gap undercut Palestinian Arab leadership throughout the various conflicts and left the rank and file vulnerable to religious and leftist agitation. The First Intifada was symptomatic of the problem, as Arab leaders (both civil and religious) were caught off guard by the sudden popular uprising.

The Arab population of Palestine was also divided along tribal, clan, and family lines, and in its formative years, the resistance movement was hampered by intertribal conflict. Tribal affiliations took root from nomadic Bedouins, but as the Palestinian Arabs adopted a more sedentary and agricultural society, tribal affiliations became less important in comparison to those on the Arabian Peninsula or elsewhere in the Arab world. Clan relationships were far more important politically and socially. A clan consisted of a group of related families that were connected through male members. Because of the ongoing upheaval in Palestine, clan lines were flexible, particularly within refugee camps, and families sometimes bonded together for convenience or shared dispossession and then redrew genealogies to reflect the new clan boundaries. Clan affiliation remains relevant to the present day because it provides a measure of stability and safety for families. Attacks against an individual would result in obligatory revenge, and the implied threat helps protect clan members from others. Clans also serve as economic units with regard to land cultivation and financial organization. Finally, there are the urban elite families that have dominated much of the region's history. Notable families include Husseini, Nashashibi, Dajani, Abd al-Hadi, Tuqan, Nabulsi, Khoury, Tamimi, Khatib, Jabari, Masri, Kanan, Shaqa, Barghouthi, Shawwa, Rayyes, and others. These families acquired prominence as a result of their service or standing within the Ottoman Empire, which ruled Palestine indirectly through

them. Thus, many of the notable families were influential landowners and officials, which made them de facto leaders within the greater Arab community.

From the start of the Arab resistance, political ideology played a prominent role not only in motivating the people and guiding strategy but also in dividing Arab from Arab. In the formative years of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), ideological struggle manifested as a tripolar conflict among leftist revolutionaries, pan-Arab nationalists, and Islamists. Within the "left" were a variety of ever-changing leaders, demagogues, groups, and subgroups divided over matters of revolutionary doctrine, goals, and policy. One of the main themes of Palestinian resistance was the initial importance and gradual decline of pan-Arab nationalism. This ideological trend was connected most famously to the person of Gamal Abdel Nasser, president of Egypt from 1956 through his death in 1970. The Islamist influence in the Palestinian resistance was present from the start among the groups and individuals associated with the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, but until the time of the First Intifada, they remained generally below the radar, at least from the perspective of governing powers. The conflict among ideologies continues as of this writing, with Islamist organizations, including Hamas and the PIJ, contending with the secular, leftist Fatah, which dominates the Palestinian Authority (PA) in the West Bank.

In the first volume of this study, one of the primary research questions concerned when the Zionist movement evolved into an insurgency. In this volume, no such problem exists because throughout the period from the nineteenth century through 2010, and even in the present, the Palestinian Arabs were resisting imposed governing authority to one degree or another. Their opposition to Turkish authorities culminated in the British-led Arab Revolt of World War I. During the British Mandate that followed, the Arabs alternately cooperated with and opposed the colonial authorities. From the start of the Zionist immigration, Arab leaders demonstrated, protested, and fought against the incursions, while many among the population cooperated with and benefited from the Jewish-led economic improvement. The Arab insurgency against the British Mandate culminated in the 1936–1939 Arab Revolt that featured widespread violence as well as strikes, protests, and demonstrations. It ended as World War II began, and the two episodes left the Arab leadership dispersed and ill prepared for facing the growing Zionist presence in Palestine. The 1948 establishment of the State

of Israel resulted in a sustained, organized insurgency that sometimes cooperated with other Arab powers against the "Zionist entity." The conflicted history of the Arab resistance follows the narrative of organizations that claimed they would never compromise with or negotiate with Israel but that eventually came to some form of accommodation. Each instance of this political compromise would in turn spark another resistance movement determined to prosecute the struggle against Israel.

TIMELINE

June 24, 1891	Arabs leaders in Jerusalem cable the Ottoman Grand Vizier to halt Jewish immigration to Palestine and land sales to Jews in what is the first recorded "national" protest.
1904	Negib Azoury flees his post within the Ottoman government, landing in France. He forms the League of the Arab Fatherland and begins writing about Arab nationalism.
April 1909	Conflict in Sejera becomes violent as Arabs attack a Jewish photographer en route to a conference hosted there during Passover. Several Jews are murdered.
June 1913	The First Arab Congress meets in Paris to discuss reform and a change of the condition of the Arabs within the Ottoman Empire.
August 1913	The First Palestinian Congress meets in Nablus to discuss protecting Palestine from the onslaught of Zionism.
August 1914	World War I begins.
October 1914	Ottoman Empire joins the Central Powers. Lord Kitchener contacts the sharif of Mecca, Hussein bin Ali, assuring him support should the Arabs, especially the Hashemites, fight the Turks.
May 1915	Arab nationalists publish the Damascus Protocol, which announces that they will join the allied powers and fight the Turks under the leadership of Hussein bin Ali.

May 1916	The Sykes–Picot Agreement, which divides postwar Greater Syria and the northern Arabian Peninsula between the British and French governments, is signed in secrecy.
October 1916	T. E. Lawrence engages with the Hashemites to assist them in fomenting a revolt against the Ottoman Turks.
November 1917	The British government issues the Balfour Declaration, supporting a Jewish national home in Palestine.
1918	World War I ends with Britain in control of Palestine. Zionist attempts to seek cooperation from Arabs fail in Palestine but achieve tentative acceptance in Syria.
January 1919	The First Palestinian Arab Congress meets in Jerusalem. The main theme is resisting Zionism.
1920–1922	Riots erupt in Jerusalem, Jaffa, and other communities in Palestine, with both Jews and Arabs killed. The continued violence leads to the Churchill White Paper that seeks to reassure Arabs and restrain Zionist ambitions.
1923	The British Mandate for Palestine begins.
August 1929	Arab riots result in numerous Jewish and Arab deaths.
1935	British authorities kill Sheikh Izz ad-Din al-Qassam, an Arab Islamic insurgent. He is regarded as a martyr for Islamists.
1936	Arab Revolt against British and Zionists begins. The Arab Higher Committee (AHC) forms to lead efforts to coerce the British government to curb Jewish immigration and land purchases and to petition for the formation of a national government in Palestine.
July 1937	The Peel Commission recommends partition of Palestine; Zionists reluctantly agree, while Arabs reject the proposal.
1939	The Arab Revolt ends with leadership fragmented and scattered. World War II begins in Europe.
1939–1945	World War II. The Holocaust kills six million Jews in Europe. Arab leadership aligns with Nazi Germany, while Jews align with British.

1947	The United Nations (UN) votes to partition Palestine into a Jewish state and an Arab state. Jews accept, and Arabs reject the proposal. The Israeli War of Independence begins as Palestinian Arabs, backed by Arab powers, attack the Yishuv.
1948	The civil war between Palestine's Arabs and Jews continues, ending in May 1948 with the defeat of the Palestinians. The Jewish state—Israel—is established on May 14, and the last British troops and officials depart. The armies of surrounding Arab states invade Palestine and fight Israel.
1951–1955	Fedayeen raids commence, resulting in numerous deaths on both sides and triggering Israeli retaliation raids.
1956–1957	Suez Crisis. Israel, with covert support of Britain and France, invades Sinai with the objective of reopening the canal to Israeli shipping and reducing fedayeen raids from Egypt.
1959	Yasser Arafat and others form Fatah.
1964	The Arab League creates the PLO with the stated goal of destroying Israel and establishing a Palestinian state.
June 1967	Six-Day War. Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) preempt and destroy Arab air forces as a prelude to ground operations that capture the Sinai Peninsula, the Golan Heights, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and all of Jerusalem.
September 1967	The Arab League publishes the Khartoum Resolution pledging (1) no peace with Israel, (2) no recognition of Israel, and (3) no negotiation with Israel.
November 1967	UN Resolution 242 proposes "land for peace" as the basis for negotiation between Arab powers and Israel.
1968–1970	War of Attrition between Israel and Egypt.
March 1968	At the Battle of Karameh in Jordan, Fatah claims victory and gains recognition throughout the Arab world for standing up to the IDF.
1969	Yasser Arafat becomes Chairman of the PLO.

September 1970	The PLO provokes a civil war in Jordan, and the Hashemite regime expels the organization from the country. Most of the PLO's fedayeen rebase in Lebanon.
May 1972	The Lod Airport massacre by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) the Japanese Red Army kills twenty-four people and injures seventy-eight.
September 1972	The Munich Olympics massacre by the Black September group kills eleven Israeli athletes.
October 1973	Yom Kippur War. Egypt and Syria launch a surprise attack on Israel and inflict early setbacks. The IDF rallies and defeats the invaders.
October 1974	The Arab League recognizes the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people.
November 1974	Yasser Arafat addresses the UN General Assembly.
1976	In Operation Entebbe, the IDF rescues 260 hostages from a hijacked airliner in Uganda.
September 1978	Israel and Egypt sign the Camp David Accord in which Israel agrees to withdraw from the Sinai in exchange for peace.
1979	Egypt becomes the first Arab power to recognize Israel and signs a peace treaty.
1982	In Operation Peace for Galilee, the IDF invades Lebanon with the goal of destroying PLO bases there. The PLO is forced to flee to Tunis. In the Sabra and Shatila massacres, Lebanese Phalangists kill hundreds (perhaps thousands) of Palestinians, and Israel is blamed for allowing it to happen.
October 1985	The Palestine Liberation Front hijacks the cruise ship *Achille Lauro* and murders Leon Klinghoffer.
1987	The First Intifada begins.
1987–1988	Hamas is founded in the Gaza Strip. The group's objective is to liberate Palestine through Islamicization of Palestinians and armed struggle.
1988	King Hussein of Jordan abandons claims to the West Bank in favor of the PLO. The Palestine National Council (PNC) proclaims an independent State of Palestine.

1990–1991	After an Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, a US-led coalition defeats Saddam Hussein's forces, expelling Iraqis from Kuwait. Yasser Arafat aligns with Hussein, alienating him from many Arab powers.
October 1991	The Madrid Conference attempts to restart the Arab–Israeli peace process.
August 1993	Yasser Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin sign the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government at Oslo, an event considered by some as signaling the end of the First Intifada.
1994	Israeli forces withdraw from Jericho and the Gaza Strip; Yasser Arafat returns from exile to take over as head of the Palestinian National Authority.
October 1994	Israel and Jordan sign a peace treaty.
September 1995	The Oslo II Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip is signed in Washington.
April 1996	Operation Grapes of Wrath. The IDF invades Lebanon to combat Hizbollah.
October 1998	Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu and Yasser Arafat sign the Wye River Memorandum, furthering plans toward Palestinian self-government.
2000	The US-sponsored Camp David Summit between Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak ends without resolution.
September 2000	Ariel Sharon's visit to the Temple Mount sparks the beginning of the Second Intifada.
2001	Ariel Sharon becomes Israel's prime minister and suspends negotiations with Yasser Arafat in the face of renewed violence.
March 2002	As terror and violence escalates, the IDF launches Operation Defensive Shield in the West Bank, leading to construction of a barrier to prevent movement of terrorists into Israel.
April 2003	The Quartet (United States, UN, European Union, Russia) announces the Road Map for Peace, calling for an independent Palestinian state living in peace with Israel.
March–April 2004	The IDF assassinates Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, head of Hamas, and his confederate Abdel Aziz al-Rantissi.

September–October 2004	The IDF launches Operation Days of Penitence in northern Gaza in response to rocket attacks.
November 2004	Yasser Arafat dies in a Paris hospital.
September 2005	Israel withdraws unilaterally from the Gaza Strip. Palestinian terror groups use the abandoned territory as a base for launching strikes against Israel.
2006	Hamas wins Palestinian legislative elections.
June 2006	Palestinian terrorists kill two IDF soldiers and capture Gilad Shalit. The IDF responds with Operation Summer Rains in Gaza.
July 2006	The IDF invades Lebanon after incursion by Hizbollah.
2007	Hamas battles Fatah, capturing the Gaza Strip and expelling Fatah. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas responds by dissolving the Hamas-led government and expelling the group from the West Bank.
November 2007	The Annapolis Conference spells out a two-state solution as the basis for negotiations between Israel and Palestinians.
February 2008	The IDF launches Operation Hot Winter in response to rocket attacks from Gaza.
December 2008	The IDF invades Gaza in Operation Cast Lead, aimed at destroying the rocket-firing capabilities of Hamas and the PIJ.
January 2009	Israel and Hamas announce separate unilateral cease-fires.

ENDNOTES

[1] The terms *insurgency* and *revolution* or *revolutionary warfare* are used interchangeably in the ARIS series. We adopted the term *revolution* to maintain consistency with the Special Operations Research Office (SORO) studies conducted during the 1960s, which also used the term. Many social scientists use an arbitrary threshold of battle deaths to delineate civil war from other acts of armed violence. Our definition relies on Charles Tilly and Sidney Tarrow's definition of contentious politics, activity that "involves interactions in which actors make claims bearing on someone else's interests or programs, in which governments are involved as targets, initiators of claims, or third parties."

[2] Charles Tilly and Sidney Tarrow, *Contentious Politics* (Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, 2007), 4.

[3] Chuck Crossett, ed. *Casebook on Insurgency and Revolutionary Warfare Volume II: 1962–2009* (Fort Bragg, NC: United States Army Special Operations Command, 2012), xvi.

[4] Ibid., xii–xiii.

[5] Marwan Darweish and Andrew Rigby, *Popular Protest in Palestine: The Uncertain Future of Unarmed Resistance* (London: Pluto Press, 2015).

[6] Margaret Nydell, *Understanding Arabs: a contemporary guide to modern society*, fifth edition. (Boston: Intercultural Press, 2012).

[7] Ibid.

PART I.
CONTEXT AND CATALYSTS OF THE INSURGENCY

CHAPTER 2.
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Sometimes a homeland becomes a tale. We love the story because it is about our homeland and we love our homeland even more because of the story.

—Refaat Alareer, *Gaza Writes Back*

Palestine is the anvil of our souls.

—Clovis Maksoud

PALESTINE'S GEOGRAPHY

This volume examines the Jewish–Arab conflict in Palestine from 1890 through 2010. As with nearly every aspect of the struggles there, the exact definition of "Palestine" and its geographical boundaries is in contention. The name of the region appears in various forms as early as the second millennium BC. The etymology points to a Hebrew name describing "the land of the Philistines"—one of ancient Israel's most notorious enemies. The Romans eventually formed a province they named Syria–Palestine that corresponds to an area stretching from modern Gaza to the Dead Sea, northward to the Lebanese and Syrian borders (including both sides of the Jordan River), and then westward to the Mediterranean Sea. The Roman province did not include the Negev to the south.

More significant for modern history was the interwar period during which the British and French contended for control of the region within the framework of their respective League of Nations Mandates. Pursuant to Great Britain's military occupation during World War I, Mandatory Palestine came to include the region west of the Jordan River, including the Negev. The British also had control of Transjordan, but they placed the region under the rule of the Hashemites, who enjoyed semiautonomy.[1] Today the region of Palestine includes the State of Israel, the self-proclaimed State of Palestine (its precise legal status is in dispute, and part of its land on the West Bank has been occupied by Israeli forces since 1967), and the Gaza Strip (governed by Hamas, and its relationship to the State of Palestine is under continued negotiation). The term *"Palestinian Territories"* equates to Gaza and the West Bank, constituting what the Ramallah-based Palestinian Authority (PA) would deem the State of Palestine. The term *Occupied Territories* refers to the land that the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) and Jewish settlers have occupied since 1967, including portions of the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and portions of the Golan Heights. (It also included the occupied Gaza Strip until Israel's withdrawal in 2005.[2]) East Jerusalem, which Israel annexed in 1980, remains in dispute, with the State of Palestine claiming it as well.

Figure 2-1. Modern Palestine.

Modern Israel occupies much of Palestine. The country lies at the southeastern edge of the Mediterranean Sea and extends southward to the Gulf of Aqaba on the Red Sea. It borders Lebanon to the north (79 kilometer border), Syria to the north and east (76 kilometer border), Jordan to the east (238 kilometer border), and Egypt to the southwest (266 kilometer border), as well as the Palestinian territories (358 kilometer combined borders). Israel also has a 273 kilometer coastline to the west along the eastern Mediterranean Sea.[3] The total area of modern Israel (less the occupied territories) is about 20,770 square kilometers, which is slightly larger than the state of New Jersey.[4] The climate of Palestine is temperate overall, but hot and dry in the Negev and Judean Deserts.

The terrain of Palestine encompasses a coastal plain in the west, central mountains, the Jordan River Valley in the east, and the Negev

Desert in the south. Each of these areas figured prominently in the history of the Arab–Israeli conflict.

The Coastal Plain

The coastal plain stretches from the Lebanese border in the north to the Gaza Strip in the south. It has an average width of forty to fifty kilometers that narrows toward the north. The area is partially covered by sand dunes and fertile soil. The Yarqon and Qishon streams traverse the area and are the only year-round water flows of the coastal plain. The coastal plains include the Saruunah plain, the Mount Carmel plain, and the Acre plain.

Early Zionist immigration led to the establishment of numerous communities in the coastal plain, including Petah Tikvah, Rishon LeZion, Zikhron Yaakov, and Gedera. The coastal plain also includes Tel Aviv, the first Jewish city that the Zionists built adjacent to Jaffa, as well as the important port of Haifa and the medieval fortress city of Acre.

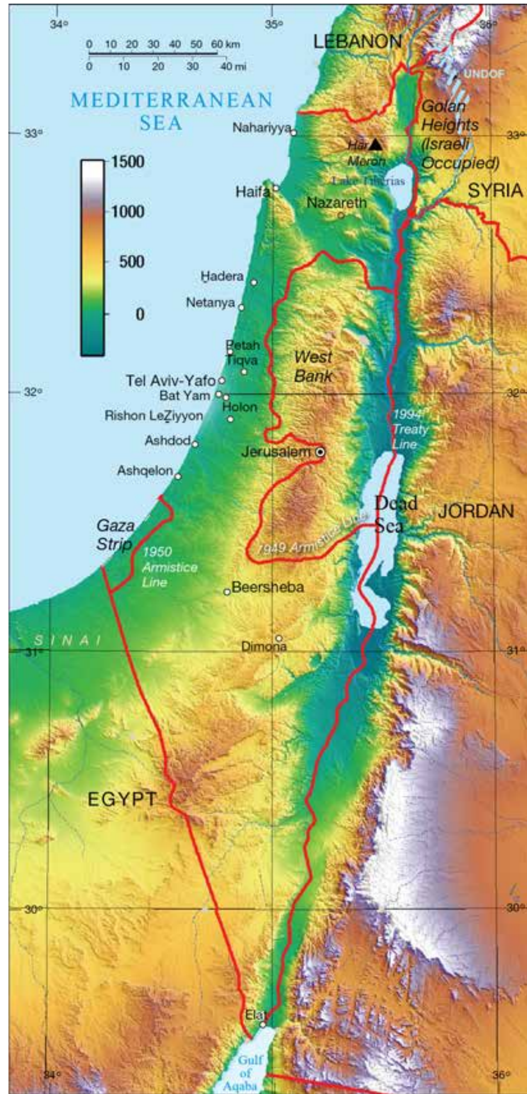


Figure 2-2. Topography of Palestine.

The Central Highlands

The central highlands include the Galilee highlands in the north, the Judean and Samarian Hills in the center, and the Negev Hills in the south. These hills have eastern slopes that are generally steeper than the western slopes. To the north, the hills of Upper and Lower Galilee range from 500 to 700 meters in height, reaching a maximum height

of 1,208 meters at Mount Meron. The Samarian Hills in the West Bank feature fertile valleys and heights up to 800 meters. South of Jerusalem, and within the West Bank, are the Judean Hills, including Mount Hebron. Several valleys cut across the highlands roughly from east to west; including the Jezreel Valley (see the section on the Jezreel Valley in this chapter).[5]

Figure 2-3. Galilee.

Judea is the biblical name for the mountainous region in the southern area of the West Bank that includes the Hebron Hills, the Jerusalem saddle, the Bethel Hills, and the Judean Desert east of Jerusalem.[6] The core of Judea comprises the Judean Hills that extend south from the region of Bethel (an ancient Israelite city twelve miles north of Jerusalem, today identified with the Israeli settlement of Beit El just north of Ramallah in the West Bank) to Beersheba and include the surrounding area of Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Hebron.[7] In biblical times, the Judean Hills were forested, and the land was used for sheep grazing and farming.[8]

The central highlands include the ancient city of Jerusalem, which both Israel and Palestine claim as their capital and which contains important religious sites for Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Hebron, Ramallah (administrative center for the PA), Nablus, and Jenin are other prominent cities in the highlands, all within the West Bank.

Rivers and Drainage

East of the highlands is the Jordan River Valley that serves as the border between the West Bank and Jordan. The Jordan River flows 251 kilometers from headwaters north of Lake Hula, south to the freshwater Sea of Galilee, and from there southward along the Jordan Valley, where it empties into the highly saline Dead Sea. Most of the Jordan River Valley is below sea level, with the Dead Sea at 1,308 feet below sea level.

The other main rivers in Palestine include the Kannah, Cherith, Besore, Kodron, Shichor-Libnath, Kishon, and Siloa Rivers. The Kishon River is also called the Nahr Mukata, or the Stream of Slaughter, a reference to the destruction of the priests of Baal by the prophet Elijah in 1 Kings 18:40. The Kannah River runs along Palestine's mountain range.

Galilee

Galilee is a large area in northern Palestine bordered by the ancient city of Dan at the foot of Mount Hermon (in the far northern finger of modern Israel) southward to the central highlands and from the Jordan Valley westward through the Jezreel Valley to Mount Carmel. It includes the freshwater Sea of Galilee (also called Lake Tiberias). Much of the terrain includes rocky highlands with moderate to high rainfall and mild temperatures, making it suitable for flora and fauna. Prominent cities in Galilee include Acre, Nahariya, Nazareth, Safed, Karmiel, Shaghur, Afula, and Tiberias.

Galilee has been traditionally divided into Western Galilee (which includes the coastal plain from Haifa north to the Lebanese border), Upper Galilee (from the northern finger south to the Sea of Galilee), and Lower Galilee (from Mount Carmel to the Jordan Valley, comprising the southern region of Galilee).

The Jezreel Valley

The Jezreel Valley in Lower Galilee, also known as the Plain of Esdraelon, is a large fertile plain located east of Mount Carmel and west of the Jordan River Valley. It features a mixture of swamps, irrigation canals, springs, wadis, and watering holes. Seasonal and permanent swamps existed in the valley, with the latter providing breeding grounds for mosquitos. The Jezreel Valley attracted the Zionists because the land offered the opportunity for agricultural settlement, and it was easier to negotiate land purchases there than in areas along the coastal plain.

The Hula Valley

The Hula Valley in Upper Galilee covers an area of 177 square kilometers. The area is 25 kilometers long and ranges from 6 to 8 kilometers wide. The valley is surrounded by the Naftali ridge to the west and the Golan Heights to the east. Lake Hula and its swamps were formed by the Rosh Pina Hills, which were formed from lava that impeded the natural flow of the Jordan River and its drainage downstream into the Sea of Galilee.

The Negev

The southern portion of Palestine includes the Negev Desert, covering some 16,000 square kilometers (6,178 square miles), which is more than half of Israel's total land area. Beersheba is the largest city and administrative center of the region. At the extreme southern end of the Negev is the resort city of Eilat on the Gulf of Aqaba. Dimona is also located in central Negev and contains the secretive Israeli nuclear research center. David Ben-Gurion, prominent Labor Zionist leader and Israel's first prime minster, remained insistent that the Negev be included in the State of Israel, and under his supervision, several developmental towns were established there. The northeastern portion of the Negev is adjacent to the Judean Desert, which extends to the border with Jordan and includes the Dead Sea, the lowest elevation on earth.

Figure 2-4. Map of Israel.

The West Bank

The West Bank is located east of Israel and west of Jordan within the Central Highlands. Jordan claimed the area after the 1948 Israeli War of Independence but later (in 1988) relinquished its claim in favor of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). The total area of the West Bank is 5,860 square kilometers, which is slightly larger than the state of Delaware.[9] The West Bank is composed of limestone hills called the Samarian Hills north of Jerusalem and the Judean Hills south of Jerusalem. They descend eastwardly toward the low-lying Great Rift Valley, which includes the Jordan River and the Dead Sea. The Jordan River drains much of the West Bank, but some of the elevated areas in the west have streams that flow westward to the Mediterranean Sea. Annual rainfall in the West Bank is more than twenty-seven inches in the highest areas of the northwest and declines to less than four inches in the southwest and southeast. The availability of water from rainfall and drainage conditions affects how much land is arable annually.[10] The West Bank is designated as part of the Palestinian Territories according to the Oslo Accords and United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1860.

Figure 2-5. Map of the West Bank.

The Gaza Strip

The Gaza Strip borders the Mediterranean Sea, Egypt, and the southern part of Israel. The total area of the West Bank is 360 square kilometers, which is slightly more than twice the size of Washington, DC.[11] The Gaza Strip is situated on a coastal plain that is relatively flat. Average rainfall for the area is 12 inches.[12] The Gaza Strip is part of the Palestinian Territories according to the Oslo Accords and UNSC Resolution 1860. The region has a high birthrate (population growth rate of 2.91 percent in 2014) and is overcrowded.

Figure 2-6. Map of the Gaza Strip.

Refugee Camps

The 1948 War of Independence displaced approximately 750,000 Palestinian Arabs, some of whom left at the behest of Arab powers, some of whom were forcibly expelled by Israel, and some of whom chose to leave of their own accord. Arab countries refused to absorb the displaced persons, instead establishing communities of refugees who were to be returned to their homes in Palestine as a consequence of the destruction of the Zionist state or absorbed into Israel by international agreement. More refugees were displaced in the ongoing Arab–Israeli conflict, especially after the Six-Day War in 1967, in which Israel conquered the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, Golan Heights, and Jerusalem. The number of refugees increased as the displaced populations grew since 1948. Current estimates are approximately five million Palestinian refugees in the camps.

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) provides services to refugee camps and recognizes 62 such camps in Lebanon (12 camps, 449,000 refugees), Jordan (10 camps, 2 million refugees), Syria (13 camps, 500,000 refugees), the West Bank (19 camps, 740,000 refugees), and the Gaza Strip (8 camps, 1.2 million refugees). The camps include tent communities, shacks, and, more recently, buildings. Indeed, some of the designated camps resemble city blocks or slums that are indistinguishable from surrounding communities.[13]

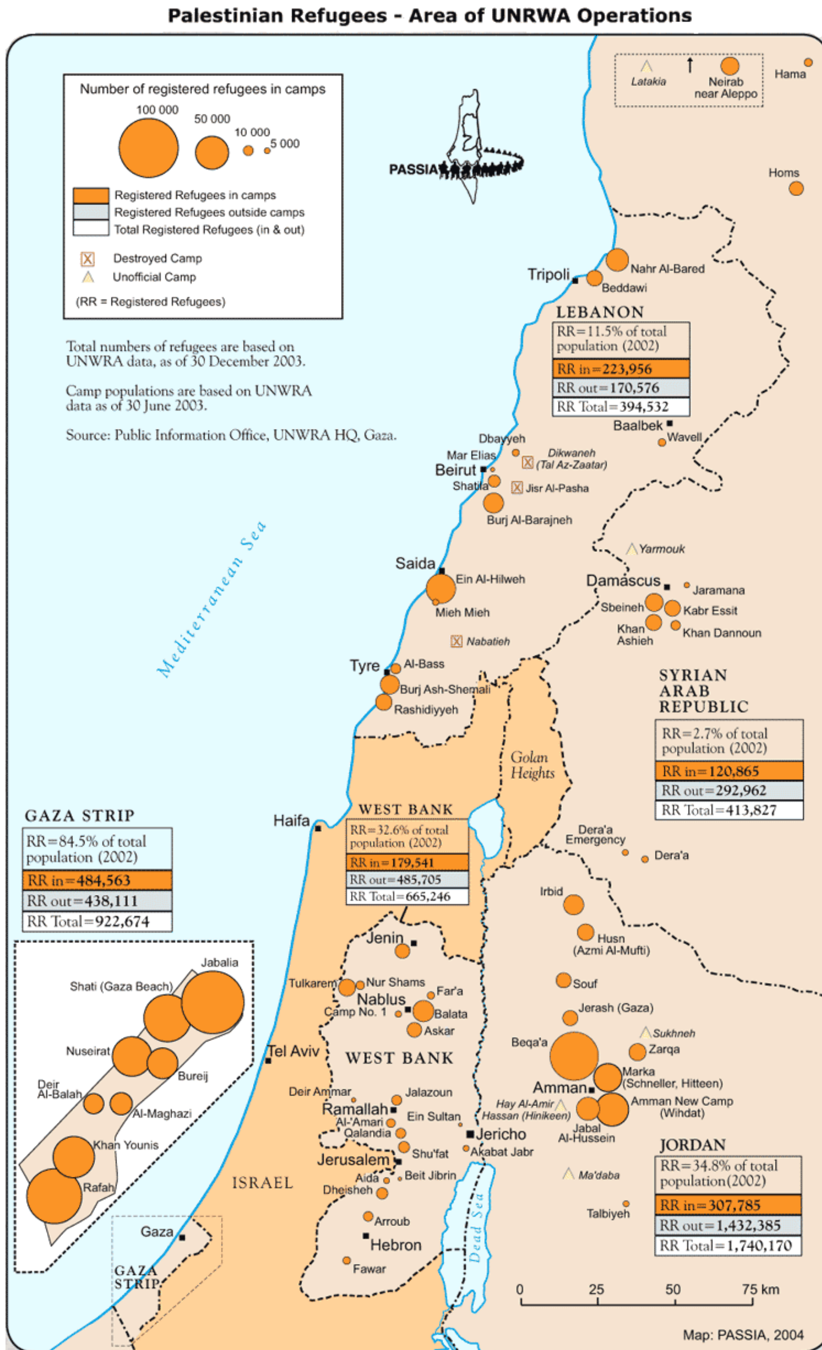


Figure 2-7. Palestinian refugee camps.

ENDNOTES

[1] This decision triggered an ideological split among Zionists. The Revisionists and other hard-liners insisted that Zionists should rule the entirety of Palestine, which included, they insisted, both sides of the Jordan River.

[2] After the 2005 Israeli withdrawal, the United Nations (UN) and many other countries still consider the region occupied because Israel maintains control over its ports, airports, and borders.

[3] "Israel," *The World Factbook* (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency), accessed August 15, 2014, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/is.html.

[4] United States Marine Corps Intelligence Activity, *Israel Country Handbook* (US Marine Corps, 1998), 6–7.

[5] The use of the terms Samaria and Judea are contentious. Zionists use these names to reinforce the Jews' ancient (and therefore legitimate) claims to the region, while Palestinians eschew these names, instead referring to the entire region as the West Bank.

[6] *Encyclopedia and Dictionary of Zionism and Israel*, s.v. "Judea" (Ami Isseroff and Zionism and Israel Information Center), accessed August 15, 2014, http://www.zionism-israel.com/dic/Judea.htm.

[7] *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, s.v. "Judaea," accessed August 15, 2014, http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/307117/Judaea.

[8] *Encyclopedia and Dictionary of Zionism and Israel*, s.v. "Judea."

[9] "West Bank," *The World Factbook* (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency), accessed August 15, 2014, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/we.html.

[10] *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, s.v. "West Bank," accessed August 15, 2014, http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/640076/West-Bank/271783/Geography.

[11] "Gaza Strip," *The World Factbook* (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency), accessed August 15, 2014, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gz.html.

[12] *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, s.v. "Gaza Strip," accessed August 15, 2014, http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/227456/Gaza-Strip.

[13] See the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, "United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East," http://www.unrwa.org/ (accessed July 2015).

CHAPTER 3.
HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Palestine. For most of us, the word brings to mind a series of confused images and disjointed associations—massacres, refugee camps, UN resolutions, settlements, terrorist attacks, war, occupation, checkered kouffiyehs and suicide bombers, a seemingly endless cycle of death and destruction.

—Radwa Ashour, *The Woman from Tantoura*

When it comes to Jews, you have a two-thousand-year memory, but when it comes to us Palestinians, you have a sixty-year amnesia.

—Suad Amiry, *Golda Slept Here*

THE SEARCH FOR A NATIONAL PAST

The enduring historical problem for Palestinian Arabs is their quest for legitimate statehood against the backdrop of Zionism. From antiquity, Palestine has been conquered and ruled repeatedly by competing kingdoms and empires. Canaanites, Jews, Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Macedonians, Romans, Byzantines, Umayyads, Abbasids, Fatimids, Sassanids, Crusaders, and many others claimed all or part of Palestine throughout history. Even in the wake of the fall of the Ottoman Empire, as modern Palestine took shape, various Arab powers—chiefly Egypt, Syria, and Jordan—claimed parts of the region, seemingly defying any existence of a Palestinian Arab nation or state. Indeed, it was only after repeated, conspicuous, and decisive defeat of those Arab powers that the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and perhaps the Palestinian Arabs themselves began to obtain recognition as a people separate—or at least partially separate—from other powers. A "nation" has been described as a people with a common past and a common vision of the future. If that definition is valid, then an Arab nation of sorts indeed existed in Palestine from at least the closing days of World War I.

The first volume of this study looked into the mytho-history and ancient history of Palestine, with emphasis on the Jewish claims to the land. This volume switches focus to indigenous Arabs. While people of Arab descent undoubtedly lived in Palestine from antiquity, it was the Muslim conquests of the seventh century that made the Arabs a power to be reckoned with in the region. From that time on, Arabs and Muslims had a claim to Palestine and to Jerusalem in particular, the site of their third holiest mosque and the Dome of the Rock.

THE ISLAMIC CONQUEST OF PALESTINE

By the mid-seventh century Muhammad's successors (the Rashidun, or "rightly guided" caliphs, 632–661 AD) had garnered enough military strength to move out of the Arabian Peninsula and into the weakly held gap between the Byzantine and Persian empires. Under the leadership of the remarkably successful military commander, Khalid ibn al-Walid, Muslim armies bested the Sassanids in Mesopotamia and then turned west and defeated the Byzantines in Syria. Palestine thus

fell to the early Muslim conquests in 636, with Jerusalem falling two years later.[1]

At the height of the so-called High Caliphates, comprising the Umayyad (661–750 AD) and early Abbasid (750–1261 AD) caliphates, the Muslim conquests resulted in a synthesis of existing cultures with the new governance of Islam. The Umayyads, with their capital in Damascus, built the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem and expanded the Muslim grip on Palestine. Although they brought the Muslim empire to its greatest expansion, they were denigrated by later Islamic historians for replacing the religious governance system of the Rashidun into a dynastic system.

The Abbasid caliphate emerged from the successful revolt against the Umayyads. The new rulers moved the capital of the empire first to Kufa and then to Baghdad, reflecting their greater dependence on Persian administration. As the third great caliphate, the Abbasids continued to enjoy military dominance over the widespread Islamic empire. But the vast expanse of conquered territory—from the Iberian Peninsula in the west to Afghanistan and India in the east—produced a series of rebellions against the central authority, with consequent fragmentation of the empire.

Palestine fell under the rule of a semiautonomous Muslim regime in Egypt, and then, in 969 AD, the Fatimids conquered the region. This Shiite caliphate, whose ruling elite claimed descent from Fatima, the daughter of Muhammad, ruled across North Africa along the Mediterranean coast. The Fatimids fought to retain control of Palestine against the Seljuk Turks and ruled the region until the arrival of Christian Europeans.

The positive results of the early Islamic conquests included advances in philosophy, the arts, science, and mathematics, all of which would eventually help to fuel the Renaissance in Europe. However, from the perspective of existing empires, the Muslim arrival was anything but welcome. The rise of the Seljuk Turks, their conversion to Islam, their settlement of Asia Minor, and the consequent perception of a Muslim threat against Constantinople motivated the Byzantine emperor to call for Christian Europe to counterattack against the unbelievers. The resulting Crusades (1091–1291) featured desultory, fragmented, and violent military expeditions that landed along the Eastern Mediterranean coast from Constantinople to North Africa, focused—at least

initially—on the Christian conquest of the Holy Land. The Christian Crusaders, though their declared enemy was Islam, lost no opportunity to abuse and murder Jews throughout their operations as well. This phenomenon gave rise to indigenous Jews sometimes allying with Muslim rulers to defend against the Crusaders. By the disastrous end of the efforts, the Europeans had lost all of their temporary gains. The Crusades left the Arab empire exhausted and created a legacy of resentment that continues in the Islamic world today.[2] Saladin, the Kurdish Muslim founder of the Ayyubid dynasty, fought against the Crusaders and eventually ruled an empire that incorporated Egypt, Syria, and Mesopotamia. He recaptured much of Palestine from the Crusaders, except for the Kingdom of Jerusalem.

Throughout the course of Muslim rule—with notable exceptions during the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphates—Christians and Jews were generally treated with contempt and repression. They suffered special taxation, and they were classified as *dhimmi*—technically, the term described a protected status, but the implication was a protected, despised inferior. Some educated elites enjoyed elevated status, serving as ministers and advisers, but especially after 1250 AD, most Jews in Islamic lands suffered poverty, prejudice, and persecution. The pattern of Muslims' ill treatment of Jews found justification in the Koran and *hadith* literature, which described Muhammad's subjection and slaying of Jews at Medina from 622 to 624 AD. Jews who submitted might suffer repression, taxation, and dispossession. Those who resisted would suffer expulsion or death. Muslim children were taught to throw stones and even spit on Jewish adults, who in turn were forced to endure the abuse without resistance.[3]

THE MONGOL INVASION

The rise and expansion of the Mongol Empire constituted a grave threat to both Europe and the Near East in the early and mid-thirteenth century. Genghis Khan's superb cavalry armies, supplemented by an effective corps of engineers, swept through the Trans-Caucasus, conquering the Khwarezmian Empire and Persia, and then invaded Georgia. Under his grandson Hulagu, the Mongols launched from bases in Persia and attacked and destroyed the Abbasid caliphate in Baghdad in 1258. From there, Hulagu intended to take on the Mamluk sultanate in Egypt and resolved to march through Palestine. This

led to one of the most decisive battles in history: Ain Jalut (September 3, 1260). As the Mongol Army marched east of the Sea of Galilee and from there turned west, crossing the Jordan River, the Mamluks, under Sultan Qutuz, engaged them, drew them by a ruse into the highlands, and then defeated them. This reversal, combined with infighting among Mongol princes, saved Palestine and signaled the ascendancy of the Islamic Mamluks. The last of the Crusader states in the region fell to the new masters of Syria and Palestine, and the Mamluks were to remain in power until the sixteenth century.[4]

THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

In the wake of the disasters that befell the empires in and around Asia Minor in the thirteenth century, the Ottoman Turks carved out a power base there from which one of the greatest empires of the Middle Ages emerged. In the course of the next several centuries, the Ottomans expanded into the Balkans and took Constantinople (1453), along with Hungary, North Africa, Egypt, Syria (including Palestine), Mesopotamia, and western Arabia. Their tolerant and flexible administrative practices, typified by the millet system, facilitated their rule over many diverse nationalities and religious groups. A millet was a community of non-Muslims who were granted local autonomy and freedom to practice their religion under the auspices of the Ottoman Empire, to which they had to pay taxes. From the zenith of their power in the sixteenth century, the empire was to gradually decline to the status of "the sick man of Europe" by the eve of World War I. Economic competition from Europe, the disruptions birthed by the Industrial Revolution, and the onset of corruption and incompetence among Ottoman rulers combined to sap the empire's strength and leave it ill suited for the military contests of the early twentieth century. The failure and recession of the Ottomans was to become the fundamental backdrop of the Palestinian conflict that persists today. It left the region poorly governed, underpopulated, and with widespread poverty.[5]

Ottoman rule over Palestine followed the empire's rapid conquest of the region in the war against the Mamluks. The Ottomans kept the administrative and political organization that the Mamluks left in Palestine and divided the conquered territory five "sanjaks": Safad, Nablus, Jerusalem, Lajjun, and Gaza, all of which fell under the district of Damascus. The Ottomans administered Palestine through the

Damascus administrators, collecting taxes and regulating economic, social, and religious affairs. The Arab population was largely rural, living and farming on leased land, with payments going to absentee landlords for generations. The Ottoman sultan granted fiefs (known as *timar*) to subordinate officials who collected the income and were responsible for law and order on their lands. A parallel system of land ownership involved *waqf*—lands privately owned, with revenues that supported religious and social needs.[6]

By the early seventeenth century, the sultan's control of Palestine had weakened in favor of local rulers, especially the Ridwan-Farrukh-Turabay dynasty—a confederation of political elites that controlled Gaza, Nablus, and Jerusalem. Concerned at the diminishing income from Palestine and the Ridwan confederation's relationship with European powers, the sultan launched a military campaign in 1657 to reassert his authority. He replaced the local elites with his own appointees, but their exploitation of the people and their alienation of formerly ruling families led to rebellion in Jerusalem (1703) and the consolidation of the local elites in the hinterland around Nablus. Here they strengthened their ties with the peasant farmers and villagers and were able to resist Ottoman control through the mid-nineteenth century.[7]

The nineteenth century witnessed continued conflict between Ottoman forces seeking centralized control of Palestine and the localized powers that wanted autonomy and lucrative economic ties with Europe. Ottoman leader Jazzar Pasha eventually crushed one such leader, Zahir al-Umar, in 1776, and reestablished at least nominal government control. He remained in power through his death in 1804 and was instrumental in repelling Napoleon's invasion in 1800. Egyptian forces under Mohammed Ali invaded Ottoman Palestine in 1831 and initiated a ten-year rule that sought to unify the entire region. However, in 1841, local uprisings culminated in an Ottoman counter-offensive that, in league with the British, ousted Egyptian forces and reasserted Ottoman control. The price of European assistance was a series of territorial and economic concessions known as "the Capitulations of the Ottoman Empire" that gave European powers a strong foothold in Palestine.

HISTORICAL ANTECEDENTS OF A PALESTINIAN NATION

As mentioned in the introduction, the question of whether Palestinian Arabs ever constituted a distinctive nation remains contentious. Their opponents, the Zionists, based much of their claim to legitimate rule in Palestine on their long history as a nation—in other words, a separate, distinct people with a common past and common vision of the future. In response, Palestinian Arabs likewise looked to history for justification for their aims. No one disputes that both Muslim and Christian Arabs have been in Palestine for centuries, but many insist that the indigenous Arabs were not a nation unto themselves but rather the subjects of various other nations and states. From this latter perspective, then, Zionists could claim that they had taken control of formerly Egyptian, Syrian, Ottoman, or Jordanian land through the vehicle of justifiable wars. Arab apologists, on the other hand, claim that the Zionists in Palestine have supplanted a separate Arab nation, unjustifiably stealing the Arabs' land and forcing them into exile or suppressing them within the occupied territories.

Some Palestinian leaders claim that they are descended from the original Canaanite tribes that predated the Jewish kingdom.[8] Others instead point to the Arab presence in Palestine after the Muslim conquests. Modern Palestine evolved from a sheikh-led tribal society to an agrarian society of townspeople, landowners, and peasants during the Ottoman period. The division of Palestinians into city dwellers and rural peasants became evident during the period of British rule. The urban Arabs benefited from the British export economy, but the peasants were reduced to subsistence poverty—excluded from the Jewish economy and exploited by wealthy Arab landowners.

However, even before the emergence of Zionism and the arrival of Jewish settlers, the Arab sectors of society in Palestine had made their mark on history and developed an embryonic sense of a distinct Arab region within the greater Islamic and Christian world. During a brief period of Egyptian rule in the 1830s, Arab peasants, along with some elites and Bedouins, rose up in rebellion against harsh conscription and taxation policies directed from Cairo and carried out by the local ruler, Ibrahim Pasha. The rebels scored a number of battlefield successes, and the conflict spread throughout Palestine before the superior forces of the Egyptian governor eventually regained control. The

episode was the first occasion in modern times of Palestinian Arabs uniting against a common enemy that was threatening their rights.[9]

Thus, a key component of Palestinian nationalism is a long-lived collective sense of deprivation and injustice. Parallel to the Jews' experience of dispossession and repression, the Palestinian Arab narrative of woe dates to the waning days of Ottoman rule. Perceived injustices multiplied under the British and Israeli regimes, forming the basis of nationalistic outrage, desperation, and despair.

ENDNOTES

1 Philip K. Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, rev. 10th ed. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 139–154.

2 Ibid., 633–658.

3 Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist–Arab Conflict, 1881–2001* (New York: Vintage Books, 2001), 8–13.

4 James Chambers, *The Devil's Horsemen: The Mongol Invasion of Europe* (New York: Atheneum, 1979), 154–155.

5 Gregory Harms and Todd M. Ferry, *The Palestine-Israel Conflict* (New York: Pluto Press, 2008), 40–43.

6 Ze'evi, Dror, *An Ottoman century: the district of Jerusalem in the 1600s*. SUNY Press, 1996, 2.

7 Douhani, Beshara, *Rediscovering Palestine: Merchants and Peasants in Jabul Nablus, 1700-1900*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995, 16-53.

8 David Bukay, "Founding National Myths: Fabricating Palestinian History," *Middle East Quarterly* 19, no. 3 (2012): 23.

9 Khaled M. Safi, "Territorial Awareness in the 1834 Palestinian Revolt," in *Temps et espaces en Palestine: flux et résistances identitaires*, ed. Roger Heacock (Beirut: Presses de l'Ifpo, 2008), 43–54.

CHAPTER 4.
SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS

It's better to fix what you have than wait to get what you don't have.

—Ancient Arab Proverb

ETHNICITY

The two major groups of people this study examines are the Jews and the Arabs in Palestine. Of the Jewish population, a small portion (about forty-five thousand) were longtime residents, whereas the vast majority immigrated there from the late 1800s through the 1950s. The Arab inhabitants were primarily descendants of Semitic populations that had lived in Palestine since the Arabization that had occurred as a result of the Muslim conquest in the seventh century.

Arabs

The majority of the Arab population was Sunni Muslim, but there was a significant Christian minority, embracing various denominations. This essential ethnicity is not in dispute, but as discussed in chapter 3, the area of dispute is the Arab population's concept of a national identity. The Zionist perspective is that the idea of a Palestinian Arab nation is an artificial construct motivated by anti-Semitism and hatred of Israel. As early as 1905, Zionist sociologist Ber Borochov suggested that the indigenous population of Palestine was likely descended from a mixture of Jewish, Canaanite, and Arab blood and that the people there would welcome Zionist immigration and the improvements it would bring. He foresaw a contented, docile population eager to be assimilated into the Jewish homeland. Modern Arab (or pro-Arab) scholars insist that Palestinian Arabs instead embraced strong feelings of nationalism and a Palestinian identity throughout modern history. They contend that the declared State of Palestine reflects a legitimate Arab nationalism long felt by the community.

Matters of ethnicity bear on the character of the Jewish–Arab conflict in Palestine because years of violence have underscored what many on both sides believe are deep ethnic divisions between the two peoples. The study of ethnicity eventually leads back to biblical antiquity, where history merges with myth. The cultural myths of both sides reinforce the idea that Jews and Arabs are different peoples, destined for conflict with each other. However, some modern scholars dispute these ideas and instead suggest that both Arabs and Jews are of Canaanite ancestry.[1]

DEMOGRAPHICS

Early Zionist leaders justified their planned mass immigration to Palestine by suggesting "the Jews are a people without a land, and Palestine is a land without a people." In other words, they believed (or claimed to believe) that the region was largely underpopulated and ripe for the absorption of thousands of Jews. The Palestinian Arab viewpoint insists that there was already a substantial population in Palestine that the Jews dispossessed upon their arrival. Throughout the diplomatic history of the first half of the twentieth century, British ministers, Zionist pioneers, and Arab leaders argued about the character and fate of the indigenous population.

Population statistics for the period in question are necessarily vague and in dispute. Because numbers impact issues of legitimacy, all sides of the conflict tend to inflate their own numbers and conflate others. Palestine under the Ottomans was undergoverned, so population statistics were not kept accurately or consistently. For these reasons, we must consider, for each period, a range of demographics that includes all but the most extreme estimations. When the Zionist enterprise began in the late nineteenth century, there were between 400,000 and 500,000 Arabs living in Palestine, and about 45,000 Jews. By the eve of World War I, the Jewish population had grown to a total between 60,000 and 95,000, while the Arab population was between 600,000 and 730,000. At the start of the British Mandate, there were just fewer than 84,000 Jews in Palestine and about 660,000 Arabs. By 1931, the Jewish population had climbed to 175,000—just under 17 percent of the population—while the Arab population rose to between 850,000 to 860,000. As the Israeli War for Independence began in 1947, the Jewish population jumped to 631,000, and the Arab population was about 1,300,000, with Jews nearing one-third of the population. In the years immediately following the establishment of the State of Israel, another 650,000 Jews immigrated, more than doubling the population.[2]

ECONOMICS

Discussion of the economic conditions in Palestine before Zionist immigration is, like the political debate, contentious. To understand the Zionist insurgency and Arab resistance, the student of irregular warfare must grasp the essential arguments about what Palestine was

like before the mass Jewish immigration began. To simplify, there are two schools of thought. The Zionist perspective is that Palestine was basically an empty, fallow land—unproductive, overrun with malaria and cholera, and full of swamps and rocky terrain. The Arab viewpoint counters that Palestine was economically viable and productive before the Jews arrived. The debate is important because it underlies arguments about legitimacy for both sides.

During the Ottoman period, Palestine's economy was in the hands of the indigenous, largely Arab population, who were trying to survive, and the colonial powers of Europe, who were trying to boost their national economies. A succession of Ottoman sultans began granting special rights (called Capitulations) to European powers, giving them access to markets, labor, and raw materials in Palestine. By the time World War I broke out, most of the economic and financial infrastructure was already foreign owned and operated. The British conquest of Palestine during the war and the diplomatic organization of Mandatory borders were the political/military denouement to what was already an economic reality.[3]

From the 1500s, European powers enjoyed exports of cotton and grains from Palestine. The region also produced olive oil, soap, grapes, citrus fruits, sesame, wheat, barley, and sugarcane. Silk and cloth manufacturing likewise contributed to exports. Cotton exports in particular became crucial to European industry, and the ports of Jaffa, Sidon, and Acre grew accordingly. The chief destinations for Palestinian commodities were England, France, and Italy. As the Industrial Revolution took hold in Europe, excess capital served as investments in the extraction, transportation, and exporting of Palestinian raw materials.[4]

One of the downsides from European interest was the decline of domestic industry. Europe needed markets as much as it needed raw materials, and the influx of cheap manufactured goods spelled doom for much of the cottage industry in Palestine. This had the effect of depressing the local Arab economy, creating consumer dependencies on imported goods and increasing unemployment and underemployment.

The Zionist perception regarding Palestine's economy was that the land was underpopulated and unproductive. In Leviticus 26:33–34 (NIV), God threatened the ancient Israelites with national dispersion, with the result that their lands would lie fallow in their absence:

> I will scatter you among the nations and will draw out my sword and pursue you. Your land will be laid waste, and your cities will lie in ruins. Then the land will enjoy its sabbath years all the time that it lies desolate and you are in the country of your enemies; then the land will rest and enjoy its sabbaths.

Even secular Jews came to believe that this ancient prophecy had indeed played out in the two thousand years of the diaspora. Palestine was a wasteland that needed redemption. Zionist ideology insisted that the *national* redemption of the Jewish people would go hand in hand with the *physical* redemption of the land. Jewish pioneers came to Palestine equipped to drain swamps, remove rocks, plant forests, and cultivate fallow lands. They viewed the indigenous Arab population as small, demoralized, and locked into subsistence farming on worn-out, ill-managed lands.

Their vision of pre-Zionist Palestine was at least in part true. Absentee landlords held title to much of Palestine. A great deal of the land was indeed fallow and unproductive. Even enthusiastic Jewish pioneers often failed to make the land productive. Some died in the attempt, and many gave it up and emigrated elsewhere. Farming methods throughout the land tended to follow a pattern of individual tenant farms. When the Zionist pioneers began to arrive, their European patrons insisted on more modern methods based on the latest agricultural science and geared for mass production.

The economic organization of Arab Palestine emerged from the competition and cooperation of three primary social elements: the peasant farmers, the elite landowners, and the Bedouin tribes. This last group consisted of pastoral tribes who raised cattle, camels, sheep, and goats. The Bedouins were likewise a military force, and they used their strength to prevent peasant encroachment on favored grazing lands. They also raided and blackmailed peasant farmers, destroying or stealing crops and cattle. Likewise, peasant farmers had to contend with the state tax system that cut into their agricultural produce, contributing to persistent poverty and failure to develop a healthy market economy:

> They described an economy that was quite primitive, chronically stagnant, and highly exploitive with regard to the income and product flows that occurred among producing and nonproducing classes. Taxes and

> interest rates were emphasized as mechanisms used to shift the national product from the peasant class to the nonproducers. With few exceptions, the peasantry was kept at minimum subsistence level. Peasant consumption and savings satisfied only the basic needs. Savings had no productive function. Net investment did not occur. Lack of security for both persons and property, and the *expectations* of insecurity greatly influenced peasant productive behavior.[5]

In the period this study examines, the Zionists, with substantial financial assistance, built up a Jewish presence in Palestine and organized the economy along socialist lines. That is, the Labor Zionist leaders did not champion individualism or capitalism but instead insisted on a socialist model in which the Jewish collectives—moshavim, kibbutzim, and urban industries—would become self-sufficient and then produce exportable goods to boost the national economy. The Zionists' model produced the phenomenally rapid growth that undergirded their argument for the legitimacy of their movement. The resulting economic boom, they argued, benefited everyone, including the indigenous Arabs and the global economy. Arab leaders argued the reverse—that Jewish businesses tended to favor Jewish labor and exclude Arabs from meaningful work.

The student of irregular warfare must understand not only the history of a region but also the historiographical debate that underlies the history. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the Palestinian conflict. The economic "truth" about pre-Zionist Palestine remains an important part of the greater struggle for legitimacy. Zionists insist that they benefited the region and its Arab inhabitants by essentially fixing a broken land. They further argue that as the Jewish presence built up a viable economy, Arabs from neighboring lands flocked to Palestine to enjoy the fruits. Anti-Zionists insist this interpretation is biased and that Arab Palestine was economically viable before the Zionists—viewed as colonial interlopers—invaded and dispossessed the Arabs. As we analyze each major Zionist immigration, the debate over the ground truth in Palestine will sharpen.

ENDNOTES

1 See volume I, chapter 3, for a complete discussion.

2 These statistical estimations were drawn from a wide variety of sources including ProCon.org, "Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, Pros and Cons," last updated September 17, 2010, http://israelipalest inian.procon.org/view.resource.php?resourceID=000636; Mitchell G. Bard, "Immigration to Israel: The First Aliyah (1882–1903)," *Jewish Virtual Library*, accessed August 15, 2014, https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Immigration/First_Aliyah.html; and *Wikipedia*, s.v. "Demographics in the Ottoman Period" in "Demographics in Palestine," last modified August 10, 2014, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics_of_Palestine#Demographics_in_the_Ottoman_period.

3 Rashid Khalidi, *British Policy towards Syria and Palestine, 1906–1914: A Study of the Antecedents of the Hussein—The McMahon Correspondence, the Sykes-Picot Agreement, and the Balfour Declaration* (London: St. Anthony's College, 1980).

4 Marwan R. Buheiry, "The Agricultural Exports of Southern Palestine, 1885–1914," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 10, no. 4 (1981): 61.

5 Fred M. Gottheil, "Money and Product Flows in Mid-19th Century Palestine: The Physiocratic Model Applied," in *Palestine in the Late Ottoman Period: Political, Social, and Economic Transformation*, ed. David Qushner (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi Institute for the Study of Eretz Israel, 1986), 211.

CHAPTER 5.
GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

The history of the past forty years has shown that the Palestinians have grown politically, not shrunk, under the influence of every kind of repression and hardship.

— Edward Said, *The Question of Palestine*

THE OTTOMAN PERIOD

The Palestinian Arabs under Ottoman Rule

The final years of the Ottoman Empire witnessed the government desperately trying to maintain the country's integrity while competing with the industrialized, democratic powers of the West. Within this context, there was little sympathy or concern for the Arabs of Palestine. Overall, the indigenous Palestinians suffered deprivation, oppression, ignorance, illiteracy, poverty, humiliation, class-based discrimination, and subjugation to foreign rule. Such conditions gave rise to a mentality in which clan status was the major factor determining eligibility for political leadership. Thus, local governance was largely confined to scions of notable clans. Clan leaders, while sensitive to the competition for advantage among their related families, had little sense of cultivating a larger political vision. It would only be with the pressures and opportunities of World War I that British agents would be able to inspire a vision of political separation from the Ottomans and the creation of an Arab state.

Among the upper class, those clans, families, and individuals who claimed descent (real or imagined) from Muhammad and his companions were known as the *ashraf* (plural form of *sharif*). Other elites included wealthy landowners and businessmen and the ulema (religious clerics). It was from these ranks that Palestinian Arab political leadership emerged, most often with the blessing and sponsorship of the Ottomans. The sultanate employed eligible Arab leaders to keep control of the rest of the population, and the interests of the two groups overlapped. The Arab political elites sought to maintain their positions and class advantages, and the Ottomans wanted reliable tax revenues and a peaceful, docile peasantry and middle class.[1]

Citizenship under the Ottomans

The Ottoman Nationality Law of January 19, 1869, made the inhabitants of Palestine citizens of the empire. As a consequence of World War I, the Ottoman Empire was dissolved, and Palestine detached from its former sovereign, along with other surrounding Arab lands. However, Palestine became distinct from its Arab neighbors as four new states were established adjacent to it: Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, and

Transjordan. Soon after, each state enacted legislation that established citizenship for its population. Palestine, rather than achieving statehood, fell under the control of the British Mandatory authorities. Subsequent legislation and United Nations (UN) resolutions legally separated the citizens of Transjordan from the population of Palestine. Similar measures separated the Palestinians from Lebanon, Syria, and Egypt, each of which incorporated formerly Ottoman subjects into their citizenry. These legal moves were later upheld in various court decisions.

This peculiar absence of statehood as Ottoman control of Palestine expired had the effect of subjecting the indigenous Arabs of all classes to rule—sometimes arbitrary—of the British authorities. As will be seen, this situation in turn allowed the pro-Zionist elements within the British government to facilitate the various waves of Jewish immigration and gave the incoming pioneers legal protection and quasi-citizenship on par with the indigenous Arab population. The inherent contradictions of British policy and promises to the competing factions contributed to the dismal status of legal vulnerability that came about as the State of Israel later emerged.[2]

Arab Politics during Ottoman Period

Arab elites in Palestine contended with rival clans for political power and influence with their Ottoman overlords. The resulting political conflicts, therefore, did not concern ideology but rather sustaining or enlarging each clan's power vis-à-vis the others. Notable families include Husayni, Nashashibi, Dajani, Abd al-Hadi, Tuqan, Nabulsi, Khoury, Tamimi, Khatib, Jabari, Masri, Kanan, Shaqa, Barghouthi, Shawwa, Rayyes, and others. As the British Mandate began, the Husayni clan was the strongest, and consequently, it was best positioned (followed closely by Nashashibis) to attain political influence under the new masters of Palestine.

The Arab leaders demonstrated little concern for the wishes of their subjects, with the result that the peasantry, both urban and rural, had little affiliation with the various notables who rose to power. Pressure from the Zionist immigrants nevertheless acted as a strong centripetal force that enabled the elites to inspire angst, anger, and occasional rebellion among the people. However, the fundamental rift between

the leaders and the led would manifest itself throughout the Arab–Israeli conflict as a defining characteristic of the two intifadas.

ENDNOTES

[1] Taysir Nashif, "Social Background Characteristics as Determinants of Political Behavior of the Arab Political Leadership of Palestine under the British Mandate," *Journal of Third World Studies* 26, no. 2 (2009): 161–173.

[2] Mutaz Qafisheh, "Genesis of Citizenship in Palestine and Israel. Palestinian Nationality during the Period 1917–1925," *Journal of the History of International Law* 11, no. 1 (2009): 1–36.

PART II.
ZIONISM, THE ARAB REVOLT, AND THE END OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

CHAPTER 6.
ORIGINS OF ARAB RESISTANCE, 1890–1914

Like twenty impossible hurdles,
In Lyddah, Ramlah and Galilee
Here we shall remain, a wall upon your chests,
And in your throats
A sliver of glass, a cactus thorn,
In your eyes
A fiery storm

—Tawfiq Zayyad, "The Impossible"

TIMELINE

June 24, 1891	Arab leaders in Jerusalem cable the Ottoman Grand Vizier to halt Jewish immigration to Palestine and land sales to Jews in what is the first recorded "national" protest.
June 1896	Theodor Herzl lobbies Sultan Abdul Hamid II, offering £20 million for Zionists to obtain the right to settle in Palestine. Hamid refuses. Many Jews migrate to Palestine regardless.
1899	The Jewish Colonial Association purchases land between Nazareth and Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee, forming a kibbutz-like settlement called Sejera.
1903	Arabs begin raiding Sejera.
1904	The Second Aliyah (literally meaning ascent in Hebrew and used to describe immigration from the diaspora to Palestine), made up mostly of Russian Jews, begins.
1904	A conflict in the Jewish settlement of Sejera leads to the death of an émigré.
1904	Negib Azoury flees his post within the Ottoman government, landing in France. He forms the League of the Arab Fatherland and begins writing about Arab nationalism.
1905	Azoury writes *La reveil de la nation Arabe dans l'Asie Turque* (*The Awakening of the Arab Nation in Turkish Asia*), predicting an Arab–Jewish clash over Palestine.
1907	Azoury writes *L'independence Arabe*, a fifteen-volume periodical calling for independence of all peoples in the Ottoman Empire.
1908	The Young Turk Revolution in Constantinople unleashes a wave of nationalism among Ottoman minorities, including Arabs in Syria and Palestine.
February 1909	Christian Arabs file a legal claim for lands in Sejera farmed by Zionists. In protest, Zionists refuse to hire Arab workers and boycott Arab goods.

April 1909	Conflict in Sejera becomes violent as Arabs attack and murder a Jewish photographer en route to a conference hosted there during Passover. Several Jews are murdered.
1910	Iiysa Sursug, a Greek Orthodox merchant, sells Zionists ten thousand dunams (two and half thousand acres) in the Jezreel Valley. Clashes between local Arabs and incoming Zionist settlers develop around the village of al-Fula at the center of the tract.
March 1911	Palestinian representatives to the Ottoman Parliament form a coalition with Albanians, Armenians, and others who seek self-determination within the empire for various ethnic groups.
June 1913	The First Arab Congress meets in Paris to discuss reform and a change of the condition for the Arabs within the Ottoman Empire.
August 1913	The First Palestinian Congress meets in Nablus to discuss protecting Palestine from the onslaught of Zionism.

ORIGINS

Before the turn of the twentieth century, some Palestinians, especially among the elite ("notable") families, became concerned and in some cases threatened by Zionist immigration. The influx of Jews during the First Aliyah (1882–1903) garnered the attention of peasant and politician alike. Palestinian leaders were alarmed by Zionist land acquisitions, and they were frustrated that absentee landlords (effendis)—Arabs, Turks, and Greeks, living in Jerusalem, Cairo, or Beirut—were willing to sell. Some leaders employed political power to stem the tide. For example, the mufti of Jerusalem, a religious leader with governing authority, fought a rear guard action by bureaucratically slowing or stopping property transfers. Others sought to get in front of the problem by petitioning the Ottoman government. Neither approach stopped the flow of Jews into Palestine.

This period also saw the emergence of Arab nationalism, which was at first very hesitant, seeking reform and some form of decentralization of Ottoman rule. By the outbreak of World War I in 1914, Arab independence or self-determination was a topic of conversation and debate,

although the majority of Arabs in Palestine, Syria, and elsewhere remained loyal to the Ottoman Empire and the ruler in Constantinople. Ironically, at times this loyalty was detrimental to the anti-Zionist cause. Nationalism mollified Palestinian Arabs who believed self-determination to be imminent. They surmised that lobbying the Ottoman Turks, coupled with nationhood, would provide the political and legal means to thwart further Zionist immigration.[1] They focused on Arab unity rather than protection of Palestine or of Greater Syria. This ingredient, mixed with Zionist displacement, began to heat up within a pre-world-war cauldron and started to boil into conflict.

In considering the germination and growth of Arab nationalism in Palestine, it is necessary to recall what the term "Arab" entails. It is easy to confuse and conflate the word with racial, religious, and geographical ideas, but the word "Arab" has in view primarily the issue of language. Arabs are, in short, Arabic speakers. Arabic was, of course, the primary language throughout the Middle East, and Palestine was no exception. At its heart, then, Arab nationalism embraced nearly all Arabic speakers—both Christian and Muslim, urban and rural, poor and middle class.

The difficult yet vital analysis of Arab sentiments in Palestine must include an understanding of the difference between Arab nationalism in general and *Palestinian* Arab nationalism. This distinction remains an article of debate down to the present. One side of the argument insists that Palestinian Arabs as such did not exist at this time, but the Arabs in Palestine looked to surrounding Arab powers as the loci for their loyalty. The other side of the debate insists that Arabs in Palestine saw themselves as a unique and separate population within the Arab world.

Herzl Lobbies Turkey, Germany, Britain

Volume I of this study delves deeply into the causes of Jewish migration. Whether it was due to war, anti-Semitism, or simply economic strife was irrelevant to the Palestinians. They merely understood that Jews from around the world were on the move, and many landed on their shores. The Zionists' lukewarm attitude toward integration into Palestinian society was problematic. After enduring anti-Semitism and inculcated with the belief that Palestine was their birthright, Zionists

would build an insular society. Unlike their previous experiences, in Palestine, the Jews would avoid anti-Semitism through a self-imposed isolation or at the very least little to no interaction with the Arabs.[2]

Theodor Herzl is the father of modern Zionism. He wrote *Der Judenstaat (The Jewish State*) to encourage European Jews to form their own state in Palestine. He even obtained an audience with Abdul Hamid II, the Turkish Sultan, in June 1896, offering £20 million for the right to settle in Palestine. Hamid II refused. Herzl tried again in 1902 and later lobbied Kaiser Willem II of Germany, also to no avail. Many Jews moved into Palestine of their own accord, regardless of any official sponsorship.

After failing with Turkey and Germany, Zionists turned next to the United Kingdom, seeking British support. The United Kingdom remained a global power, had ongoing interests in the region, and unlike other parts of Europe, had a ruling class with sympathetic Christian Zionists. Thus, Herzl met friendly ears able to provide real support. The British proposed a plan for settling Jews in the Sinai and another for placing them in Uganda. The Zionists pressed for Palestine and eventually found a Christian champion steeped in the biblical covenant, the Jews' divine right to Palestine, in Prime Minister Arthur Balfour.[3] Herzl and the Zionists now enjoyed the backing of a strong power that would assist them with the formation of the state of Israel.

Negib Azoury and League of the Arab Homeland

As Zionism grew, so did Arab nationalism. One of the earliest Arab nationalists was not a Muslim, but a Christian named Negib Azoury.[4] Educated in France, Azoury served in the Ottoman government, working for Governor Kisasim Bey. After discovering that the governor was corrupt, Azoury reported him to the authorities.[5] Then, fearing for his life, Azoury fled to France. The Ottomans tried him in abstentia for desertion, sentencing him to death.[6]

Azoury remained undaunted. From self-imposed exile, he founded *Ligue de la patrie Arabe* (*League of the Arab Homeland*) in 1904.[7, 8] This became his vehicle for publishing and disseminating an ongoing discourse of Arab nationalism. First, came a book entitled L*a reveil de la nation Arabe dans l'Asie Turque* (T*he Awakening of the Arab Nation in Turkish Asia*) in 1905.[9] A periodical entitled *L'independence Arabe* followed in

1907. Through these pages, Azoury imagined and lobbied for a post-Ottoman Arabia. He suggested that all peoples within the region—Arabs, Greeks, Kurds—should secede and form independent states. Azoury's editorializing was laced with anti-Zionism. As a result, his detractors accused him of being anti-Semitic and an agent of the Catholic Church.[10]

Whatever his motive, some of what Azoury wrote in *La reveil* was prescient:

> Two important phenomena, of the same nature but opposed, which have still not drawn anyone's attention, are emerging at this moment in Asiatic Turkey. They are the awakening of the Arab nation and the latent efforts of the Jews to reconstitute on a very large scale the ancient kingdom of Israel. Both these movements are destined to fight each other continuously until one of them wins. The fate of the entire world will depend on the final result of this struggle between these two peoples representing two contrary principles.[11]

Like Herzl, Azoury wanted to grow a movement to solidify his peoples' position in Palestine. His writing sowed the seeds of Arab nationalism, but they lay dormant. While some were spurred into action, others were patient or not convinced. Still, Negib Azoury's concepts would eventually germinate, creating conflict with the roots put in place by Herzl and the Zionists of the First Aliyah.

Growing Arab Resentment as Jewish Population, Lands, and Labor Expanded

Before the turn of the century, Palestinians blocked the sale of lands to Zionists, sometimes attacking surveyors or preventing the completion of real estate paperwork.[12] Starting in the 1880s, Muhammad Tahir alHusseini—the mufti of Jerusalem from 1865 until his death in 1921—worked actively against the influx of Jews.[13, 14] The mufti blocked the sale of lands to both Ottoman Jews and Zionists moving from Europe to the Palestine. As a result, complaints were levied against him with the Ottomans.[15]

The sales continued despite the mufti's best efforts. The Sursuqs, a Beirut family, and their business partners sold sixty thousand

dunams.[16, 17] Proving that Palestine was not "a land without a people," the people on the lands, the fellahin, also resisted these sales.[18] They interfered with surveyors and at times simply refused to leave even after Zionists paid them compensation payments that were not required by law.[19] Their desire to resist rather than reestablish a new home came from a fear that Jewish purchases represented more than a transfer of land but an erosion of Palestine itself. As the sale of lands continued despite the opposition of Arab leaders, violence inevitably followed.

Passover Murders Lead to Self-Defense Forces

One reason the Zionists could supplant Palestinians is that the latter were under the Ottoman Empire (and later the British Empire); the Arabs did not control their own destinies. This was exacerbated during the turn of the century when a series of coups and countercoups distracted the Turkish government. Arabs inspired by Azoury and others editorialized, writing about the Turkish government's instability to build nationalistic fervor. Anti-Zionism remained central to the public diatribe because the Jews were encroaching on and displacing tenant farmers. There were several attempts to lobby whichever power ruled from Constantinople, but in every case, the Jews seemed to win out. When Palestinian protestations were not satiated, their anger begot violence.

Sejera, an early Zionist settlement that resembled what would become known as a kibbutz, is an exemplar of the growing conflict and of a pattern repeated throughout the struggle's entire history, albeit on a much larger scale. The Jewish Colonial Association obtained land situated between Nazareth and Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee in 1899. From its acquisition, the exact borders of Sejera were in question. Christian and Muslim Arabs working in adjacent areas complained that the Jews worked lands not included in the original sale. In 1903, frustrated Arabs began "raiding" the settlement, perhaps in an attempt to frighten the Jews into leaving, certainly to steal from them and destroy the property. In 1904, one of these raids escalated and a settler was killed.[20] The Jewish citizens of Sejera formed a guard force. This and similar armed Zionist elements were the predecessors of the Haganah, the Irgun, and other paramilitaries that would themselves evolve into the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF).

The aforementioned pattern emerged in Sejera in 1909. Initially, Arabs frustrated with Zionist presence sought legal recourse to stop or reverse immigration and Jewish encroachment. When their grievances were not addressed, the Arabs protested, and the protests turned violent. Outright armed clashes began, leading to multiple deaths. Government forces intervened, restoring calm, but only until the next perceived insult or injury. Then the cycle began again.

In February 1909, a group of Christian Arabs filed a legal claim for part of Sejera. The Jews took umbrage at the suit and refused to employ Arabs or buy their goods.[21] This pressure eventually forced the Arabs to drop their legal case.[22] However, the harassment returned. Arab raiders attacked when Jews could be isolated from the protective umbrella of Sejera's homegrown militia.

During the Jewish Passover festival in April 1909, Sejera hosted a conference to discuss the Second Aliyah. Arabs attempted to rob Chaim Dubner, a Jewish photojournalist en route to the conference. During the melee, Dubner shot and mortally wounded Radi Saffuri, one of his attackers. The event was politicized when Saffuri's parents told him to claim Jews from Sejera were the true culprits.[23] Two days later, Arabs tried to steal animals from Sejera as an act of revenge. When intercepted, they sought "blood money"—financial compensation for Saffuri's death. The Zionists of Sejera refused. Therefore, Arabs again began to extract revenge by destroying crops and stealing livestock from the colony.[24] Mobs also attacked and murdered two Jews in two separate incidents.[25] Authorities from Nazareth arrived, and several Arabs were arrested. The legal case dragged on for two years.

Sejera was a harbinger for the future. Without a change in Arab–Zionist relations, the continued influx of Jews into Palestine would lead to more protest, violence, and death.

Al-Fula, Newspapers, and Resistance against Zionism in the Ottoman Parliament

Jews continued to displace Palestinian Arabs while resisting integration. A large plot of land in the village of al-Fula served as the conflict's next clarion call. Iiysa Sursug, a Greek Orthodox landowner living in Beirut, sold this land to Zionists in 1910. For Sursug, the sale was pragmatic, a business deal. The implications for the Palestinians who lived

and worked on the land were far greater. They started with an attempt at legal recourse, petitioning the Ottoman government in protest of the sale. Even more importantly, the Arabs garnered the attention and sympathy of the governor of Nazareth, Shukri al-Asali.

Al-Asali took several actions to prevent the sale of al-Fula. He refused to transfer the deed or accept payment for the land, and when a Jewish paramilitary force was sent to occupy and protect al-Fula, al-Asali sent forces in kind to remove them.[26, 27]

Additionally, al-Asali began a public relations campaign by writing op-eds in several newspapers, decrying the sale. Writing under a pseudonym, he stated that not only were Jews taking over Palestine but also they refused to integrate. Rather, the Zionists set up their own society in Palestine to the exclusion of their neighbors. Published in Jerusalem, Beirut, Damascus, and elsewhere, al-Asali raised awareness. As a result, Arabs began to accuse the Ottoman Turks of supporting Zionism.[28]

After making it a public issue, Shukri al-Asali ran for and won a seat in parliament. There he brought the issue to the floor so that it was debated in earnest. Arab members across the whole political spectrum were in agreement on this issue. By 1911, Palestinian resistance against Zionism was now in the fields, in the papers, and in the halls of government.

First Arab Congress in Paris, Arabs Seek Outside Assistance

With Jewish immigration and displacement of Palestinians came continued conflict. Zionism received more and more focus, but the Arabs' overall dissatisfaction with life under the Ottoman Empire meant Arabs throughout the region sought to change their condition legally, politically, or through an independence movement. Several societies formed to discuss an alternative future. Eventually, there was a call among Arab leaders for a formal congress to address their plight. Because the Ottoman Empire would bear the brunt of their criticism, the Arabs feared government opposition. Therefore, the delegates met in Paris, well beyond Turkish reach, in June 1913.[29]

Palestinian Arabs petitioned the congress, writing letters asking the body to condemn Zionism.[30] The issue was shelved. The First Arab Congress focused instead on overarching Arab nationalism, asking the Ottomans to respond to Arab needs, enhancing Arabs' overall position

within the empire, and to adopt Arabic, the language of the Koran, as an official language.[31] Those concerned about Zionism remained undaunted. Another congress was called for, a Palestinian congress, with the express goal of rebuffing the Eleventh World Zionist Congress and responding to Jewish immigration. The group met in Nablus in August 1913 and asked the Ottomans to stop selling land to Jews and to enable peasants to finance the land they toiled over.[32]

Arab groups also sought assistance from outside powers. In 1913, a group met with Lord Kitchener, the British consul-general, in Cairo and proposed that Greater Syria be annexed as part of Egypt.[33] The groundwork was being laid for an alliance between the Arabs and the United Kingdom, with the Ottoman Empire as a common foe.

LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, AND COMMAND AND CONTROL

Like Zionism, the Palestinian movement was in its infancy at the beginning of the twentieth century. There was an element of anti-Zionism among those who were displaced by Jewish land acquisition and immigration and an element of Arab nationalism from those who wanted independence and self-determination for all Arabs in the region. Religious and political leaders and the politically active all served in a variety of ways to thwart the Zionists and incite their Arab constituents. The majority of Arabs were not yet overly concerned.

Armed Component

During this early period of the conflict, the Palestinians did not have formal armed components. The problem was still in its infancy, and as described, did not affect everyone. Thus, armed conflict was isolated. What occurred was intimidation and robbery rather than an organized militia or armed resistance.

Public Component

Three public elements faced off against Zionism. First, politicians like Shukri al-Asali campaigned on anti-Zionist platforms and tried to block the Jews through the Ottoman parliament. Al-Asali and Negib

Azoury used persuasive editorials to rally Arabs to the nationalist cause with anti-Zionism as one of its pillars. These drew Arabs into societies that became politically active, which evolved into protest and sometimes violence.

Newspapers

Periodicals were an effective way to express complex concepts across the region. Newspapers became the means for Arabs in Damascus or the Hijaz to consider the plight of their brethren in Haifa or Jerusalem as relayed by a writer in Paris.

For example, *Al Karmel* described Zionism as a threat to Palestine. The editor in chief conducted detailed research into Zionists, describing how they underhandedly took over Palestinian lands.[34] He also criticized the Ottoman government for not responding to the Zionist problem. Highlighting the problem was not enough. The pages of *Al Karmel* encouraged organized resistance against Zionism to include mass demonstrations against real estate ventures with the Jews.[35]

IDEOLOGY

Two ideologies that at times were mutually supportive, at other times contradictory, pervaded Palestinian thought: Arab nationalism and anti-Zionism. The nationalist movement sought improved conditions for Arabs living under Ottoman rule, preferably through independence, self-determination, and the restoration of an Arab-led, rather than a Turkish, caliphate.

Anti-Zionists were nationalists, but not all Arab nationalists were necessarily anti-Zionist. The First and Second Aliyahs had little to no effect on Arabs living outside of Palestine. Some Palestinians even thought that, with concessions, the Jews could be integrated into society. After all, Jews had lived in Palestine for centuries. Displaced peasants and Palestinians who saw the effects of Zionism were increasingly aware that an invasion was under way. For them, anti-Zionism was a matter of survival, which easily fit within the parameters of nationalism.

Therein lay the irony. Some believed, incorrectly, that nationalism would solve the problem of Zionism. Addressing nationalism without an anti-Zionism component meant the Jews were afforded more time and space to expand.

LEGITIMACY

Before World War I, the Arabs were not an insurgency. Under Ottoman rule, Arabs were elected to and held seats in its parliament. Additionally, they enjoyed a modicum of self-government, especially at the lowest municipal and religious levels. Legitimacy was a concern among Arabs, including Palestinians, only in terms of recognition of their plight by the government in Constantinople.

MOTIVATION AND BEHAVIOR

Palestinians at the turn of the century had grievances. The First and Second Aliyahs were disruptive and sowed fear. Added to this, the Ottoman government was unstable, so much so that Muslims wanted to ensure Islam was safe in the hands of Arab leadership. These two factors combined to form Arab nationalism, especially for those in Palestine. Because the Ottomans did not address Arab concerns, a rebellion was forming that would remove the Ottomans, followed by a struggle against the Jews.

OPERATIONS

It would be a misnomer to suggest that organized "operations" were underway during this period. Still, it is interesting to note the beginnings of what would become a Palestinian insurgency.

Paramilitary

The armed component of the Palestinian struggle at this point was neither well organized nor formalized. Still, just as societies were forming with political intent, so did a military-based group known as Al-Ahd. In 1913, a number of Arab military officers serving in the Ottoman army came together with the goal of independence for protecting an Arab caliphate.[36]

Administrative

The Palestinian plight was addressed piecemeal by a variety of societies and political groups. Hizb al-Lamarkaziyyah al-Idariyyah alUthmaniyyah (A Party for the Decentralization of Ottoman Administration) worked to support all of these elements administratively, especially in terms of decentralizing Ottoman governance.[37] Although its headquarters was in Egypt, branches were located throughout Greater Syria.

Political

Several political parties formed during this period to express Arab nationalism and provide for Arabs' needs within the Ottoman Empire. Many included anti-Zionism in their platforms.

Al-Sheikh Suleiman At-Taji Al-Farouqi founded Al-Hizb Al-Watani (The National Party) specifically to thwart Zionism in Palestine.[38] The party served to inform the populace and keep pressure on the Ottoman Empire, and it led all manner of legal fights against the Zionists.[39] Palestinian students attending school in Constantinople created Al-Alam Al-Akhdar (The Green Flag) to connect all Arab students. The group's efforts included a periodical called *Lisan Al-Arab*.[40]

The Ottoman Parliament included representatives from Palestine. In March 1911, they built a coalition with Albanians, Armenians, and others called Hizb Al-Hurriyah WalTilaf (The Freedom and Coalition Party). Together, they lobbied for Negib Azoury's concept of self-rule for the various ethnic groups in the Ottoman Empire.[41]

ENDNOTES

1 Abdelaziz A. Ayyad, *Arab Nationalism and the Palestinians: 1850–1939* (Jerusalem: Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs, 1999), 38–39, http://www.passia.org/publications/research_studies/books/arab_nationalism/index.html.

2 Ghassan Kanafani, *The 1936–39 Revolt in Palestine*, Committee for Democratic Palestine (New York: Committee for Democratic Palestine, 1972), http://www.kalimatmagazine.com/kanafani.

3 Manuel Hassassian, *Palestine: Factionalism in the National Movement (1919–1939)* (Jerusalem: Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs, April 1990), http://www.passia.org/publications/Palestine/Pal-Book-All.pdf, 11.

[4] As with many Arab names, there are several transliterations of Negib Azoury (for example, Negib Azouri and Najib Azuri). Some sources describe Azoury as a Syrian Catholic, and others describe him as a Lebanese Christian. This may be in part because the region encompassing today's Syria, Lebanon, Israel, and much of Jordan was considered Greater Syria. In any case, it is clear that Azoury was an Arab and a Christian.

[5] Spencer Lavan, "Four Christian Arab Nationalists" (master's thesis, McGill University, 1966), 38.

[6] Ibid., 40.

[7] Ibid., 39.

[8] The name of this organization is also sometimes translated as the League of the Arab Fatherland.

[9] Stefan Wild, "Ottmanism vs. Arabism: The Case of Farid Kassab (1884–1970)," *Des Welt des Islams* 28, no. 1/4 (1988): 607–627.

[10] Ibid., 615–617.

[11] Steven Menashi, "Conflicts Religous and Secular," *Policy Review*, no. 126 (August & September 2004): 90–96.

[12] Ayyad, *Arab Nationalism and the Palestinians*, 37.

[13] Emanuel Beska, "Responses of Prominent Arabs towards Zionist Aspirations and Colonization Prior to 1908," *Asian and African Studies* 16, no. 1 (2007): 24.

[14] The al-Husseini family name is sometimes transliterated as el-Husseini or al-Husaynyi.

[15] Ibid., 24.

[16] Rashid Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Conciousness* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 103.

[17] A dunum is the equivalent of what a team of oxen can plough in a day.

[18] A common Zionist slogan when referring to Palestine was, "A land without a people for a people without a land." This was a false premise because Palestine did have a people.

[19] Rashid Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Conciousness* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 103.

[20] Neville J. Mandel, *The Arabs and Zionism before World War I* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1976), 67.

[21] Ibid., 68.

[22] This is another pattern that often occurs. Jews often seem to be able to operate autonomously within Palestine, but whenever they sever economic ties to the Arabs, the Arabs suffer and fold.

[23] Mandel, *The Arabs and Zionism before World War I*, 68.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Ibid., 69.

[26] Emanuel Beska, "Political Opposition to Zionism in Palestine and Greater Syria: 1910–1911 as a Turning Point," *Jerusalem Quarterly* 59 (2014): 56.

[27] Although the exact nature of the payments is not specified, the payment for land likely refers to property tax.

[28] Beska, "Political Opposition to Zionism in Palestine and Greater Syria," 58.

[29] Ayyad, *Arab Nationalism and the Palestinians*, 50.

[30] Ibid., 51.

[31] Ibid., 50.

[32] Ibid., 57.

[33] Ibid., 59.

[34] Ibid., 57.

[35] Ibid., 58.

[36] Ibid., 49.

[37] Ibid., 49.

[38] Ibid., 47–48.

[39] Ibid., 48.

[40] Ibid., 50.

[41] Ibid., 58.

CHAPTER 7.
WORLD WAR I AND AFTERMATH (1914–1922)

> Be careful of your enemy once and of your friend a thousand times, for a double crossing friend knows more evil.
>
> —Arab proverb

TIMELINE

April 1908	The Young Turk Revolution restores Ottoman constitutional rule and seeks restoration of a caliphate with Constantinople as its center.
June 28, 1914	Francis Ferdinand is assassinated in Sarajevo.
August 2, 1914	The Ottoman Empire signs a secret alliance with Germany.
August 4, 1914	Britain declares war on Germany.
October 28, 1914	Turkish warships bombard Russian Black Sea ports, marking Turkey's entry into World War I on the side of the central powers. The allies subsequently declare war on Turkey.
October 31, 1914	Lord Kitchener contacts the sharif of Mecca, Hussein bin Ali, assuring him support should the Arabs, especially the Hashemites, fight the Turks.
May 23, 1915	Arab nationalists publish the *Damascus Protocol*, which announces that they will join the allied powers and fight the Turks under the leadership of Hussein bin Ali.
July 14, 1915	Hussein bin Ali begins a correspondence with Sir Henry McMahon, the British high commissioner in Egypt, seeking assistance in a revolt against the Ottoman Turks. The correspondence includes a definition of the region that will enjoy Arab self-determination after the conflict.
January 30, 1916	The McMahon–Hussein correspondence concludes with its tenth and final letter.
May 16, 1916	The Sykes–Picot Agreement, which divides postwar Greater Syria and the northern Arabian Peninsula between the British and French governments, is signed in secrecy.
June 1916	Start of the Arab Revolt led by Hussein bin Ali and Hijazi tribes, backed by Britain, against the Ottoman Empire.
October 1916	T. E. Lawrence engages with the Hashemites to assist them in fomenting a revolt against the Ottoman Turks.

March 1917	The Russian Revolution begins in Petrograd.
November 2, 1917	The British government issues the Balfour Declaration, supporting a Jewish national home in Palestine.
November 23, 1917	After the Bolsheviks release the document, *Pravda* and *Izvestia* publish the Sykes–Picot Agreement.
November 26, 1917	The Sykes–Picot Agreement is published in the *Manchester Guardian*.
December 1917	The British Imperial Army (the Egyptian Expeditionary Force, EEF), commanded by General Allenby, conquers southern Palestine, including Jerusalem.
March 1918	Dr. Chaim Weizmann leads a Zionist commission analyzing the potential for continued immigration to Palestine with an initial visit with Arab leaders in Cairo. Syrians seem sympathetic but note that representative governance will be the means.
April 1918	The Zionist commission meets with Arab leaders in Jerusalem. The mufti and mayor are not convinced.
June 4, 1918	The Zionist commission meets with Prince Faisal in alAqabah. Faisal has a wider view of Syria and seeks continued British support, thus appearing more willing to allow continued immigration.
October 1 (or 3), 1918	T. E. Lawrence, Prince Faisal, and the Arab army enter Damascus.
October 30, 1918	The allies and Turkey sign an armistice agreement, ending World War I in the Middle East.
November 11, 1918	World War I ends.
January 27, 1919	The First Palestinian Arab Congress meets in Jerusalem. The main theme is resisting Zionism.
February 3, 1919	The First Palestinian Arab Congress sends a delegation to the Paris Peace Conference expressing the Arabs' views.
February 27, 1920	Arab demonstrations against Zionism take place in Jerusalem, Jaffa, and Haifa.
March 1, 1920	Palestinian gangs attack Jewish settlements, killing seven people.
March 8, 1920	The General Syrian Congress proclaims independence and Faisal as king of Syria.
August 7, 1920	Faisal is deposed by the French and flees to Palestine.

November 7, 1920	A Jewish Communist protest turns violent.
May 1, 1921	Another Jewish Communist protest turns violent. Arabs respond with violence that is not anti-Communist but anti-Zionist. Many are killed over several days of fighting.
June 3, 1922	The Churchill White Paper clarifies British policy in the Palestinian Mandate. It assures that Palestinians were never intended to be subservient to Jews, nor that Jews should receive all of Palestine.

ORIGINS

World War I resulted in the destruction of the Ottoman Empire. Arab nationalism, British and French imperialism, and Jewish Zionism poured into the vacuum. Arabs recognized that the Turks sought to assert themselves as the keepers of the Islamic faith and as the nucleus of a new caliphate. This pressed on Arab pride, bringing nationalistic feelings to the surface. Still, Arab leaders knew that forming a modern state would require the assistance of, or an alliance with, a Western power. Because the British had a longstanding interest in the region characterized by a large presence in Egypt when they were at war with the Turks, the Hashemites asked them for military assistance. Similarly, since the end of the previous century, Zionists had been developing the early stages of a homeland in Palestine and were emigrating there in increasing numbers. Anticipating an expansion of British colonial rule, an alliance with Britain was an imperative for both Arabs and Jews.

Great Britain needed both Arab and Zionist assistance to achieve its colonial aims. Because the two were incompatible, Britain issued two opposing sets of declarations and treaties through the war and its aftermath—incongruent promises that fomented a conflict that lasts to this day.

Anti-Zionist Arabs in Ottoman Parliament

Zionism was a full-fledged political issue by the spring of 1914. Newspapers pronounced the Palestinian perspective before the Ottoman parliamentary elections. *HaHerut* provided space for candidates to have a comprehensive discussion in a piece entitled "The Prominent Muslims and Zionism."[1] There were competing views, but resistance to

Zionism can be read between the lines of each response. One end of the spectrum suggested Jewish immigration should be stopped. The other was mollified with the assurance that the Jews would not be able to form a state within Palestine. A candidate for Jerusalem's general council named Hasan Efendi Salim al-Husayni stated that Zionism posed no danger because of the certainty that not one Zionist desired a Jewish government in Palestine.[2] However, even al-Husayni asserted that Palestinian leaders must look out for the displaced peasants, and there must be limits to the selling of land to Zionists.[3]

Several members of the Ottoman Parliament identified as Palestinian and took action to support the displaced peasants. In July 1914, Said alHusayni, whose view was included in the *HaHerut* article and who was reelected to office in April, sent a petition to the other Palestinians in government and to Palestinian groups. Known as the Jerusalem Petition, it expressed to the Ottoman government, "we have become frightened that the Zionist people's calamity which has become clear as the sun, is a nightmare that has befallen the Land of Palestine."[4] It was endorsed by many of the addressees.

The petition:

> We have become frightened that the Zionist people's calamity which has become clear as the sun, is a nightmare that had befallen the Land of Palestine. This should cause a warning that in the very near future will be impossible to reverse. Every day hundreds of Zionist immigrants are arriving in Palestine. In the face of this the wretched ones from among the people of Palestine are migrating. The government is acting quite indifferent to this situation. The Al-Aqsa Mosque which is the keepsake of Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi and the first Qiblah has practically been handed over to the Jews with consent. . . . We protest this with all our hearts. Since the Constructional period the Zionist people have seized the opportunity and more than 300,000 have arrived in Palestine and in the event that it is not possible to reduce this number [of immigrants] we request that significant and rational measures be taken by the government in order to keep it at this number.[5]

The McMahon–Sharif Hussein Correspondence

The colonial powers of Western Europe recognized the strategic value of the lands of Greater Syria.[6] France and Britain both envisioned a pipeline to transport oil from the Persian Gulf to Haifa. For Britain in particular, control of this region would form a seamless connection from its foothold in Cairo to its corresponding Mediterranean–Suez Canal–Red Sea commerce, all the way to India to include envelopment of the Strait of Hormuz and much of the Persian Gulf.

At the turn of the twentieth century, most of the region rested within the Ottoman Empire. All three of the world's Abrahamic religions were founded there, but at this time, Arab Muslims were the majority. This included Bedouin, farmers or fellahin, and urban peoples, many of whom were landowners. When the "Young Turks" took over the empire through a coup in 1908, they sought to homogenize Islam into a Turkish flavor.[7] Arabs, comfortable with the status quo and proud of their history and heritage, became nationalistic and wanted not just self-determination but independence. Several families, including the bin-Saud family and the Hashemites—direct descendants of the prophet Muhammad and protectors of Mecca—began jockeying for power, even considering a rebellion against the Turks.

Lord Kitchener provided assurances of British support to Hussein bin Ali, the sharif of Mecca, on October 31, 1914, should the Arabs fight the Ottoman Turks. Similarly, on May 23, 1915, a number of Arab nationalists announced through the Damascus Protocol that they would join the allied powers, fighting under Hussein's leadership.[8] Hussein then wrote to Sir Henry McMahon, the high commissioner of Egypt, in July 1915 asking for British support in war and postwar self-determination.[9] While realizing the region included many factions, through this correspondence (and likely because of the associated legitimacy among Muslims derived from his role as protector of all that was holy in Mecca), the British recognized Sharif Hussein as the sole representative, the spokesman for the Arab world.[10]

The British recognized that it would be easier to wrest this region from the Turks with the Arabs as willing partners, and so an alliance was concocted. Britain would lead or at least assist an Arab revolt against the Ottoman Turks. This pact included training, equipment, and guidance. Victory would be followed with a longstanding relationship as Britain helped the Arabs build a modern nation.

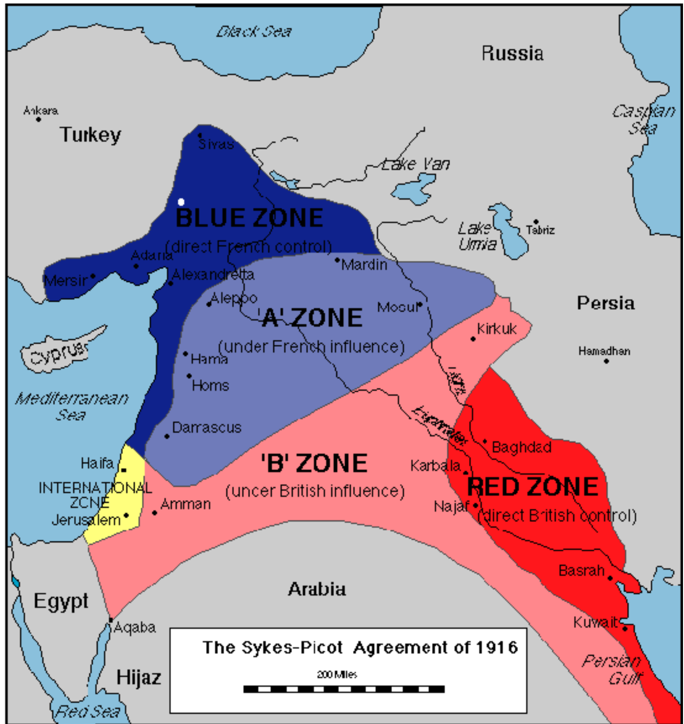
The first stage in any such interaction is to establish rapport with the resistance leadership. Sir Henry McMahon responded to Sharif Hussein in what would become a correspondence of ten letters from July 1915 to January 1916.[11] In addition to military assistance, Sharif Hussein sought Arab independence within a defined region that included what is today Saudi Arabia and much of Greater Syria. McMahon countered somewhat, expressing desire for a small section that includes part of what is now Lebanon and the borders between Syria, Turkey, and Iraq (see Figure 71).[12] The foundation of these terms would shift more than the desert sands they considered. The British and Arab peoples were setting the stage for the end of the Ottoman Empire and for what would become one of Britain's last colonial endeavors. It would lead to strained relations, to include violence between British occupiers and Arab peoples, for the next forty years.

Figure 7-1. McMahon–Sharif Hussein map.

The Sykes–Picot Agreement

Great Britain and France both had plans for the Middle East after World War I. Sir Mark Sykes served as a lieutenant colonel in the British War Office working on Middle East affairs. He was assigned the task of coordinating the postwar division with Ambassador François Georges Picot of France to divide the region. Because the Arabs were promised self-determination, their agreement was a political secret.

The two designated areas would be under each nation's direct control and "zones of influence," areas of less import but that should not be encroached by the other. In general, France's section was north and west of Great Britain's. It included much of the eastern Mediterranean coastline and what are today southeastern Turkey, Lebanon, Syria, and parts of Jordan and Iraq. Conversely, Great Britain's section was south of France's portion and further to the east. It included the northern and western Persian Gulf coast, much of Iraq to include Baghdad, the Tigris and Euphrates river basins, and modern-day Kuwait, as well as parts of northwestern Iraq, much of Jordan, and the northern and gulf coast of Saudi Arabia (Figure 7-2).



The blue region in the figure corresponds to French control, with red for British control. Similarly, Zone A represents French influence and Zone B for the British.

Figure 7-2. Sykes–Picot Agreement map.

The Balfour Declaration

Zionists led by Dr. Chaim Weizmann, a Russian-born chemist who taught in Manchester University, lobbied to establish a Jewish "national home" and found sympathetic ears in Great Britain. Weizmann's influential friends introduced him to Foreign Secretary (and former Prime Minister) Arthur Balfour.[13] Surmising that the British would be able to ensure continued migration to Palestine after the war, Jews even volunteered for service with the British army.[14] Much like other aspects of postwar Middle Eastern affairs, there was an ongoing diplomatic effort to sift through Zionist desires and the British response. Even Sir Mark Sykes, British co-author of the Sykes–Picot Agreement, was involved. In February 1917, Sykes began discussions with Weizmann.

Ironically, the Russian Revolution in 1917 served as a tipping point and brought deliberations to an end. Many of the Bolsheviks were Jewish. The British government was concerned that it may decide to withdraw from the war to focus on domestic turmoil, leaving the remaining allies to their own devices in dealing with Germany. Prime Minister Lloyd George directed Balfour to ingratiate the Zionists, and, in turn, potentially the Bolsheviks. He did so by publishing what became known as the Balfour Declaration with the often-quoted phrase, "His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people."[15]

Hence, on November 2, 1917, the British cabinet authorized Balfour to issue the declaration that bears his name to British Zionist leader, Lord Rothschild. It was construed by many as contradictory to the British alliance with the Arabs. The French, however, were in lockstep with the British. They expressed support for the Zionists as early as June 1917 and published a statement concurring with the British position on February 9, 1918.[16]

The Arab Revolt against the Ottoman Empire

In June 1916, Hussein, the sharif of Mecca, raised the flag of revolt in Hijaz, the birthplace and holiest territory of Islam. During the following two years, while laying siege to the Turkish garrison in Medina sufficient to tie down these forces, Hussein's tribal army slowly advanced northward along the Red Sea coast on horse and camel. By 1918, bolstered by British funding, advisers, and British and Egyptian regular military units (artillery, aircraft, armored cars), the Arabs entered Transjordan and then reached Syria by early October. In the latter stages, their advance northward, in which they harried small Turkish garrisons, the Arabs paralleled the far more substantial Egyptian Expeditionary Force (EEF) led by General Allenby.

Although the Arab forces were diminutive in comparison to the EEF, the Arab Revolt provided a valuable front in the global conflict. It forced thousands of Turkish troops to focus on internal security in Greater Syria and the Arabian Peninsula, rather than the European theater.

Several advisers were sent from Cairo to engage with the Hashemite leadership, the sharif of Mecca and his sons Abdullah and Faisal. A

former Oxford archeology student turned intelligence officer named T. E. Lawrence was perfectly suited for this role. After years of study documenting the crusader fortifications and participating in archeological digs, Lawrence was fluent in Arabia's culture, customs, traditions, and languages, including the subtleties of each from region to region and tribe to tribe. As a result, he was able to construct an effective partnership with Faisal, building on the foundation of trust that McMahon solidified with Hashemites through his correspondence with Faisal's father.

Lawrence quickly ascertained the Arab armies' capabilities and limitations. In the first phase, they gained control of important cities, towns, and ports as they campaigned from south to north along Arabia's Red Sea coast in the Hijaz. Later, they used guerrilla warfare—hit-and-run tactics that avoided large Turkish formations but kept the enemy tied down to protect important logistic nodes like railway bridges and seaports.

Unknowable to him at the time, Lawrence was imparting to the Arabs tactics, techniques, and procedures that they would apply against the British, the Zionists in Palestine, and the relatively young country of Israel long after his death in 1936. Many Palestinians volunteered to join the Arab army.[17]

Although practicing irregular warfare, the Arabs eventually realized they needed to control territory, especially Damascus. Faisal and his Arab army continued north, coordinating their movements with the British army operating in Palestine that would eventually capture Jerusalem. Allenby allowed Faisal to appear to have taken Damascus as World War I came to a close. To the Arabs, control of this city equated to control of the Arab realm. In their view, it rendered Sykes–Picot moot.

A war correspondent named Lowell Thomas traveled with the Arab army for a short time and portrayed the young officer from Oxford as a flamboyant hero, dubbing him Lawrence of Arabia (Figure 7-3).

Figure 7-3. Photo of T. E. Lawrence in Arab dress, 1916.

Additionally, Lawrence was encouraged to write of his exploits, and he did so in two works: *Revolt in the Desert* and *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom*. These works, and the knowledge he passed on to fellow officers through an internal periodical known as *The Arab Bulletin*, serve as a foundation for modern irregular warfare, especially for practitioners working with indigenous forces to overcome a strong power.

Although he was a British citizen and a serving officer, Lawrence clearly had an affection for the Arabs that dated back to his days as a student. He was dismayed when he realized that the McMahon–Sharif Hussein correspondence would not be honored. He was the one who had advised Faisal to reach Damascus first. Lawrence served as an adviser to Prince Faisal during the postwar peace conference in Paris.

Lawrence's exploits were magnified both in his own writings and later in popular culture after his death. The importance of the Arab insurgency in the Hijaz was somewhat overemphasized since the end of World War I. In part, this was because to do so served the interests of the Hashemite rulers and strengthened their claim for an independent Arab state, including Palestine. Still, the Arab operations complemented and reinforced the larger British military campaign in

Palestine and gave the Ottoman Turks another military front that drew away its focus on other theaters.

Emir Faisal and Chaim Weizmann Agreement

Zionists undoubtedly appreciated the support they received from the British government. It was also important to garner support within Palestine. To evaluate the potential for continued immigration, Dr. Weizmann formed a Zionist commission to visit the Middle East and engage in discussions with Arab leaders.

The commission stopped first in Cairo in March 1918. There members met with a Syrian delegation. The Zionists heard that a representative government based on relative populations of Muslims, Christians, and Jews was the pragmatic and fair approach. It was even conceded that, one day, Jews might form the majority.[18] This dialogue was welcome to Zionists, in part because it did not imply that the Muslim majority in Palestine would vote for an end to Jewish immigration.

After this relatively warm reception in Cairo, the commission moved on to Jerusalem, arriving in April 1918. Members met with the mufti of Jerusalem, Kamel al-Husseini; the mayor, Musa Kazim; and the head of the Department of Education.[19] Dr. Weizmann knew the audience held differing opinions. He expressed the advantages of the influx of Jews, likely emphasizing economic benefit. The mufti was appreciative of Weizmann's candor and assurances.[20] Still, by and large, Palestinian leaders were not convinced.

The Palestinian Arabs were not the only ones who held influence in the region. The British thought to leverage their delicate but important relationship with the Hashemites. They recommended that Dr. Weizmann and the commission meet with Faisal, as a representative of Sharif Hussein bin Ali, believing that convincing Faisal could lead to others getting in line and accepting continued immigration.

Faisal held a wider view. The Hashemites wanted to rule all of Arabia as defined in the correspondence between Hussein ibn Ali and McMahon. As a result, the influx of Jews into Palestine may have had a lesser impact on his overall view of the realm.

Weizmann, with a contingent of British officers on hand, met with Faisal at al-Aqabah on June 4, 1918. Faisal stated simply that he would

allow continued immigration but that the Jews in Palestine must accept Arab rule. Palestine, after all, remained an Arab land.[21]

Of course, Faisal also had a British adviser. T. E. Lawrence submitted a report to Balfour, amplifying Faisal's response somewhat. In effect, he assured Balfour that Faisal was not opposed to Jewish immigration. Balfour, in turn, recognized that ultimately Faisal wanted to rule Syria and was willing to endure a Zionist influx or sacrifice Palestine altogether in exchange for British support.[22]

During the Paris Peace Conference, Faisal solidified this aim through a formal agreement with Dr. Weizmann, an accord that bore both their names. Faisal was committing to British policy in a play for the throne in Damascus.[23]

Article IV of their agreement stated:

> All necessary measures shall be taken to encourage and stimulate immigration of Jews into Palestine on a large scale, and as quickly as possible to settle Jewish immigrants upon the land through closer settlement and intensive cultivation soil. In taking such measures the Arab peasant farmers shall be protected in their rights and shall be assisted in forwarding their economic development.[24]

The First Palestinian Arab Congress and the King-Crane Commission

In 1918, various associations formed within Palestine. Some purported to be social and others literary, but all were certainly political, nationalistic, and resistant to Zionism. For example, a group known as AlJamiyyat Al-Islamiyyah Al-Massahiyyah (The Islamic-Christian Society) worked to imbue the notion that Palestine was really "Southern Syria" and part of the overall Arab world.[25] Chapters of this society began sending memoranda to General Allenby, Lloyd George, and President Wilson, expressing distaste for the establishment of a Jewish homeland within Palestine.[26]

Seeing no response to their lamentations, a congress formed. The First Palestinian Arab Congress met in Jerusalem the last week of January 1919. Its main themes—resistance to Zionism and disdain for the

Balfour Declaration—were incorporated into its National Covenant for Palestine.[27] On February 3, 1919, the congress sent a petition to the Paris Peace Conference that stated:

1. Palestine is part and parcel of Syria and as such was never and should never be carved out separately.
2. Palestine must be inculcated into Syrian governance.
3. The new Arab government should be able to call on Britain for assistance without threat to its independence.[28]

Naturally, this approach was at odds with the Faisal-Weizmann Accord. Additional study was needed. When the major powers determined how to divvy up the postwar spoils, they considered Arab desires. Faisal's singular presence at the conference was insufficient in light of the rumblings from Palestine, so a commission was formed. Only the United States provided delegates: H. C. King, president of Oberlin College, and C. R. Crane, a leader within the Democratic Party.

The group was known as the King-Crane Commission, and the other major powers were not enamored with its report. It asserted that Palestine was clearly part of Greater Syria and should not be separated into its own territory, and continued Jewish immigration would be detrimental to the land's indigenous people.[29]

For the British, the most salient point was that the Arabs were not united. This is an enduring theme in Palestinians' resistance, one that their British and Zionist foes exploited throughout the conflict.

Arabs Protests and Riots

The British, the French, the Zionists, and the Hashemites each maneuvered for the best geopolitical position. They all had a long-term strategic view that led them to negotiation before conflict. Still, each represented a population that if not ultimately satisfied would use violence to achieve its ends.

Protests and violence did emerge. On February 27, 1920, Arabs frustrated with Zionist immigration protested in Jerusalem. Then, on March 1, Palestinian gangs attacked the Jewish settlements of Metalih and Tal-hay, killing seven people.[30] A week later, Faisal was crowned king of Syria and Palestine. Both sides were incited to violence, to

include rock throwing. In April, there were protests and violent clashes around the holidays of Easter and Passover.[31]

Ultimately, the leadership of all parties involved would need to ensure that agreements were honored while also controlling the population they represented.

The Jaffa Riots

Zionism was socialist in its initial construction, but some Zionists were communist. On November 7, 1920, the birthday of Soviet Russia, Jewish communists called for others to march, protest, and strike in part as a celebration but also to garner attention for the plight of workers in Palestine.[32] Apparently, they did not receive the reception for which they had hoped. Marching into a furniture shop, they argued with workers who refused to strike. Arguments turned violent as furniture and machines were damaged and fights ensued. Police were called, and several protesters were arrested.

The communists were not satisfied. They applied for a permit to march in Tel Aviv on May 1, 1921. Formal approval came with an understanding that their actions would be peaceful, nonpolitical, and nonprovocative; for example, no banners or flags could be included. The communists refused to concede to such a direction, noting that their efforts would be political.[33] The application was denied, but the communists decided to move forward anyway.

Anticipating violence, police watched for communist activity. They found Jews distributing inflammatory leaflets written in Hebrew, Yiddish, and Arabic.[34] Protests in Jaffa and the surrounding region turned violent. A British postmortem of the events leaves many questions unanswered.[35] It is clear that fighting went on for several days, and both Jews and Arabs were killed.

The British inquiry into the riots noted:

> Had it not been for the outstanding grievances felt by the Arabs against the Jews, the police would have had little difficulty in keeping the peace. The Arab population is ordinarily very obedient to authority, and it is only when some religious or racial emotion is aroused that it becomes difficult to manage. The Jews are less obedient to authority and more difficult to control; on the other hand they are less prone to that sudden

> access of violence which characterizes the Arab when aroused to anger by some actual or supposed wrong or provocation.[36]

Equally important in the postmortem of this event was the British recognition that although the communists started the affair, the Arab reaction was not about communism but about Jews in Palestine. Arabs were threatened and, if provoked in any case, would respond with violence.

The Churchill White Paper

Through this period, the British constantly balanced the perception of Middle Eastern Arabs, especially Palestinians, and Zionists, both Jewish settlers and those who either sought or supported continued immigration. Winston Churchill, then British colonial secretary, recognized that the Balfour Declaration must be clarified. He formally stipulated that while Britain stood behind the Balfour Declaration, the document was often misinterpreted. It was never the intention of the British government that all of Palestine should become a Jewish homeland; it would not be "as England is English."[37] Furthermore, the paper assures Palestinians that it was never the intent that they should be subservient to the Jews.[38] It suggested support for a Jewish homeland in Palestine, but not that the Zionists would obtain all of Palestine, and the Balfour Declaration policy would not cover Transjordan, although it was still formally part of the Mandate (that is, Transjordan would be off limits to Jewish immigration and settlement). Through the Fifth Palestinian Arab Congress, the Arabs rejected the Churchill White Paper; the Jews accepted it in part because it maintained the intent of the Balfour Declaration.[39]

LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, AND COMMAND AND CONTROL

Arab leadership was religious, political, tribal, and familial. These elements were sometimes at cross-purposes because of competing rivalries between subelements. Still, for other aspects of command and control, cultural ties revealed a bond that was immediate and enduring. One simply would not turn away family.

It is interesting to note that as the British, the French, and the Zionists connected with the West and its notions of governance, it became easier for them to exploit the fissures between these new structures in Palestine.

Underground Component and Auxiliary Component

The traditional functions of an underground were not apparent during this period, but the foundations were laid as an increasing number of dispossessed Arab farmers flocked to the growing cities. The functions of an auxiliary—lending sympathy, support, and shelter to guerrillas—played out within the complex network of families and clans. Although modern case studies may reveal named groups as wings of an overall movement, Arabs in this period relied more on family and tribal hospitality to support the other components.

Armed Component

The most common Arab form of war remained traditional Bedouin methods. Derived from centuries of military tradition, Bedouin tactics emphasized secrecy, careful selection of the most advantageous time and location for battle, and individual heroism. Arab fighting philosophy likewise shunned close-in attrition matches and instead preferred the use of missile weapons, primarily rifles. Misdirection, evasion, thorough intelligence, subterfuge, and psychological operations remained key features in planning and conducting raids.

Some Arabs served in the Turkish forces and, as a result, were introduced to the more modern forms of warfare, including conventional maneuver, support with indirect fire, sophisticated logistics, and the newly emerging role of airpower. During World War I, T. E. Lawrence and other British soldiers served as advisers to the Arab Revolt. As a result, Arabs learned more sophisticated forms of irregular warfare. Perhaps use of explosives to create devastating effect, especially to initiate an attack, was most iconic. Equally valuable was developing the guerrilla's "perfect intelligence" rule—to attack only when the outcome is already known.

Public Component

The resistance emerged publicly through insurrection as well as governmental bodies, such as congresses, commissions, and delegations. It also emerged through protest. Members of the population from time to time became so dismayed that they needed to express their dismay loudly for their leadership, for the Zionists, and for the British to hear. This expression sometimes erupted in violence.

Equally notable is the formation of various societies and guilds that often first joined for social or other reasons. These would quickly, perhaps by design, become the vehicle for the public to express its dissatisfaction.

IDEOLOGY

In 1922, there were approximately 660,000 Arabs in Palestine; about 10 percent were Christians and the remaining 90 percent Muslim. It would be difficult to evaluate the level of devotion of Arab leaders or of the masses during this period. This is especially true because modern Western analysts view the history through a secular lens. It may be enough to note that there was sufficient Arab support to resist Turkish efforts to dominate Islam and that the Hashemites derived political power from their role as protectors of Mecca. T. E. Lawrence's own view is instructive:

> With the Bedu, Islam is so all-pervading an element that there is little religiosity, little fervour, and no regard for externals. Do not think from their conduct that they are careless. Their conviction of the truth of their faith, and its share in every act and thought and principle of their daily life is so intimate and intense as to be unconscious, unless roused by opposition. Their religion is as much a part of nature to them as is sleep or food.[40]

LEGITIMACY

Longstanding religious, tribal, economic, and familial authority created internal nodes of power and legitimacy for the resistance

movement. Some of this was tied to religion, like the sharif of Mecca and the mufti of Jerusalem, who were recognized by the masses as legitimate religious and political figures. Some legitimacy was derived from political sources easily understood by Westerners, including backing by the mayor of Jerusalem and the mayors of other major cities and towns. Economic legitimacy lay with landowners who had a modicum of control over their leases as well as the ability to sell to the Zionists, which could tip the population scales in favor of the Jews.

Each of these sources of legitimacy multiplied when supported by the external powers: the British and the French. For example, the Hashemites increased their own legitimacy by engaging with the British through the McMahon–Sharif Hussein correspondence and the Faisal-Weizmann Accord.

This is most salient from a British perspective because they recognized that they served as a source of legitimacy for the various Arab factions and thus had the power to ignore them, direct them, or, perhaps, make them simply go away.

MOTIVATION AND BEHAVIOR

Displacement by Zionists led to a pragmatic response from Palestinian Arabs. Loss of home and livelihood created resentment and anger at the individual and community levels. If the Palestinian Arabs were unable to support their families, this anger would grow to violence out of frustration and desperation. Religious culture also exacerbated the problem because many Arabs viewed Judaism as hostile to both the Muslim and Christian faiths. Thus, it was easy for Arabs to petition, protest, and fight.[41]

OPERATIONS

During this period, the Arabs moved from operating within the Ottoman Empire to resisting against it too soon after embracing the United Kingdom as a supportive strong power. Although Arab society included strong familial, social, tribal, and religious components, modernization was seen to require assistance from a Western power. However, British interests did not always align with those of the Arabs.

Paramilitary

The most specific paramilitary that can be described during this period was the Arab army led by the Hashemites and advised by T. E. Lawrence. This force was *the* iconic paramilitary—the very definition of "irregulars." Facing a much larger, more modern, and certainly better resourced, trained, and equipped force in the Ottoman army, the Arabs embraced guerrilla warfare. Combining high mobility and hit-and-run tactics, the Arabs forced the Ottomans to dedicate thousands of troops for force protection.

It is important to note that although they were effective against a larger foe, the Arabs—especially the Palestinians—never seemed to be able to transition from a paramilitary force to a more conventional one. The implications of this failure came to light when they fought the Israelis in 1948.

Administrative

No specific, named administrative body during this period deserves singular recognition. Rather, a tribal culture inculcated with hospitality, and the administrative infrastructure that was part of the religious and governmental structures under the Ottoman Empire, meant the Arabs had no difficulty forming an effective administrative structure. This structure was able to support the political and armed components of the resistance by communicating ideas, transferring funds, and providing food, shelter, and clothing. Effective administration of their cause was one of the Arabs' greatest assets.

Psychological

Islam served as a powerful psychological force to bond the community and connect the Arabs in their conflict against the Zionists. However, it was not homogeneous, and wealthy urban Arabs were still willing to sell property to the Jews. Nationalists believed that independence would solve the issue, especially with representative government. Other Arabs believed the British would support their cause eventually. Also, many Arabs thought that there was space for Jews in Palestine, especially because it was only one region in Greater Syria.

Although Arabs were bonded by their religion and culture, these divisions in their approach to the Zionist problem would hamper their ability to be unified in their resistance as the conflict continued.

Political

Although there were political parties in the Arab world, no one party solely similar to the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) or Hamas in the modern era represented the Arabs, and certainly not the Palestinians, in their entirety. Although such a unifying party would not emerge until after 1948, before the influx of Zionists into Palestine, the Arabs had a strong political culture. Because Islam intertwines with politics, religious leaders enjoyed a modicum of political power. In addition, because the Ottomans were supportive of local powers participating in their own governance, many Arabs were connected on a national level. Finally, political concepts proliferated because of a strong tradition of forming like-minded societies to address issues and share political ideas through newspapers and congresses.

For Arabs, the most important political and social entity was the family.[42] The two dominant rivals in this period were the Husseini and Nashashibi clans. Through the 1920s–40s, Palestinian society was driven by a basic divide between those who supported the Husseini ascendancy and overlordship and those who opposed it ("the Opposition"), led by the Nashashibi clan and its aligned clans. This division weakened Palestinian society in its struggles against the Brits and the Zionists.

This phenomenon emerges often through the Arab–Israeli conflict—the Arabs are unable to unite because of rival factions, and families exhaust their efforts in an internal fight for control. During this early period, many Arabs were as yet unconcerned, believing the Zionist problem would be solved after the Ottoman yoke was removed and self-governance became representative. Instead, the Ottomans were simply replaced by the British and the French, and the Arab world traded one set of political masters for another.

ENDNOTES

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3 Ibid., 78.

4 Ibid., 65.

5 This is a gross exaggeration. The true figure was closer to sixty thousand.

6 Greater Syria includes what is, at this writing, Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, Israel, much of northern Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, and Kuwait. At the time, the region that is today Israel was known as Palestine.

7 *Promises and Betrayals: Britain and the Struggle for the Holy Land*, directed by Arense Kvaale (United Kingdom: Content Productions, 2002), 9:23.

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[36] Ibid.

[37] Mahler and Mahler, *Arab–Israeli Conflict*, 54.

[38] Ibid., 55.

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[40] T. E. Lawrence, "Twenty-Seven Articles," *Arab Bulletin* (August 20, 1917).

[41] These topics are explored in Tamar Hermann, "Zionism and Palestinian Nationalism: Possibilities of Recognition," *Israel Studies* 18 no. 2 (2013): 133-147 and Paul Scham, "Perceptions of Anti-Semitism in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict," P*alestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics & Culture* 20/21, no. 4/1 (2015): 114-120.

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PART III.
FROM MANDATORY PALESTINE TO INDEPENDENT ISRAEL

CHAPTER 8.
THE BRITISH MANDATE (1923–1939)

We oppose occupation of land by force and we believe in dialogue as the method for regaining Arab rights. This is the spirit of the Great Arab Revolt.

—King Hussein I

TIMELINE

April 1920	The British are assigned the Palestine Mandate at the Supreme Council of the Allies meeting held in San Remo.
July 1920	The British military government is replaced by mandate civil administrative/government headed by Herbert Samuel.
June 3, 1922	The Churchill White Paper is submitted in an attempt to mollify Arab concerns.
July 1922	The League of Nations confirms the Palestinian Mandate.
September 29, 1923	The Palestinian Mandate is officially in place.
September 28, 1928	During Yom Kippur, Jews praying near the Wailing Wall erect a screen in violation of the agreements of managing this holy site.
August 15, 1929	The Haganah and other Zionists stage a demonstration at the Western or Wailing Wall, beginning what is known as the Western Wall Riots.
August 23, 1929	Violence erupts after Friday prayers. Seventeen Jews are killed in Jerusalem.
August 24, 1929	Palestinian leaders publish a pamphlet asking for calm, but a mob rampages through Hebron, killing sixty-six unarmed ultra-orthodox Jews and then eighteen more in Safad.
November 12, 1935	A British patrol encounters Sheikh Izz ad-Din al-Qassam and a band of his supporters. They attack and kill the rebels. Al-Qassam will become a martyr.
April 1936	Arabs declare local strikes followed by a countrywide "general strike," organize local "national committees," and then establish the Arab Higher Committee (AHC), headed by Haj Amin al-Husseini, to head the political struggle and rebellion. Start of the Arab Rebellion that lasts until spring 1939. Rebels call for an end to Jewish immigration, British withdrawal, and Palestinian Arab independence.

April 25, 1936	The AHC is formed to lead efforts to coerce the British government to curb Jewish immigration and land purchases and to petition for the formation of a national government in Palestine.
October 11, 1936	The AHC calls for an end to the revolt after neighboring Arab kings make a public appeal. In effect, a cease-fire is in place, while the Peel Commission deliberates on the problem.
November 1936	The Royal (Peel) Commission arrives in Palestine to investigate grievances.
July 7, 1937	The Peel Commission recommends ending the British Mandate and partitioning the country into Jewish (17 percent of Palestine) and Arab (80 percent) states, with continued British rule over Jerusalem-Bethlehem and a strip of land to Jaffa. The commission also recommends transferring Arabs out of the Jewish state area ("exchange of population"). Zionists accept the principles of partition and Arab transfer; Arabs reject the whole proposal.
September 26, 1937	Arab gunmen assassinate Acting District Commissioner of Galilee Lewis Andrews, renewing rebellion. British respond by removing Haj Amin al-Husseini from power, implementing censorship, and disbanding the AHC and national committees.
1938–1939	Arab violence continues; the British reinforce from Egypt and England and strengthen martial law. Terrorism, assassinations, and sniping continue until the outbreak of World War II.
1939	The rebellion collapses.

ORIGINS

Britain balanced many issues after World War I with respect to Palestine. This is best summarized by an unknown author writing for the Information Services of International Affairs in 1929: "But in the matter of Palestine there were other interests besides those of Zionism to be considered, and Great Britain was not free to act alone."[1]

During the war, Britain promised Arab self-determination through the McMahon–Hussein correspondence of 1915–1916. It also planned postwar division of the region with France through the Sykes–Picot

Agreement of 1916. Then, in 1917, the Balfour Declaration assured British support for Zionism. These various negotiations, treaties, promises, and declarations ensured that the status of Palestine, and of all of the Middle East, would remain in question for several years after the end of hostilities.

Two perspectives were at odds in Palestine. First, the Arabs thought of Palestine as a region within Greater Syria. As such, division into a separate entity was an anathema. The King-Crane Commission validated this assumption, or at least echoed it. Second, Zionists wanted to continue to migrate from Europe and elsewhere to their homeland in Palestine. This did not appear to include assimilation. In fact, Jewish presence seemed to be to the detriment of Palestinian Arabs.

The League of Nations Mandate

General Jan Smuts, a South African who rose from military service into politics, developed the concept of a mandate to facilitate a client relationship between a strong power and a former Ottoman possession while avoiding colonial implications, which became unpalatable in the postwar era.[2] Mandates were divided into categories. Palestine was considered a mandate, which recognized it "reached a stage of development where their existence as independent nations can be provisionally recognized, subject to the rendering of administrative advice and assistance by a Mandatory until such time as they are able to stand alone."[3] In other words, the governance therein was relatively mature. To suggest otherwise would have proved difficult given the elements already present: political and religious bodies, monarchs and elected officials, and an army that defeated the Ottoman Turks in battle, albeit with British advice and guidance.

Still, a few questions had to be addressed before confirming the Mandate. For example, the United States expressed interest in ensuring the safety of holy places. Similarly, the Palestinian Mandate would be confirmed only after the French Mandate for Syria. All British concerns met with resolution by July 1922.[4]

Initially, the Zionists were satisfied. Reflecting the Balfour Agreement, the Mandate assured them a place in Palestine. Article 4 called for a Jewish agency "for the purpose of advising and co-operating with the Administration of Palestine in such economic, social and other matters

as may affect the establishment of the Jewish National Home."[5] To be fair, the document stipulated that the rights of the indigenous population would not be harmed but never specified with the words *Palestinian* or *Arab,* nor *Muslim* or *Christian.*[6]

The Arabs protested, especially because the Mandate represented a breach of the McMahon–Hussein correspondence. Winston Churchill, then secretary of state for the colonies, responded that the government's interpretation of the McMahon–Hussein correspondence excluded Palestine. More importantly, this correspondence ensured that the Arabs were not to be subordinated and that the Jews were not to obtain all of Palestine, but merely a homeland in Palestine.[7]

Even with this assurance, the Arabs were not cooperative, and certainly not happy. The British proposed three remedies:

1. Representation through a legislative council, on which Arabs would include ten representatives
2. Formation of an advisory council with Arab representation
3. Creation of an Arab agency, much like the Jewish agency, with parallel recognition[8]

The Arabs rejected each of these proposals, believing that such representation should not be needed when they simply wanted self-determination. Believing any other arrangement to be a violation of previous agreements, Arabs and their supporters viewed these proposals as simple attempts to mollify the disgruntled.

Without any real resolution with respect to Arab concerns and desires, all other challenges were addressed to the satisfaction of all governments involved, and the Mandates were officially inaugurated on September 29, 1923.

The Grand Mufti

A key leader of the Palestinian resistance during the post-World War I period was a member of the prominent al-Husseini family in Jerusalem. Mohammed Amin al-Husseini was a redheaded descendant of the prophet. His family dominated in Palestine, especially in Jerusalem, where his father and his brother served as the mufti, the religious and political leader whose power derives from expertise in sharia law, before him.

Some within Middle Eastern cultures share physical characteristics with Europeans. For example, T. E. Lawrence was able to disguise himself among Arab populations as a Circassian, a people who originate from the Caucasus, because they often have fair skin and can have blue eyes and blonde hair. It is notable that al-Husseini was a redhead, with red hair, red eyelashes, and a red beard. This would later support the notion within Nazi Germany that he was Caucasian, an Aryan, making him a suitable ally to the Third Reich.[9]

As a young man, al-Husseini served in the Ottoman army, but after the fall of Jerusalem, he recruited two thousand Arabs to join the British fight against the Turks.[10] Like all other Arab nationalists who sided with Great Britain during this period, he sought self-determination and independence. During the postwar period, this nationalism soon manifested itself as both anti-British and anti-Zionist.

Figure 8-1. Grand Mufti Haj Amin al-Husseini.

The British and Zionists believed al-Husseini to be a major inciter of the April 1920 riots. After learning there was a warrant for his arrest, al-Husseini fled to Syria to avoid internment. The British tried him in abstentia, sentencing him to ten years in prison.[11] Sir Herbert Samuel subsequently pardoned al-Husseini and other Arab nationalists in a move for peace. Recognizing that al-Husseini was from a prominent and influential family, the British sought to draw him into their

camp to use him to control the Palestinian Arabs. Sir Herbert Samuel appointed al-Husseini to succeed his older brother as mufti of Jerusalem. The British appointed him grand mufti of Jerusalem, seemingly placing him above the rest of Palestine's urban muftis. To bolster his position, in 1922, the British established the Supreme Muslim Council, charged with running and supervising all Muslim religious enterprises (including schools, mosques, and cemeteries) in Palestine. This turned out to be a miscalculation, however, and the ruthless and politically shrewd al-Husseini began to harness power by maneuvering supporters into a variety of key posts.[12]

Conflict at the Wailing (Western) Wall

At the heart of any conflict between the Abrahamic religions is the importance of holy sites, especially in Jerusalem. The most iconic of these is the Western Wall or Wailing Wall, regarded by the Jews and Christians as the only surviving part of the First and Second Jewish Temples. As a vestige of the retaining wall of the temple compound, it is the holiest site in Judaism. For Muslims, it is part of the contemporary retaining wall of the Haram al-Sharif compound—and, by tradition, the wall to which Muhammad tethered his horse before setting out on his nighttime journey to the heavens. (Both the horse and the wall were called *al-Buraq*.) It is commonly referred to now as the Western Wall or the Wailing Wall.

The Haram al-Sharif and areas adjacent to it, including the Western Wall, were owned by a Muslim *wakf* (a religious trust). The right for Arabs to control this holy site was confirmed in 1925 when the British governor of Jerusalem recognized the wall and its surrounding area as part and parcel of Harim al-Sharif—an easy declaration when Arabs were 87 percent of the total Palestinian population.[13]

For the Zionist minority, the wall, located near the heart of Judaism, represented the most prominent place to publicly resist British authority and Palestinian enmity. The Zionist executive embarked on a strategy of slowly increasing its control over the wall and, similarly, over the rest of Palestine.[14]

Initial Zionist Encroachments

As early as 1918, Dr. Weizmann tried to take over the Wailing Wall or at least purchase the buildings nearby so as to exert a modicum of control over the area.[15] Zionists sought control over the wall again in 1920, complaining that Muslim repairs to the top of the wall interrupted their worship. The British administration promised to take over maintenance of the middle and lower sections of the wall, to cease all work during the Sabbath, and to undertake a study to establish management of all holy sites in Palestine.[16] Zionists may not have garnered more control over the wall, but the Arabs certainly had less.

In December 1925, Jewish officials wanted to place benches and seats near the wall but were blocked by Muslim complaints and British enforcement.[17] Next, Zionists griped about Arab residents weeding the wall for this was to be British jurisdiction. These claims were amplified with an accusation that Jews were attacked and stoned while praying.[18]

The grand mufti of Jerusalem—Haj Amin al-Husseini—and the Supreme Muslim Council led a three-pronged defense of the wall. First, they asserted that Muslims must prove devotion to holy sites in Jerusalem, lending credence to their voice. To do so, they garnered financial support from Muslims around the world to repair and improve the wall. Second, every violation of agreed use of the wall for worship would be met with vigorous protest to the government. A vigilant effort was put in place to ensure any transgression by the Jews was reported and dealt with posthaste. Third, Arabs would continuously protest against Attorney General Norman Bentwich, pro-Zionist and Arab antagonist.[19] Bentwich created land legislation that benefited Jews and collective punishments that Arabs endured.

The Supreme Muslim Council's approach was mildly successful. Arab elements believed the British Mandate government responded appropriately to Arab actions, and as a result, the Arab control over the wall was enhanced.

The Wailing Wall Riots

During Yom Kippur in September 1928, Jews erected a screen to separate men from women and also placed benches near the Wailing Wall. Because this represented an infraction of regulation and management of the holy site, British police removed these additions. Jews

worldwide protested, calling for more control over the wall and the surrounding area.[20]

Almost a year later, the Haganah and other groups held a demonstration at the wall on August 15, 1929. Palestinian Arabs responded in kind. Anger erupting through protests, and counterprotests grew into violence. On August 23, attacks against Jews after Friday prayers resulted in seventeen deaths. The next day, a leaflet published in Jerusalem called for calm. Signed by Palestinian leaders, it focused on the British, noting they "never discriminated against a specific group of people in terms of rights and responsibilities."[21, 22] By the time people read these words on the streets of Jerusalem, Jews were fighting for their lives in Hebron. Arab protestors killed more than sixty Jews, and the survivors fled.[23] Brutality continued in Haifa, Jaffa, and Safad, leading to at least another forty-five dead.[24] There is a cruel irony in that these attacks were against Palestinian Jews, ultra-orthodox Jews who refused Haganah protection, not bastions of Zionism.[25] Some suggest Arabs targeted these Jews precisely because they lived in historically peaceful areas that, thus, had a smaller British police presence. When the massacre began, there were not enough forces to respond and restore order.[26]

Unlike the Arabs, the Zionists enjoyed international support from Jews and others. Bloodletting in Jerusalem, Hebron, and Jaffa led to fundraising in Paris, London, and New York, which allowed the Zionists' foothold in the homeland to be restored.[27] Rebuilding included enhanced security, reorganization, and strengthening of the Haganah.[28]

Commissions of Inquiry, Contradicting Papers, and Competing Views

To address the problem of violence, the British government formed a number of commissions over the next two years.[29] Such an approach bought time of relative peace, as each side waited for a response and lobbied for reform. The Arab Executive Committee engaged with the British-appointed Shaw Commission, and it also sent a delegation to London to discuss formation of a legislative council in Palestine.[30]

Competing Views

Palestinian Arabs were unified in their desire to resist Zionist immigration but suffered from deep divisions between ruling families,

wealthy landlords, and those most affected by the influx of Zionists, the peasants and urban working class. This division continues to erode the Palestinian cause to this day. This was born of the fact that Palestinian politics were dynastic, and parties formed along familial lines, with the al-Husseini and an-Nashashibi as the dominant clans. When Ragib an-Nashashibi failed to be elected as mayor of Jerusalem in 1934, the al-Husseini family, which held the role of mufti of Jerusalem, gained the upper hand. This made it problematic for the two figures to join forces against the common enemies of Great Britain and the Zionists.[31] When the Executive Committee of the Palestinian Arab congress dissolved, these and other families constructed political parties as another vehicle to wield power.[32] An-Nashashibi formed the Ad-Dif Party (Arab Defense Party), which attracted many of Palestine's mayors.[33] Then Jamal al-Husseini, relative of the grand mufti, formed the Al-Arabi Party (Palestinian Arab Party), which represented his family's interests.[34] All political parties were united in the ultimate goal of independence and self-determination, but they often conflicted with one another on the means and were influenced heavily by their own desire for power. For example, at different times in the struggle, both the an-Nashashibi-led Arab Defense Party and the al-Husseini-led Palestinian Arab Party sought conciliation with the British Mandate government in opposition to all other resistant parties.

Political rivalry prevented the Arab working class and rural peasant farmers from receiving the support they needed to overcome Zionist displacement and oppressive labor practices. Peasants continued to endure the loss of home and livelihood as absentee landlords sold their land to incoming Jews. Many peasants migrated to cities and towns, joining the urban working class. Once there, however, they continued to suffer from unfair labor practices and unemployment. Jews owned many businesses and secured higher wages. Those in the wealthier strata garnered tax breaks and other incentives.[35]

George Mansour reported to the Peel Commission the causes of high unemployment among Palestinian Arabs:

1. Zionist immigration
2. Peasant migration to urban areas
3. Jewish removal of Arab employees
4. General economic strife

5. Mandatory government support of Jewish businesses and workers[36]

Palestine was a region within Greater Syria. Therefore, Arabs throughout the region supported the Palestinian plight. Many suggested a solution for the Palestinians that supported the Zionist cause—Palestinian Arabs should simply be absorbed into other parts of Greater Syria. In other words, "Why not allow Jews to settle in Palestine? There are other places that Palestinian Arabs can live." This support was often short lived as Arabs protected their own interests before those of their Palestinian brethren.

The Shaw Commission

In March 1930, the Shaw Commission published its report asserting the need for a constitution in Palestine. Consistent with this message, the Arab delegation visiting London expressed the same desire for a representative government. Prime Minister MacDonald rejected both proposals. Although the Muslims were in an ever-weakening position, he knew that a Muslim majority was unpredictable and uncontrollable at the ballot box and would therefore be difficult to control once a recognized government was in place. However, the British government acceded to halt further immigration until completion of another study by Sir John Hope Simpson on immigration and the economic situation in Palestine.[37] This report concluded that the Arabs were suffering unemployment in part because of Jewish immigration. Continued immigration was problematic because there was no land available for Jewish immigration except that open land already owned by the Jewish agency.

The end result of the Shaw and Simpson reports was another declaration in October 1930 by Lord Passfield, then secretary of state for the colonies. Known as the Passfield White Paper, it asserted that Jewish immigration must cease if detrimental to Arab employment.[38] Dr. Weizmann lobbied to diminish this paper. He was successful after several attempts, yielding a letter from Prime Minister MacDonald, which published in the *Times* on February 13, 1931. It asserted that the Passfield paper did not alter the immigration stance, nor land purchases, and the Jewish agency had the right to form restrictive labor policy.[39] The MacDonald letter became known to Arabs as The Black Letter.[40]

Rising Immigration, Rising Tensions

The early 1930s saw a dramatic increase in Jewish immigration caused by the rise of Hitler and the Nazis in Germany and by anti-Semitic legislation in Eastern Europe, especially Poland. In 1934, more than forty thousand Jews arrived in Palestine. In 1935, the number was more than sixty thousand.[41] This influx heated Arab frustration. The British did not respond to Arab protests and cries for help. Because Palestinian Arabs increasingly felt the mandate system was set against them, they became more active in their resistance.

The division between Arab and Jew deepened as 1932 saw an organized Arab boycott of Jewish goods. For example, Arabs did not participate in the Levant Fair in Tel Aviv and withdrew from Mandate civil positions.[42] An unwillingness to participate in solving the most mundane of local issues did not bode well for the future of interfaith coordination. New Arab political parties formed to express grievances and lobby for the Palestinian cause, with six new parties forming before 1936.[43] However, these also came with rivalries that eroded Arab unity. A recurring phenomenon throughout the Arab–Israeli conflict is Arab movements collapsing from within as a result of disunity.

In March 1933, the Arab Executive Committee issued statements claiming Zionist policies created fear among the native Arabs.[44] The grand mufti of Jerusalem joined a protest in Jaffa. Arabs resolved to boycott British and Jewish products. Rioting ensued for the next six weeks and included the deaths of twenty-four people and injuries to more than two hundred.[45] Another commission conducted yet another investigation. The report's findings were clear: obtrusive Jewish immigration created Arab unrest.

The grand mufti remained a dominant figure, but rival families formed competing political parties. Ragib an-Nashashibi formed the National Defense Party. Other parties included the Independence, Reform, National Bloc, and Palestine Youth Parties.[46] Al-Husseini's clan controlled the Arab Palestine Party. These groups formed along familial lines, focused on landowners and other political elites, and represented factionalization more than organization.

The Legislative Council

In 1935, the British administration in Palestine sought to form a legislative council of twenty-eight members to include elected and

nominated officials from all three Abrahamic religions in numbers that reflected each population.[47] Clearly, this meant a predomination of Palestinian Arabs. The proposal received some criticism in the Arab press but was accepted by both the leadership and the populace. Zionists rejected the proposal out of fear that it would enable Arab control of Palestine and endorse and legitimize a governing body with the power to prevent continued immigration. In effect, Arabs, who were in the majority, wanted representative governance. Zionists, who were in the minority, did not.

Britain's House of Commons considered the plan in March 1936. Some failed to understand why any change was necessary at all. Pro-Arab voices used the opportunity to reiterate that the Mandate charter was contradictory. Pro-Zionists suggested that ignorant, uneducated, and even anti-Semitic Bedouins would dominate.

Pro-Zionist elements won the day, and the plan was rejected.

The Arab Revolt

A wave of Jewish immigration into the Palestinian Mandate brought the total number of Jews to 443,000, or 29.6 percent of the total population, by 1935.[48] The impact of this rapid growth was problematic. Jews owned a majority of the region's industry and influx of capital as a result of garnering the majority of the British government's contracts. Jews also represented a majority of the workers and were paid at a higher rate than their Arab counterparts.[49] A similar situation existed in rural areas. By 1930, Jews had obtained one-third of Palestine's arable land. Many of the Arabs sold their property to Arab landlords so that they could obtain weapons for the revolt. The landlords in turn sold the property to Jewish interests.[50] This created a situation not unlike that seen in other insurgencies, even that faced by the coalition in Iraq in the summer of 2003. A large Arab population, without work or suitable wages, was armed and living under occupation by a foreign power and an ever-rising population of immigrants who did not seem to want to assimilate. In other words, in less than one generation, Palestinians lost their homes, their land, and their jobs to Zionists, making rebellion inevitable.

The exact beginning of the Arab Revolt is debatable. Some historians suggest it was an event in April 1936, when a group of Palestinians

conducted an act of highway robbery, stealing from fifteen cars with mostly Palestinian passengers, while declaring that they needed funds to fight the Zionists.[51] More commonly, the beginning is believed to have been an event that occurred a few months earlier in November 1935. Sheikh Izz ad-Din al-Qassam, a Syrian living in Haifa, decided to form an armed resistance against Zionism and the Mandate. He led a band of men into the Yabad Hills on November 12, but they were discovered, attacked, and eliminated by a British column.[52] Other Palestinian leaders, many of whom had previously ignored al-Qassam's cries for revolution, now saw his martyrdom as an opportunity and a spark to ignite the masses.[53]

If al-Qassam symbolizes the moment, it is still important to note the causality. The report of Lord Peel's Commission identified secondary factors leading to the revolt:

- The spread of the Arab nationalist spirit outside of Palestine
- Increasing Jewish immigration since 1933
- The fact that the Jews were able to influence public opinion in Britain
- The lack of Palestinian Arab confidence in the good intentions of the British government
- The Palestinian Arabs' fear of continued land purchases by Jews
- The fact that the ultimate objectives for the mandatory government were not clear[54]

The Arabs made three demands, each previously voiced in varying forms:

1. An immediate stop to Jewish immigration
2. Prohibition of the transfer of the ownership of Palestinian Arab lands to Jewish settlers
3. The establishment of a democratic government in which Palestinian Arabs would have the largest share in conformity with their numerical superiority[55]

Palestinian nationalism grew after al-Qassam's demise. He was declared a martyr. The disparate factions realized that it was time to rebel. They reorganized, forming national committees with a new central body, the AHC. The AHC elected the grand mufti, Haj Amin al-Husseini, as its first president.[56]

A general strike was declared on April 19, 1936. "Civil disobedience and armed insurrection" followed.[57] Then in May 1936, 150 Palestinians attended a national conference to discuss the revolt. They declared Arabs would no longer pay taxes unless the British put an end to Jewish immigration.[58]

In its earliest stages, the most recent form of Palestinian resistance enjoyed some success. The British ceded control of large sections of the country. (Later, in 1938, the Palestinians even controlled the old city of Jerusalem for five days.) However, British colonial experience made its forces adept at managing insurrection. Manuals and doctrine governed their actions, including the 1929 *Manual of Military Law, Notes on Imperial Policing*, and *Duties in the Aid of Civil Power.* These documents made it clear that soldiers should behave in a civil and honorable manner, while also allowing for heavy-handed tactics, even brutality, to keep the resistance at bay. First, the British arrested Arab leaders, especially those who seemed to be effective organizers.[59] When this failed, it became permissible for British soldiers to shoot rioters in an attempt to calm the situation. Finally, when other means failed, both retribution and collective punishment were authorized as a means to suppress the Arabs. Demolishing homes was one of the tactics employed under the latter two categories, and it remains a practice of the Israeli government today. "The idea that you demolish houses, of people, is a British invention," Ilan Pappe has said.[60]

In Jaffa, the British destroyed 220 homes and displaced more than six thousand Palestinians. Similarly one hundred homes were leveled in Jabalia, three hundred in Abu Kabir, three hundred and fifty in Sheikh Murad, and seventy-five in Arab al-Daudi.[61]

The British increased the forces applied to the issue, a common military response, not unlike "the surge" of US forces in Iraq in 2007. Approximately twenty thousand troops arrived in Palestine by September 30, 1936, followed by the imposition of martial law.[62] The fiercest battles of the conflict were soon after, but they lasted for only a few days.

Infighting occurred among Palestinian leaders during this period as they struggled to determine an honorable way to extricate themselves from the conflict. Their connection to fighters was not coordinated; groups of "independent actors" made up the armed component.[63] These guerrillas experienced a slight boost when a Lebanese military

expert named Fawzi al-Qawuqji arrived in September 1936 with an eighty-man force of Arab volunteers.[64] Al-Qawuqji attempted to take control of the military operations, but his forces departed after only two months in the field when the Arab leadership directed that the strike end.[65]

The strike had a more detrimental effect on the Palestinian Arabs than on the Zionists or the British. Even before the surge, the grand mufti, Raghib an-Nashashibi, and Auni Abd al-Hadi met with the British high commissioner to discuss the means to end the strife. A call from the Arab kings, such as King Abdul Aziz al-Saud of Saudi Arabia and King Ghazi bin Faisal of Iraq, would provide a dignified way out. The kings gave this direction, followed by the AHC calling for an end to the revolt on October 11, 1936.[66] A month later, the General Command of the Arab Revolt in Southern Syria–Palestine declared that the violence was ending. A cease-fire, perhaps an unofficial one, was in place. It would not last, however: "We demanded the British end the sale of land and immigration. The British refused our demands, so we turned against them. We abandoned civil action in favor of fighting."[67]

The Peel Paper

The British responded with more than military force. In the summer of 1936, under the direction of Lord Peel, a Royal Commission formed to determine the "underlying causes of the disturbances which broke out in Palestine in the middle of April." The Peel Commission conducted an exhaustive investigation of the Palestinian problem, providing what may be the most comprehensive recording of the origins of the conflict. Published July 7, 1937, the Peel Commission's report recommended partitioning Palestine into three sections: one Jewish, one Arab, and a small international enclave including Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and a corridor to the sea with Jaffa and Tel Aviv. The report also suggested that a number of Jews and Arabs would need to move to ensure homogenous populations.[68] This would mean the transfer of 200,000–300,000 Arabs from the region designated for Jewish sovereignty and of 1,250 Jews from the Arab region to the Jewish one.

Zionists accepted the principle of partition laid out in the Peel report as congruent with their plans for establishing a Jewish homeland. The AHC, to include the grand mufti, boycotted the commission and refused to meet with them. There was dissent, however; the Arab Defense Party, led by Raghib an-Nashashibi, thought that the British

proposal should be considered. An-Nashashibi was bolstered by the Arab kings and emirs, who also believed there was value in engaging with the British and wrote to al-Husseini, "In view of our confidence in the good intentions of the British government to do justice to the Arabs, it is our opinion that your interest requires that you should meet the Royal Commission."[69]

Under threat of British arrest and potentially worse from his political rivals, the grand mufti fled to the al-Aqsa Mosque and eventually to Damascus. The British decided that he remained a valuable figure because he served as a legitimate source with which they could negotiate.[70]

External forces, rather than internal pressure, led to the end of the 1936–1939 revolt. With war on the horizon in Europe, the British realized that continuing the fight in Palestine would drain military resources and put their oil interests—a requirement to sustain ships, tanks, and planes—in jeopardy. It was not lost on British decision makers that they themselves used this region and its peoples to bog down the Turks in the previous world war. Thus, they decided to concede to Arab demands. Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain said, "We are compelled to consider the Palestine problem from the view of its effect on the international situation. If we must offend one side, let us offend the Jews, rather than the Arabs."[71] Thus, the British stemmed the flow of Jewish immigration and paved the way for Palestine to be ruled by an Arab majority.[72]

LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, AND COMMAND AND CONTROL

The rapid growth of Zionism was met with a rapid growth in Arab resistance in all forms. The Palestinian Mandate faced Arab political pressure, protests, violence, and outright rebellion. More Palestinians joined this resistance across the entire spectrum. They became more unified organizationally and operationally but were never homogeneous like their British and Zionist opposition. This meant that they could be fractured, making it easier for the British to suppress and defeat them.

Armed Component

Palestinian Arabs did not have a unified armed component. Various groups took up arms, but they were never able to become coordinated enough across the region to defeat the British. A small eighty-man volunteer force led by a military expert named Fawzi al-Qawuqji took control of the Arab Revolt's military wing in September 1936. The group departed after only two months in the field when the Arab leadership directed that the strike end.[73]

Facing an unorganized and elusive military foe, the British used heavy-handed tactics, such as destroying homes or interning leaders, to suppress Palestinians. These tactics succeeded and are used by the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) today.

Public Component

The public component of Palestinian resistance was led by political/religious figures such as Haj Amin al-Husseini, the grand mufti. Palestinians formed the AHC as a balance against the Jewish agency, but the committee was marred by internal dissent and eventually disbanded by the British government. It included representation from across the political spectrum, but with emphasis on the ruling and wealthy classes more than on the peasants. A variety of societies, youth organizations, and other groups in Palestine discussed, petitioned, and protested Zionism. It was through protest actions, such as those at the Wailing Wall, that Arabs showed their most public face.

LEGITIMACY

Palestinians who resisted Zionism enjoyed legitimacy in their own population. Many Palestinians felt that the Jews would never recognize them. The British pretended to recognize the legitimacy of the Palestinians when it suited them. The Mandate could easily form and disband any political entity it deemed necessary, as was evident from the requirement that a legislative body within the Mandate be validated in London. Such a construct would never lend itself to true legitimacy for the Arabs.

MOTIVATION AND BEHAVIOR

A growing number of Palestinians' most basic needs were not being met. Palestinians were displaced from their lands while living under a British occupation that continued to support Zionist immigration. Societies, guilds, and other political entities supported the resistance even to the point of armed rebellion. Support from religious and political leaders provided legitimacy of action under Islamic custom.

OPERATIONS

The 1936–1939 Arab Revolt may represent the height of Palestinian resistance—the best chance for the Palestinians to defeat the Zionist incursion. They were fighting not one but two challengers: the British authority, to include a twenty-thousand-man surge and martial law, and the Zionist invasion. During this period, the Palestinians became increasingly organized, but they never reached the homogeneity of the opposition. As a result, the resistance, especially the leadership, was severely damaged by 1939.

Paramilitary

The Arabs continued operations similar to those of World War I. Guerrilla tactics against weak and isolated targets created the havoc needed to garner attention. Successes meant that the British had to surge twenty thousand forces into the region and impose martial law. The Arab armed component was not well organized, although it was able to take over Jerusalem and coordinate attacks on British administrative offices.[74] The grand mufti maintained armed elements within the police force and created a paramilitary force, named Al-Jihad Al-Muqaddas, led by Abdul Qadir al-Husseini.[75]

Administrative

As during World War I, Islamic hospitality served as the administrative foundation to support Arab political and armed components of resistance. The means to communicate ideas, transfer funds, and provide food, shelter, and clothing was in place because of this culture.

Added to this system were administrative functions in place as part of the religious and governmental structures under Islam, now under the British Mandate. The conflict between those who worked within the mandate structure and those who sought to resist it remained, but many more Arabs now moved to the cause of outright rebellion.

The AHC served as a formal, politically oriented administrative body. It performed functions such as mass communication through leaflets and newspapers. Al-Markaziyyah Lil-Jihad (the Central Committee for Holy War), whose leadership included the grand mufti, also served as an administrative body to support the insurrection.[76]

Psychological

During the 1930s, the Arab Muslim population in Palestine comprised about 73 percent of the total population, while Arab Christians were about 9 percent. The conflict that arose and culminated in the Arab Revolt reflected these numbers because some of the central issues involved Islamic religious principles, and many key Arab figures in the uprising were Muslims. Christian Arabs generally shared the resentment that other Arabs felt at the growth of the Zionist population and consequent dispossession suffered by tenant farmers and others. However, the violence that began in Jerusalem and that sparked a widespread rebellion thereafter held the religious confrontation between Muslim and Jew at its center. Closely associated with religious tensions was the perception by traditional Arab Muslims that Zionism had brought with it modernistic, secular values that threatened Islamic culture.[77]

Economics likewise motivated Arabs of all religious faiths because the growing influx of Jewish immigrants resulted in accelerated land sales and consequent dispossession of the Arabs. The Arab Higher Committee specifically addressed the issue to the mandate authorities, and the British responded accordingly in the Peel Commission report in 1937. The commission's conclusions included the growth of Arab mistrust and alarm at the continued purchase of Arab land. Besides the issue of land purchases, the Arabs were offended and economically threatened by the Zionists' unequal treatment of the Arab working class, often denying Arabs jobs and preferring fellow Jews instead. The result of Jewish policies and the Mandate's acquiescence was a growing population of unemployed, poor urban Arabs.

Political sentiments also factored into the Arab psyche during the uprising. Arab leaders saw with increasing clarity the conflicting promises that Whitehall had given to the Zionists and the Arabs, and they grew restive at the prospect of losing any chance for political autonomy. Nationalism was on the rise throughout the world, including in Palestine. Palestinian Arabs felt that they had the right to achieve national independence on par with surrounding countries in the region after World War I. Instead, they saw British equivocation and Zionists moving toward the establishment of a Jewish state, with borders that remained very much in question.

Political

This period marks a time of transition as a larger number of Arab nationalists were willing to move from the political arena to armed insurrection. Even in the midst of the revolt, the Palestinians were willing to negotiate and remain organized enough to effect a cease-fire. Many did not realize that the British and the Zionists were merely mollifying them on the one hand, while shoring up efforts for additional displacement on the other. This lack of clarity resulted partially because rival Palestinian families focused not only on the external conflict with the British and the Jews but also on intraclan battles. The political parties that formed during this period were tied to powerful families, such as the al-Husseini and an-Nashashibi clans. Both clans agreed the Mandate must be dissolved, Zionist immigration must cease, and there must be an independent Arab state.[78] However, the grand mufti's Arab Palestinian Party saw armed insurrection as the only answer, while an-Nashashibi's National Defense Party took a much softer stance, seeking to work with the British and correct the problem of Zionism with the mandatory government.[79] Other parties also presented disparate views. For example, the Istiqlal (Independence) Party led by Awni Abdul Hadi sought to end the Mandate and build Arab unity, leading to independence of all Arab nations.[80]

ENDNOTES

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[5] Ibid., 6.

[6] In 1922, there were similar numbers of the minority Christians and of Jews in Palestine.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Ibid., 7–8.

[9] Heinrich Billstein, "Turban and Swastika: The Grand Mufti and the Nazis," 10:30.

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[26] Ibid., 14.

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[29] Ibid., 71.

[30] Ibid., 72.

[31] Ayyad, *Arab Nationalism and the Palestinians*, 138.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid., 139.

[34] Ibid., 139.

[35] Ghassan Kanafani, *The 1936–39 Revolt in Palestine* (New York: Committee for Democratic Palestine, 1972), 13, 23, http://www.kalimatmagazine.com/kanafani.

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[37] Sela, " 'Wailing Wall' Riots," 73.

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[39] Ibid., 25.

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[41] Ibid., 28.

[42] Ibid., 26.

[43] Ibid., 25.

[44] Ibid., 28.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Kanafani, *The 1936–39 Revolt in Palestine*, 41.

[47] Abboushi, "Road to Rebellion," 30.

[48] Kanafani, *The 1936–39 Revolt in Palestine*, 10.

[49] Ibid., 13.

[50] Ibid., 21.

[51] Ibid., 35.

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[53] Ibid., 39.

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[57] Kanafani, *The 1936–39 Revolt in Palestine*, 42.

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[62] Ibid., 45.

[63] Kenneth W. Stein, "The Intifada and the 1936–39 Uprising: A Comparison," *Journal of Palestinian Studies* 19, no. 4 (1990): 73.

[64] Al-Qawuqji's name is sometimes spelled *Fauzi* and *el-Kaukji.*

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[67] "1936–1939 Arab Revolt in Palestine," YouTube video, 20:53.

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[70] Ibid., 49.

[71] "1936–1939 Arab Revolt in Palestine," YouTube video, 7:55.

[72] "1936–1939 Arab Revolt in Palestine," YouTube video, 8:10.

[73] Ayyad, *Arab Nationalism and the Palestinians*, 161.

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[75] Ibid., 141.

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CHAPTER 9.
WORLD WAR II (1939–1945)

Our shouting is louder than our actions,
Our swords are taller than us,
This is our tragedy.
In short
We wear the cape of civilization
But our souls live in the stone age

—Nizar Qabbani, "Verse"

TIMELINE

October 1937	The grand mufti flees to Lebanon.
January 1941	The grand mufti writes to Adolf Hitler, offering to help the Nazis.
May 29, 1941	British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Anthony Eden issues the "Mansion House Speech," which is supportive of Arab self-determination.
September 20, 1944	Winston Churchill forms the Jewish Brigade.
March 22, 1945	The Arab League officially forms.

ORIGINS

World War II profoundly affected the Arab–Israeli conflict. The war provided Zionism with the means to build and train a robust fighting force. It led to the formation of a Jewish Brigade within the British army to include the requisite training and combat experience. Jewish Brigade soldiers either were, or became, Haganah and subsequently Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) soldiers. Germany and Palestine became aligned by their common enemies as the grand mufti forged an alliance with the führer. Before the war's end, al-Husseini became an important Nazi propagandist and Waffen Schutzstaffel (Armed Protective Squadron, more commonly known as the SS) military adviser.

In an ironic twist, the Middle Eastern borders drawn by France and England after World War I were solidified during World War II by the formation of the Arab League. Palestine's political isolation made it easier for the Jews to carve out the area as their own in 1948, particularly after the Holocaust heightened the world's sympathy for the Jews and for Zionist postwar migration.

The Rise of Hitler and European Jewish Migration

Anti-Semitism preceded Adolf Hitler's rise to political power and thus was easily inculcated into Germany's postwar frustration. Hitler embraced removing the Jews from Germany, making the issue an important part of his platform as early as 1920.[1] Initially, Hitler

supported emigration to Palestine, although Nazis assumed that the Jews did not possess the ability to form their own state.[2] Hitler viewed the Jews immigrating to the Middle East as an easy way to eliminate an annoying problem that would subsequently wither and die on its own.

Churchill Forms a Jewish Brigade

Recognizing that Nazi Germany represented a greater threat than the British, Jews volunteered to serve in the British army in varying capacities. As a result, the Haganah and other Jewish militia received invaluable training that influenced forming the IDF and fighting the Arabs for their independence in 1948.

Dr. Weizmann conceived of a military force composed entirely of Palestinian Jews, one that would serve within the British army but under its own flag.[3] Weizmann sought the assistance of Winston Churchill, believing this would be a “symbolic first step to achieving statehood.”[4] Ben Gurion was more pragmatic; he saw this as the means to train with the British army.[5]

Initially, Great Britain refused. Many in government were still concerned with how Arabs would respond.[6] Still, Jews kept this concept alive. As German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel drove his Afrika Corps eastward across North Africa, more manpower became an imperative. Great Britain pragmatically relented and welcomed a Palestinian regiment of Jews and Arab soldiers.[7] They had minimal training and were assigned the mundane but needed role of guard duty.[8] It was not until September 20, 1944, that Winston Churchill created the Jewish Brigade, bypassing the War and Foreign Offices.[9] This five-thousand-man force chose the Star of David in yellow as its badge of honor.[10]

The British assigned officers and noncommissioned officers from Great Britain and the commonwealth nations to lead the brigade. The Jewish agency formed a parallel secret organization, a “Haganah command structure,” to organize the Jewish rank and file and lead them as necessary for Zionist intents and purposes. Although the Jewish Brigade saw fighting only in the last stages of the war, its influence would resonate in Israel in 1948.

The Grand Mufti in Germany

World War II also impacted Palestinian Arabs. Many who remained concerned by the growing Jewish population in Palestine were mollified by the fact that Nazi Germany shared the Palestinian view—vis-à-vis the Jewish problem.

When Hitler and the Nazis came to power, the grand mufti embraced their anti-Jewish stance, although he resisted the Nazi encouragement of Jewish emigration to Palestine. Similarly, the SS anticipated conflict with the British in the region and recognized that al-Husseini and the Arabs could become valuable allies. The SS commenced surreptitious financial support to the mufti.[11]

The British knew al-Husseini served as an instrumental leader of the Arab Revolt. Since the riots a decade before, he remained an Arab nationalist and, more importantly, an anti-Zionist. His resistance remained aggressive, with the willingness to use violence. The murder of a British official became the justification for arresting and capturing the grand mufti. Learning of his pending arrest, al-Husseini escaped to the al-Aqsa Mosque where he enjoyed sanctuary.[12] The grand mufti eventually fled to Lebanon in October 1937 and subsequently continued to lead the revolt from Beirut and Damascus.[13, 14]

The British reversed their stance on Jewish immigration because of the impending war, but by this time, the mufti was out of the fold completely. In January 1941, alHusseini was in Iraq, offering to help Adolf Hitler and the Nazis.[15] He wrote:

> Excellency, the Arab peoples' warmest sympathy for Germany is a firm fact. If the Arab lands are relieved of certain material deficiencies, they will be everywhere prepared to act against the common enemy, and rise up enthusiastically to play their part in the defeat of the English-Jewish coalition.[16]

Next, the grand mufti incited a revolt in Iraq with the intention of aligning the country with Germany. Winston Churchill approved a plan to have the Irgun assassinate the mufti, and British forces were sent from the Palestinian Mandate to help quell the rebellion. The assassination mission failed when a German fighter plane intercepted the Irgun's aircraft and their leader was killed.[17] The rebellion, however,

was put down. The German agents working with al-Husseini were captured, but he escaped.[18] He made his way to Italy and then Germany.

Shortly after his arrival in Berlin, the grand mufti met with many high officials, even Adolf Hitler himself, who noted that al-Husseini appeared to have Aryan blood. The mufti was welcomed as a figure in the Third Reich. The stage was set for Palestinians to align with the Germans in a revolt against the British, much like their alliance with the British against the Ottoman Turks three decades before. The grand mufti now worked to support the Nazis while lobbying for military assistance.

In January 1942, General Erwin Rommel's Afrika Corps pushed east toward Egypt. Al-Husseini observed that Germany was poised to enter Palestine. Wanting to solidify his position and Palestine's alliance with Germany, al-Husseini wrote to the German foreign minister, again offering to assist in the war effort while also seeking formal recognition of Arab sovereignty and help in defeating the British–Jewish coalition.[19] Inside Palestine, the Arabs were aware of Rommel's victories. "They shouted 'Forward Rommel' in the streets of Jerusalem for each and very German victory. . . . They clapped for the German Army as if it were led by an Arab officer."[20]

Of course, it was not to be. Rommel was thwarted by British forces in North Africa. Germany still recognized that the grand mufti could be useful. Financial support continued as he served as an anti-Semitic figurehead, broadcasting propaganda and recruiting Muslims to the cause.[21]

Jews were still able to flee from Europe to Palestine. The grand mufti wanted to stop them for good and was willing to support their elimination through the death camps. He corresponded with various government officials in Hungary, Bulgaria, and Romania, suggesting they send the Jews to camps in Poland rather than to Palestine:

> To the Royal Bulgarian Foreign Minister: Your Excellency, the Jewish threat to the entire world and especially to the countries where Jews reside has become a fact of life for most peoples and caused them to take defensive measures. We do not believe that Jewish emigration can solve this problem. Once emigrated, the Jews could, with nothing to hinder them, enter into alliance with their racial comrades in the rest of the

> world and cause more damage to the land they have left. It seems to me to be worth noting that the countries Jews are supposed to immigrate to take a significant position that could have great influence on the outcome of the war. Further, the Jews during their stay in other lands have had the opportunity to learn about information vital to the war, and would make use of this information. I take the liberty of pointing out that it would be appropriate and expedient to prevent the Jews from emigrating, and send them where they are under rigorous control, for instance, Poland. Thus you avoid their threat and do a good deed for the Arabian people.[22]

The grand mufti also helped the Nazis form a new division of the SS composed of Bosnian Muslims after Himmler declared them racially acceptable.[23] Al-Husseini provided the religious legitimacy needed to connect Muslims with the Nazis. Dubbed the Handschar, or Scimitar, Division—named for a wide, curved Arabian sword—the men wore fezzes instead of traditional Western covers. Al-Husseini was in charge of the unit's education and training. He even ensured that Muslim chaplains served in the Handschar and instructed them in their duties.

Figure 9-1. SS soldiers of the Handschar Division with their iconic insignia and headgear.

Formation of the Arab League

The British continued to try to placate both Arabs and Jews. At the beginning of World War II, they appeased the Palestinian Arabs by ending Zionist immigration. As the situation became more and more dire in North Africa and the Middle East, Arab nationalism had the potential to become as great a threat to Great Britain as it was to the Ottoman Turks. On May 29, 1941, Mr. Anthony Eden, the British secretary of state for foreign affairs, issued the "The Mansion House Speech" with words reminiscent of the Balfour Declaration: "His Majesty's Government will give full support to any scheme [that provides a] greater degree of unity than they [The Arabs] now enjoy."[24]

This notion was asserted yet again in a speech a little less than two years later on February 24, 1943:

> As I have already made plain, the British Government would view with sympathy any movement among the Arabs to promote economic, cultural, or political unity, but clearly the initiative in any scheme would have to come from the Arabs themselves. So far as I am aware, no such scheme which commands general approval has yet been worked out.

Arabs throughout the region understood this to mean that the ills of the post-World War I reconstruction would be corrected in the post-World War II environment. Egypt took the lead in hosting and organizing a series of political gatherings to discuss Arab nationalism and self-determination. A plan emerged to reunite Syria, Lebanon, Transjordan, and Palestine into "Greater Syria." Greater Syria and Iraq became the founding members of the Arab League.[25] The league was intended to regulate defense, foreign affairs, currency, communications, customs, and protection of minority rights. Palestinian Jews would enjoy a modicum of self-rule but live within the Greater Syrian state.[26]

As talks continued, however, friction developed when Amir Abdullah of Transjordan asserted he should be king of Greater Syria. The Syrians wanted to remain a republic. This fissure prevented union with Lebanon and Palestine. The league would form, but without combining Transjordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Palestine into Greater Syria. Recognizing that this would somewhat isolate Palestine from the other states,

the Palestinian representative to the talks emphasized to the other states the need to address the ongoing Zionist problem. The league agreed to buy Palestinian lands that would otherwise be purchased by Jews and to place lobbyists in London and Washington, DC, to fight for the Arab cause.[27]

Arab League members signed their charter on March 22, 1945. This served more to divide than unite the Palestinian cause. Now, Palestine was a separate political entity as divided by the British and subsequently endorsed by the Arabs themselves. Borders were formed in the hearts and minds of other Arabs who could look to the influx of Zionists into the region as more of a Palestinian problem than an Arab problem.

LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, AND COMMAND AND CONTROL

Palestinian resistance experienced a lull during World War II. The leadership eroded during the Mandate period. Leaders were eliminated in one form or another, and many would remain in exile. Additionally, there seemed to be some hope that the British would finally address the Palestinian plight as they stopped immigration and expressed support for Arab unity. The process of forming the Arab League created a sense among many that the issue may finally be resolved. The grand mufti was himself in exile. He was the prime example of Palestinian leadership. In effect, it was active, but absent.

Underground Component and Auxiliary Component

Palestinians maintained their underground and auxiliary as before during the World War I and pre-World War II Mandate period. Tensions were calmed somewhat during the war because of exhaustion and erosion from the Arab Revolt.

Armed Component

There was no fighting internally during World War II between the Arabs, the Zionists, and the British. Only one attempt was made by the Germans—Operation Atlas. The team was inserted by parachute and discovered immediately.

Public Component

The grand mufti serves as the iconic example of the Palestinian resistance's public component, a strategic-political approach. Al-Husseini operated in exile from Germany for most of the war. His efforts laid the groundwork for an alliance to include military support from Germany and an end to Zionists leaving the axis powers for Palestine.

IDEOLOGY

Arab Palestinian ideology remained the same through World War II. There was resistance to Zionist incursion, but it had been stopped by the British Mandate authorities; the tide shifted from the influence of the grand mufti operating in Nazi Germany. As a result, Palestinians could have been pushed to rebellion with enough pressure but were more amenable to engaging in a larger Arab conglomeration as emerged through the formation of the Arab League. As a result, the period before 1948 was the doldrums of the Arab–Israeli conflict.

LEGITIMACY

The Palestinian Arabs sought legitimacy from two external sources. Those who were in league with and followed the grand mufti thought legitimacy would come from Germany. This connection was made very easily because the Nazis' anti-Semitism was closely aligned with Palestinian anti-Zionism. The grand mufti obtained this legitimacy, but it would quickly disappear when Germany capitulated. Arabs also derived legitimacy through the formation of the Arab League. In doing so, the Palestinian cause was damaged when inter-Arab rivalry prevented Palestine from being subsumed into Greater Syria. Arabs solidified the borders drawn by Great Britain.

MOTIVATION AND BEHAVIOR

After the Arab Revolt and through World War II, Palestine was relatively peaceful compared to the rest of the world. Arab leaders, such as the grand mufti, were in exile or exhausted. Others were mollified by the British, who maneuvered shrewdly and intimated support for

a unified Arab realm. This meant that within Palestine, Arab leaders unwittingly made preparations for a postwar environment that would be harmful to their cause. Arab motivation remained the same, a nationalist desire for self-determination with a contained Zionist population. Their behavior solidified the lines between Palestine and the great Arab nation.

OPERATIONS

The Palestinians focused on political maneuverings more than on kinetic operations during World War II. They were exhausted from their own Arab Revolt, and it appeared that either through the support of Nazi Germany or the formation of the Arab League, the Zionist issue would be solved.

Paramilitary

During World War II, there were no significant Palestinian armed operations. As German forces moved toward Palestine, elements began to prepare to act as partisans to assist in defeating the British and the Zionists, but this never came to pass.

Political

The two Palestinian political moves were at odds with one another. In effect, the grand mufti chose to side with the Nazis. He garnered their support, but it was to no avail once the axis was defeated. The Arab League formed after receiving British encouragement, but then internal Arab politics and rivalry prevented reunion of Greater Syria.

ENDNOTES

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2 David Yisraeli, "The Third Reich and Palestine," *Middle Eastern Studies* 7, no. 3 (1971): 344.

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[4] Ibid., 8:35.

[5] Ibid., 9:00.

[6] Ibid., 9:48.

[7] Ibid., 10:42.

[8] Ibid., 11:01.

[9] Ibid., 14:11.

[10] Ibid.,15:40.

[11] Ibid., 13:00.

[12] Ibid., 15:00

[13] Ibid., 16:00.

[14] Avoiding capture and operating from exile in places such as Lebanon, Iraq, and Germany was an al-Husseini hallmark, one that Yassar Arafat inherited.

[15] Ibid., 17:00

[16] Ibid.,17:07.

[17] Philip Mattar, "The Mufti of Jerusalem and the Politics of Palestine," *Middle East Journal* 42, no. 2 (1988): 237.

[18] Billstein, 19:22.

[19] Ibid., 23:00.

[20] Ibid., 23:42.

[21] Ibid., 30:00.

[22] Ibid., 34:00. For a discussion of the Mufti's role in the Holocaust, see Zvi Elpeleg, *The Grand Mufti Haj Amin al-Hussaini, Founder of the Palestinian National Movement* (London: Routledge, 1993), Chpater 2.

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[25] Ibid., 94.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid., 97.

CHAPTER 10.
ISRAELI STATEHOOD AND ARAB RESISTANCE (1945–1964)

A foolish man may be known by six things: Anger without cause, speech without profit, change without progress, inquiry without object, putting trust in a stranger, and mistaking foes for friends.

—Arab proverb

TIMELINE

July 22, 1946	Menachem Begin directs the Irgun to place a bomb in the King David Hotel, the British headquarters in Jerusalem. More than ninety people are killed.
April 2, 1947	A British delegation to the United Nations (UN) asks that the future of Palestine be considered, with an implication that the United Kingdom wanted to end the Palestinian Mandate.
September 3, 1947	UN Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) submits its report, recommending partition.
November 29, 1947	UN General Assembly approves Resolution 181, calling for the partition of Palestine into a Jewish state and an Arab state. The Zionists accepted, and the Arabs rejected it.
March 1948	Al-Qawuqji leads an army of Arab volunteers, the Arab Liberation Army (ALA), from Transjordan into Palestine and begins offensive operations as part of the Arab–Zionist civil war.
April 8, 1948	Abd Qadir al-Husseini, one of the Palestinians' most capable military leaders, is killed at the Battle of Qastel.
April 9, 1948	The Irgun and the Stern Gang launch an attack on the village of Deir Yassin and massacre 245 Palestinian Arab villagers.
April 21, 1948	British forces pull back from their position in Haifa; Zionists of the Carmeli Brigade attack the city, leading to a mass exodus of Palestinians.
May 15, 1948	End of the Palestinian Mandate, the birth of Israel, and the start of the first Arab–Israeli War.
June 1948	UN mediator Count Bernadotte sends a letter to Israeli foreign minister stating, "it is impossible to isolate Jerusalem from its Arab environment."[1]
June 11, 1948	The first truce begins.

July 9, 1948	Israeli forces attack Lydda and Ramla, home to fifty thousand to seventy thousand Palestinians, including refugees from Jaffa. The towns are within the Arab part of the UN partition but also strategically located on the road between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.
September 17, 1948	Count Bernadotte issues a report to the UN stating that Arabs and Israelis can live autonomously and Arabs should have the right to return. He is assassinated by four members of the Stern Gang.
September 22, 1948	The Arab League recognizes the All-Palestine Government (APG) with the grand mufti as its head.
October 1, 1948	The grand mufti declares independence for Palestine.
October 31, 1948	The ALA is non-operational. All of Galilee is under Israeli control.
February 24, 1949	Egypt signs an armistice with Israel.
March 1949	Syrian President Shukri Quwwatli is overthrown in a coup.
March 23, 1949	Lebanon signs an armistice with Israel.
April 3, 1949	Transjordan signs an armistice with Israel.
July 20, 1949	Syria signs an armistice with Israel.
1959	Yasser Arafat joins nine others from the Palestinian diaspora to form a new resistant movement known as Fatah.

ORIGINS

Colonial and other imperialist ventures continued to fold after World War II. For the United Kingdom, Palestine was particularly problematic because the Zionists and Arabs returned to terrorism and guerrilla war.[2] Jewish paramilitary groups perpetrated the preponderance of post-World War II violence as they resisted British rule.[3] The seminal event that accelerated British withdrawal from Palestine was the Irgun bombing of the King David Hotel on July 22, 1946. The Jerusalem hotel's south wing served as the British headquarters in Palestine. Other sections still functioned as a normal hotel, and it was often home to guests of all races and creeds. For this reason, many thought it a safe haven, a place that would never endure an attack.[4]

At the direction of future prime minister of Israel, Menachem Begin, several Irgun soldiers dressed as Arabs and entered the hotel grounds in a milk delivery truck. They carried seven large milk churns filled with gelignite and TNT, threatening anyone who tried to stop them by brandishing weapons, and placed the churns together next to a support pillar.[5] There was an attempt to provide warning so the building could be evacuated, but it was unsuccessful. When the assembled improvised explosive device detonated, it brought down one entire corner of the building. Ninety-one people were killed, including twenty-eight British citizens, seventeen Jews, and forty-one Arabs. More than half of the victims were civilians.[6] Noting it as one of the earliest milestones in modern terrorism, Bruce Hoffman said, "For many decades it held the record of having killed the largest number of people."[7]

The Question of Palestine

To begin the process of disentanglement, the British delegation to the UN submitted a request on April 2, 1947, that the future of Palestine be considered.[8] It was clear from the verbiage that Britain wanted to cease their involvement. The British no longer believed the strategic advantage of this region was worth the cost, whether measured in sterling or British lives. British Zionists may have surmised that the Jews in Palestine were ready for self-determination. Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and Syria similarly sought "the termination of the Mandate over Palestine and the declaration of its independence."[9] Denying this request almost assured the Zionists they would have some space in Palestine to call their own.

Figure 10-1. The King David Hotel after the bombing.

Responding to the British request, the UN formed UNSCOP to conduct a concerted study of the situation. UNSCOP garnered input from the Mandate government and the Jewish agency.[10] The Arab Higher Committee (AHC) would not accede to partition as an option and therefore refused to meet with the special committee. Understanding that the status of Jerusalem and of holy sites would be an important factor, UNSCOP set up a separate subcommittee to address these sites in detail.[11]

After completing its survey and review of the Palestinian situation, UNSCOP published Supplement No. 11, Volume 1, of its report to the General Assembly on September 3, 1947. In chapter 2, "The Elements of the Conflict," UNSCOP emphasizes the points of friction. This includes discussions that were of particular interest at the time, namely the rising population of Jews versus Arabs in the region, as well as topics that remain today, such as the availability of water.[12] It also notes

the two peoples formed two economies that were "involved with one another and yet in essential features separate."[13] The report noted the following features of the economies:

- Jewish workers are not employed by Arabs, and very few Arabs are employed by Jews.
- There are "considerable differences" in wages for Arabs and Jews working in the same occupation.
- Arab farming is mostly for subsistence, and Jewish farming is cash producing.
- Trade between the two groups is similar to commerce between two nations.[14]

UNSCOP also noted the increased violence after the white paper, including the activities of the Haganah, the Stern Group, and the aforementioned King David Hotel attack by the Irgun. (The British responded with an operation that included the arrest and detention of 2,600 Jews, including four members of the Jewish agency executive.)[15]

UNSCOP Recommendations

UNSCOP recommended partition, as depicted in Figure 10-2. This division delineated an Arab state with a population of 725,000, with 10,000 Jews among them. The newly formed Jewish state would have a population of 498,000 Jews, with a near equivalent number of Arabs (407,000 according to the 1946 census), plus 90,000 Bedouins.[16] An additional 150,000 Jews displaced during World War II would be admitted over the next two years.

The city of Jerusalem, as home to important holy sites of three of the world's largest religions, would be managed separately as an international trusteeship. Its appointed governor would be neither Jew nor Arab, nor a citizen of either of the two states, nor Jerusalem.

Not surprisingly, the AHC rejected the partition plan. The Jews accepted it begrudgingly. The UN voted on the plan in November 1947, passing it through UN Resolution 181(III), "Future Government of Palestine."[17] With its passing, the British continued preparations for withdrawal, and the Zionists and Arabs prepared for war.

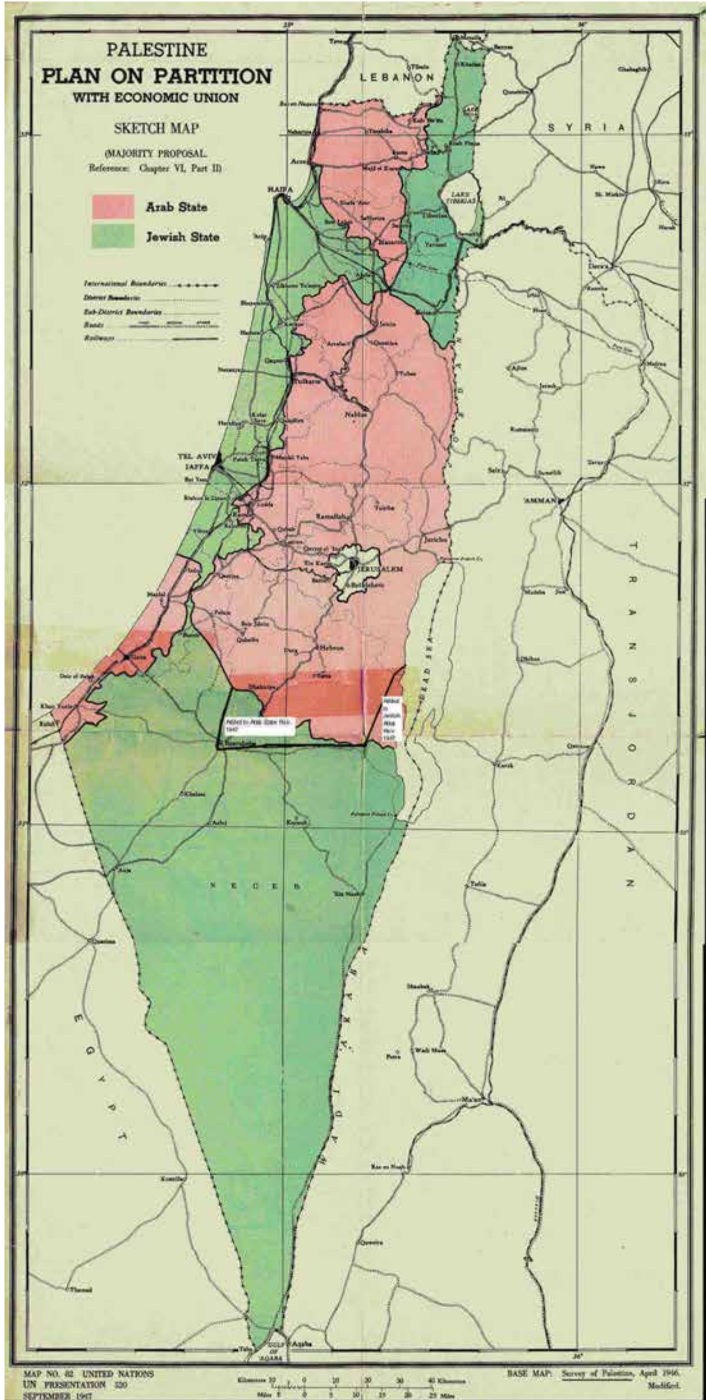

Figure 10-2. UNSCOP partition, majority view.

In Beirut, the grand mufti announced that Palestinians would not recognize UN Resolution 181. He was joined by Syrians, especially members of the Muslim Brotherhood. The Brotherhood in Palestine viewed such a compromise as an unacceptable secular solution to what they saw as fundamentally a religious matter. The answer lay in jihad, not in political compromise with the Zionists and their allies. Syrians went on strike and protested at the US legation and Soviet cultural offices in Damascus. In Aleppo, Arabs attacked Jews in their homes and in their synagogues. A call went out to form an Arab army to free Palestine.[18]

Palestinians, Ill Prepared for War

During the Arab Revolt, most of the Palestinian leaders were killed or dispersed through internment or exile, and most of their weapons were confiscated. While the Zionists benefited from service during World War II, there was no comparable experience for the Palestinians. As a result, they were not adequately prepared to return to an armed conflict.

Still, the grand mufti attempted to lead an effort to resist transition from the Palestinian Mandate to the UN Partition Plan. Under his purview were two one-thousand-man résistance elements dubbed the Army of Salvation.[19] This relatively diminutive force suffered a huge blow early in the conflict when its best field commander, Abd Qadir al-Husseini, was killed at the Battle of Qastel on April 8, 1948.[20] After his successor died on June 2, 1948, there was no significant Palestinian force remaining to fight the Zionists.

Arab Support

The Palestinian resistance enjoyed the support from their Arab brethren in the wake of UN Resolution 181. Six thousand Arab volunteers joined Palestinian militias to fight the Jews after the UN passed the resolution. These subsequently banded together to form the ALA under Fawzi al-Qawuqji, one of the few remaining military leaders of the 1936 revolt.[21, 22]

Similarly, the Arab League decided it would go to war to support the Palestinians, but only after the British withdrawal. Several armies converged on Palestine in the spring of 1948, but each had its own agenda. King Abdullah of Transjordan would serve as the political leader of

Arab League forces. Abdullah's army, known as the Arab Legion, was designed and led by the British commander known as Glubb Pasha.[23] The Legion numbered ten thousand and included armor and artillery. They would advance from the east and focus on Jerusalem and the surrounding region. King Farouk's Egyptian army committed five thousand troops to invade from the south, across the Sinai into the Negev and Gaza. From the north came Syrian forces, numbering eight thousand, and two thousand Lebanese. The Iraqi army sent ten thousand to operate under the direction of the Arab Legion.[24]

In contrast to the Palestinians, the Zionists were well resourced, trained, and equipped for war in part because many of those who would fight for Israel's independence in 1948 had been fighting since World War II in one form or another. A large number of Jews trained and fought with the British during World War II as members of the Jewish Brigade.

The Zionist defense forces, the Haganah and Irgun, fought a guerrilla war against the British that started during the global conflict and increased in intensity in the years following. As of 1946, there were fifty thousand Haganah, five thousand Palmach, and three thousand five hundred to five thousand in the Irgun.[25] There were even three hundred Polish Jews, former partisans who fought the Nazis, who had entered the country illegally.[26]

The discrepancy between Arab and Jewish recruiting and force development leading up to the 1948 war can best be attributed to the fundamental disunity that plagued the Arab resistance dating back to the Ottoman experience. On the Jewish side, there were serious, potentially catastrophic political divisions among Labor and Revisionist Zionists, but the centripetal force of the need to work together for survival overcame them, at least temporarily. The Arabs, however, remained disorganized primarily as a reflection of the tension among political elites and their social separation from the peasants and urban poor who were needed to fill Arab ranks. The military assistance that came from surrounding Arab powers likewise came with the cost of further disunity, as each power—Syria, Jordan, and Egypt—gave priority to their own quest for dominance over Palestine.

The 1948 War

Today, the 1948 war is commonly known as the Israeli War of Independence. The conflict can be more accurately characterized as two wars, or at least a war in two phases. The first was a civil war beginning in late 1947/early 1948. It saw the Army of Salvation and the ALA fighting the Haganah and Irgun. British forces served as a third major combatant as they provided the Jews with humanitarian aid, casualty evacuation, and sometimes even supported fires. This is particularly odd because the British also blocked thousands of Jews from entering Palestine in the postwar period.

The second phase started with the British withdrawal and official disestablishment of the Palestinian Mandate on May 15, 1948. This coincided with the Israeli declaration of independent statehood. Within days, the Haganah and Irgun became the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF). The Palestinian and Arab irregular forces remained their foes, but they were joined by the conventional forces of the Arab League, which was waiting for the British to depart.

The Zionists were well prepared and suitably motivated for this war. The Arabs were ill prepared, engaged with limited objectives, and, as often is the case in this conflict, experienced a lack of coordination born of longstanding rivalries.

The Palestinian Civil War

The first phase of the Israeli War of Independence pitted the Zionists against Palestinian Arabs with support from both the British and surrounding Arab powers. The Zionists aimed at seizing decisive control of contiguous territory, stretching from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. In addition, they wanted to ensure that the embryonic State of Israel would achieve defensible borders. The Arabs, though their strategy suffered from disunity among the various factions, strove to deny the Zionists any territory at all. They hoped that the Arab states would join them in a war to exterminate the Jewish state and reclaim the entirety of Palestine for the Arabs.

In March 1948, al-Qawuqji and the ALA crossed into Palestine after much consternation at the border of Transjordan. The ALA High Command in Damascus failed to coordinate the movement with

Transjordanian authorities. Major General Ismail Safwat met with King Abdullah, who provided permission. There had not been a shot fired and already the Arabs seemed to be squabbling among themselves.

Upon crossing into Palestine, a British delegation asked to meet with al-Qawuqji. They informed him that he was now responsible for security throughout all of Palestine. He curtly informed them that he would accept responsibility for only the forces under his command in their assigned region, Galilee.[27]

Soon, the ALA was skirmishing with the Haganah and the Irgun. AlQawuqji reported that British forces often rescued beleaguered Zionists, aiding in their escape. After Abd Qadir al-Husseini's death at the Battle of Qastel, Damascus asked al-Qawuqji to move his forces into the region. This began a thematic correspondence between al-Qawuqji and the High Command, wherein al-Qawuqji suggested the ALA could defeat the Haganah if properly resourced. In one cable during the Battle of Mishmar Ha'emek, he wrote:

> High Command
>
> We are fighting in this area with the very pick of the Haganah forces who are trying to establish their superiority on the field of battle so as to influence the course of the truce negotiations in the political field. Some battles are optional and can be avoided, others must be fought. It you have no ammunition and cannot ensure supplies, how do you expect us to defend and hold out in battle? The League decided to make war and is obliged to provide the means for fighting it.

After continually voicing his complaints, finally in person to the inspector-general, al-Qawuqji was told succinctly, "The Arab regular armies will soon be entering Palestine and it will all be over. We have decided to attach the Central Area to your command. Just wait, and you will be satisfied. The United Nations is going to intervene and settle the problem."[28]

This notion, a belief that the forces of the Arab League would soon crush the Zionists, was folly.

The Massacre at Deir Yassin

An important Zionist operation occurred at Deir Yassin. The battle, subsequent massacre, and reported atrocities there began a pattern that was often repeated by Zionist forces as they took over strategic positions throughout Palestine before and after the British withdrawal. Among Palestinians, the impact of this particular operation would create fear that grew into a refugee crisis that persists today.

Deir Yassin lay on the western side of Jerusalem. On April 9, 1948, Irgun and Lehi obtained permission from a local Haganah commander to take over the town.[29] They moved to the outskirts of the village and called for the inhabitants to surrender. After receiving small-arms fire, they attacked the village, moving house to house in brutal close-quarters combat. Some innocents were killed in the battle, and afterward, the Zionists massacred between 110 and 200 villagers.[30] Religious Jews from nearby entered the town and yelled at the Irgun, chastising them, which subsequently ended the killing.[31]

The surviving Palestinians fled to Jerusalem where they were met by Dr. Hussein Khalidi, deputy chairman of the higher Arab executive. Khalidi directed publication of a press release that said children were murdered and women raped to garner more visceral support from the Arab League.[32] This created a longstanding, detrimental effect on Palestinians throughout the rest of 1948. Fearing rape and murder of civilians, Palestinians scattered as Zionist forces approached or attacked. This fear grew into a refugee crisis as three-quarters of a million Palestinians fled to Lebanon, Syria, Transjordan, and other parts of the Arab world.[33] Thus, a horrific act combined with propaganda evolved into a useful phenomenon for the Jews to take ground, to capture cities and towns they needed to prepare the battlespace for the arriving Arab armies, and to develop the lines that were to become Israel.

Plan Dalet, or Plan D

The Zionists enacted a series of plans to ensure they secured regions that the UN designated for the Jewish population as well as regions intended for the Arabs that would provide a strategically sound environment to respond to the arriving Arab armies.[34] Enacted in April, just before the British withdrawal, the effort was known as Plan D or Plan Dalet.

In mid-April, the Golani Brigade captured Tiberias. Expecting a similar fate as Deir Yassin, Arabs began to flee. The British assisted by transporting them to Transjordan. On April 21, as the British forces in Haifa moved from their positions to an encampment before departing, Jews of the Carmeli Brigade attacked the city. Haifa's Arab forces were defeated, and a truce was granted to discuss terms for surrender. The grand mufti and al-Qawuqji encouraged Haifa's Arabs to depart the city, assuring them that the Arab armies would soon rout the Jews. The Zionists, led by Haifa's Jewish mayor, assured them that if they stayed, they could remain in peace. The mufti's recommendation was congruent with the response to Deir Yassin, with the same intended outcome. He hoped it would incite the Arab armies to defeat the Jews and spur them to victory. More than one hundred thousand Arabs left Haifa during a four-day evacuation, leaving only a small number behind.[35]

This process repeated in Jaffa and then again and again throughout much of Palestine. The Haganah was preparing the ground for war and achieving its strategic objective of removing Palestinians from what would become Israel, and it was at the direction of their own leaders. Much of the land intended to be Arab remains Jewish today because of the exodus that occurred before a single Arab army entered the fray.

Invasion and Truce

On May 14, 1948, General Sir Alan Cunningham departed Jerusalem with a small security garrison. Only British forces in Haifa remained. David Ben-Gurion declared the creation of the State of Israel.[36] He sent the future Mrs. Golda Meir to meet with King Abdullah to negotiate peace before the conflict started, but to no avail. The Arab armies invaded that night.

The Syrian and Lebanese forces conducted operations in the north that were supportive of the ALA. The Syrians captured several towns in the Jordan Valley. The Arab League captured Jerusalem and the surrounding region that is now commonly known as the West Bank. Egyptian forces captured much of the Negev and Gaza. After only a few weeks of fighting, however, a truce was in place.

Truce

With the British departure, the UN now held a modicum of responsibility for the conflict in Palestine. The UN Security Council responded by appointing a diplomat with experience in peace negotiations. Swedish nobleman Count Folke Bernadotte became the primary mediator, with American Ralph Bunche as his deputy. Bernadotte set up a headquarters in Rhodes, Greece, and began flying to the various capitals to meet with leaders on both sides of the conflict. He negotiated a truce to begin on June 11, 1948, and hoped it could become a settled peace.[37]

Al-Qawuqji was on leave in Beirut when he heard his fellow Arabs had agreed to a pause in the fighting. He was apoplectic:

> An armistice is made after the defeat of the enemy who then asks for it. Nothing of this kind has happened. We are not defeated or crushed, nor are the Jewish Forces, yet our position is comparatively better than theirs. . . . It will just give them an opportunity to increase their armaments and strengthen their fortifications and reorganize their fronts.[38]

Fighting continued as the truce began, although it eventually becalmed. The Israelis used the opportunity to resupply and rearm their troops with weapons from Czechoslovakia.[39] King Abdullah worked to unite the Arabs, attempting to visit leaders from all of the nations, even seeking support to pass control of the Arab regions of Palestine to him.[40] Arab forces did not enjoy any significant improvement in their disposition.

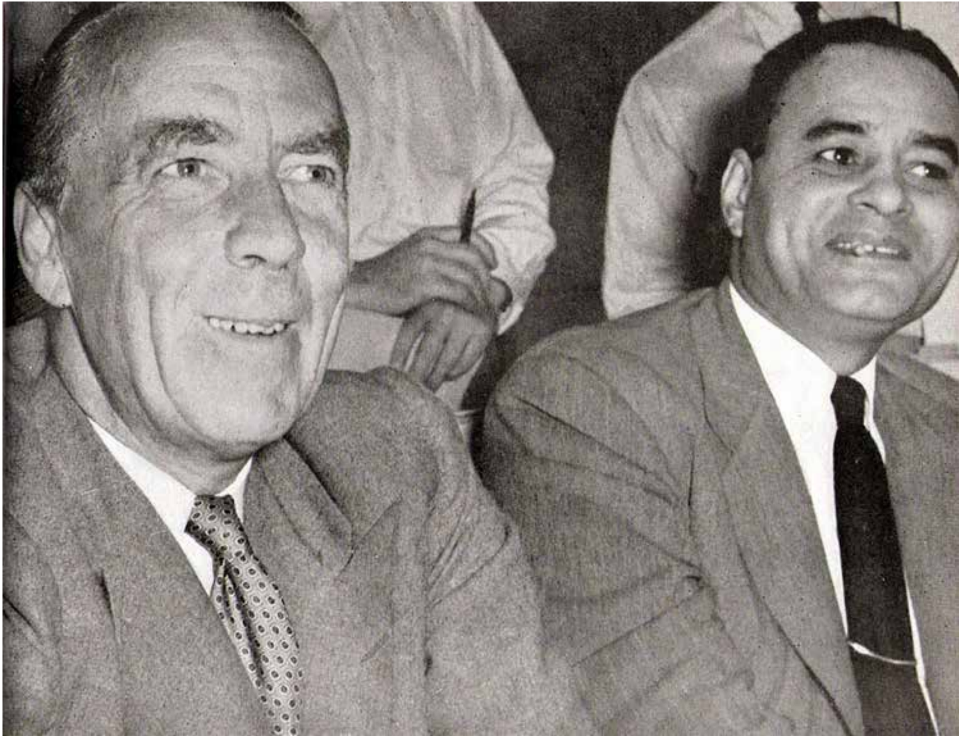

Figure 10-3. Count Bernadotte in Palestine.

Bernadotte's Revised Plan for Palestine

Count Bernadotte used the relative calm to construct a new plan for Palestine. He thought the partition should represent congruent, rather than disparate, sections of land. The Bernadotte view was the Jews should have Galilee and a section of the Mediterranean coastline down to Tel Aviv. He allocated for the Arabs the coastal region between Tel Aviv and Egypt—Gaza—and the Negev Desert, which was originally intended for the Jews. Bernadotte asserted that the Arab section would become part of Jordan, fitting into the theme expressed by most Arabs all along that Palestine was part of Greater Syria. Additionally, Bernadotte included in his plan and thus lobbied for the right of return for all Palestinian refugees. He wrote:

> It would be an offense against the principles of elementary justice if these innocent victims were denied the right to return to their homes while Jewish immigrants flow into Palestine and indeed at least offer the threat

> of permanent replacement of Arab refugees who have been rooted in the land for centuries.[41]

Bernadotte's approach was very different from the original UN plan. He placed Jerusalem solely in Arab hands.[42]

Bernadotte Is Assassinated

Count Bernadotte revised his proposal, to include returning to the original UN plan to manage Jerusalem. However, Yitzhak Shamir, future prime minister of Israel, and other members of the Stern Gang voted to assassinate Count Bernadotte just as he was about to begin another round of negotiations. On September 17, 1948, the Stern Gang ambushed Bernadotte's convoy in Jerusalem. They blocked the roadway with a jeep and, after determining that Bernadotte was in the third vehicle, shot him and a French officer who rode with him.

All-Palestine Government

By declaring its independence and seeking international recognition, Israel enjoyed a modicum of legitimacy. Palestine was in a much weaker position but needed to assert itself in a similar manner. On September 22, 1948, all members of the Arab League, with the exception of Transjordan, recognized the APG with the grand mufti as its head of state. Al-Husseini declared their independence on October 1, 1948, and announced that Jerusalem would be the Palestinian capital.

This move still represented inter-Arab rivalries. King Farouk of Egypt led the support of the APG in an effort to prevent King Abdullah of Transjordan from consuming Palestine as part of Greater Syria.

The ALA Is Defeated in Galilee

Al-Qawuqji and the ALA operated in Galilee, spanning an area west of the Sea of Galilee northward to the border with Lebanon. They launched an attack on October 22, 1948, to close the northernmost section of Palestine between Lebanon and Syria. The ALA gained some ground, but the Israelis responded with Operation Hiram on October 28, 1948. Israeli forces attacked the ALA on three sides: from the east, south, and west. Syrians sent to assist the ALA were thwarted before they could get into position. As the IDF pushed most rapidly from the east, ALA forces to the west heard that Israelis were now operating

between their positions and Lebanon. The Arabs began to abandon their equipment and flee to Lebanon and relative safety.

By October 31, the ALA was non-operational. The rank and file fled, 550 were taken prisoner, and 400 were killed in battle.[43] The Lebanese and Syrian armies withdrew to their borders. The entire northern part of Israel from the Sea of Galilee to the coast below Haifa was now completely in Jewish hands.

Armistice

The Arab Legion fought until it controlled Jerusalem and the West Bank. The Egyptian forces were ill prepared and did not devote the forces needed to win in southern Palestine. Future Egyptian President Nasser served as a staff officer during the war and was dismayed at the lack of effort. To him, it seemed the war was political, not kinetic—a show of force rather than a willingness to devote the last full measure for the Palestinians and Arab nationalism.[44]

Transjordan held the West Bank, Egypt controlled Gaza, and the Palestinian people were either exiled in refugee camps in the surrounding Arab countries or displaced within what was now Israel. Palestine ceased to exist.

Ralph Bunch negotiated an armistice that Egypt and Israel signed on February 24, 1949. Lebanon signed an agreement on March 23, Transjordan on April 3, and Syria on July 20, 1948.

Palestinian Narrative of the Arab Invasion

An important Palestinian narrative emerged from the Arab support, a notion that each of the members of the Arab League had its own objectives and limitations to solidify an Israeli victory. The Arab Legion fought only within lands the UN designated to remain Arab and garnered control of Jerusalem's Old City.[45] King Abdullah would continue negotiations with the Israelis after the war as he tried to control more and more of Palestine and Greater Syria. Eventually, this would lead to his assassination. Egyptian leaders were reluctant to become involved. They balanced four political concerns:

1. Condemnation from Jewish–Egyptian constituents
2. A Muslim Brotherhood call to support the Palestinians

3. A fear that King Abdullah of Transjordan would obtain control of Palestine, to include Jerusalem
4. An alliance with King Aziz bin Saud of Saudi Arabia, who shared this concern[46]

Egyptian forces advanced into the Negev and then set up defensive positions. Even Egyptian soldiers could see this was not a serious attempt to support Palestinian Arabs. Future Egyptian President Gamal Abdul Nasser was one of the Egyptian Army officers who became dismayed at the realization that their effort was insufficient. He later joined others in the Free Officer's Movement that subsequently deposed King Farouk.[47]

The Syrian, Lebanese, and Iraqi forces' contributions to the conflict were minimal. For example, Syria performed poorly, capturing just enough land to secure water resources. Suffering three hundred dead, likely more than 10 percent of its deployed assets, the Syrians were unable to join forces with the ALA as requested. Syrian President Shukri Quwwatli fired his chief of staff and defense minister, but the new defense minister would overthrow Quwwatli in a coup in March 1949.[48]

Therefore, for their lack of zeal in defeating the Zionists, all three heads of state, King Abdullah of Jordan, King Farouk of Egypt, and President Quwwatli of Syria, were eliminated or removed from power.

Similarly, Palestinians believe the ALA leader al-Qawuqji was placed in command in part to thwart the mufti's forces from obtaining control of Palestine. During the Battle of Qastel, al-Qawuqji would not resupply Palestinian, likely contributing to Abdul Qadir al-Husseini's demise.[49] AlQawuqji's protestations at his own supply lines were germane. Still, it is indicative that even when fighting a war against the Israelis for ultimate control of Palestine, the Arabs could not unite.

The conclusion of the Israeli War of Independence gave rise to a sustained Arab narrative that was best described in one word: al-Nakba—the "catastrophe." From then on, May 15 was observed as the Day of the Catastrophe, when the Zionists seized control of Palestinian territory because of the dubious motives and ineffective leadership of the Arab powers. As well, the Nakba became the rallying point for the Arab resistance against Israel. The "catastrophe" had to be undone, and this could be achieved only through the eradication of Israel and the recapture of the land.

Yasser Arafat and Fatah

The grand mufti may be the most influential Palestinian leader before partition. Chairman Yasser Arafat, founding member of Fatah and later chairman of the Palestinian Organization, was certainly the leading Palestinian figure after partition until what some suggest was a mysterious death in 2004.

Born in 1929, Arafat lived in Jerusalem and Cairo during his youth. As a teenager, he became active in the resistance and began smuggling weapons into Palestine. He attended the University of King Fuad I but left school in 1948 to join the fight in Gaza. Upon returning to school after the armistice, Arafat became politically active and became the leader of the Palestinian Students' Union.

In 1956, Arafat graduated with an engineering degree and moved to Kuwait. Still focused on the plight of Palestinians, Arafat remained political, and in January 1958, he and nine other Palestinians founded AlFatah, a secret organization that sought the restoration of the Palestinian nation.[50]

LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, AND COMMAND AND CONTROL

Palestinian leadership did not recover significantly after World War II. The grand mufti remained an important figure but was marginalized. Remaining in exile in Cairo, he exerted influence over Palestinians through the AHC and his military representatives, who led the Army of Salvation. The Arab League wanted Palestine to transition to independence similarly to its surrounding neighbors and was willing to devote forces to the fight, but each had its own designs for Palestine. Thus, there were limitations on how much blood and treasure each Arab League force would devote to the overarching effort, especially after each met its self-serving objectives.

After the Israeli War of Independence, Palestine ceased to exist as a political entity. Palestinians became refugees, either within the new State of Israel or in neighboring Arab nations. Many who felt the Arab League and the rest of the international community were not doing enough to restore Palestine decided to form their own resistance.

Yasser Arafat led the General Union of Palestinian Students at Cairo University, smuggled weapons into Palestine, and eventually fought against the Israelis. Arafat completed his studies and began work as an engineer in Kuwait, but his desire to restore Palestine remained. In 1958, Arafat and others formed the Palestinian National Liberation Movement, or Fatah, which included a small armed component.

Armed Component

The Zionists effectively planned and prepared for war. They ramped up attacks against the British as World War II ended and continued to stream refugees to their homeland. Palestinians were not as industrious. The Palestinian Army of Salvation was no comparison to the Haganah in numbers, resources, or ability. Two other guerrilla forces supported the cause: the ALA and elements of the Egyptian Brotherhood in Gaza. The ALA in particular performed relatively well against the Zionists but was eventually defeated in Galilee.

Armed elements of the Arab League and the Arab Legion—Transjordan's army and the armies of Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Egypt—all invaded Palestine in support of their brethren, but only after the British withdrew. In effect, the Zionists had a head start and were able to control several strategic positions in anticipation of the pending war.

The Palestinian armed resistance was not strong enough to defeat the Zionists, and the military support it received from strong powers was insufficient.

Public Component

With the grand mufti in exile, followed by an exodus of the Palestinian people, the public face of the Palestinian resistance was weak. The AHC engaged in information operations that caused fear, more than anger, in some cases and overconfidence in Arab League military support in others, leading to a mass exodus of Palestinians in the face of Zionist forces. The Arab League became the voice for the Palestinian people until the formation of Fatah and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

IDEOLOGY

Desperation and a pragmatic need to survive the partition process characterized Palestinian ideology. Thus, the social and religious issues were less of a concern than the pragmatic need to survive the civil war. The wider Arab world sought to prevent Zionism from controlling Palestine, but most salient was the need to preserve Jerusalem, which was promised by UN Resolution 181 and guaranteed by the Arab Legion's rapid advance after British withdrawal.

LEGITIMACY

After World War II, the Palestinian population saw the diminutive resistance movement as a legitimate force in providing its need to thwart Zionism, primarily because it was connected to the Arab League. Collectively, the resistance movement and the Arab League did not garner enough legitimacy on the international stage. The UN would not consider the Arab League's request to grant independence to Palestine, nor to transfer it to Transjordan. The Palestinian people themselves would not receive legitimate recognition, even as refugees after the death of Count Bernadotte, because all UN resolutions to protect them and ensure the most important right to return to their homes were never enforced.

MOTIVATION AND BEHAVIOR

Palestinians and those in the greater Arab world were outraged by partition as described in UN Resolution 181. The Palestinians were not sufficiently prepared to respond because they had not recovered from the Arab Revolt of 1936–1939. The Arab League was similarly angered, but its member states' self-serving objectives prevented them from supporting Palestinian independence. Member states' willingness to place their individual goals before the aim of a Palestinian state meant Israel was able to divide the Arab League and use UN influence to succeed in winning its bid for independence.

OPERATIONS

The end of the Palestinian Mandate, the Israeli declaration of independence, and the subsequent war marked a change in Palestinian resistance. Although the British no longer suppressed the Palestinian movement, they also ended operations against the Zionists as they prepared to leave Palestine. The IDF defeated the combined Arab armies, and thousands of Palestinians became refugees. They would have to reconstitute a fight from the diaspora.

Paramilitary

The Palestinians created the Army of Salvation to fight the Zionists. The army was supported by the ALA and armed elements of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. These elements were able to conduct a combination of guerrilla and conventional operations against the Zionists. However, these forces were outmatched, especially in terms of resourcing, and were therefore ineffective without the support of an external power, such as the Arab League.

After the 1948 war, Fatah emerged from the diaspora as a new Palestinian movement. Fatah also included a paramilitary element, but it did not become a significant element until after 1964.

Psychological

The psychological component of the Palestinian resistance had a profound negative effect on the populace. Two elements combined to form a false sense of security on the one hand and to sow fear on the other. Arab leaders suggested to the ALA and Palestinians that the conflict would end as soon as the armies of the Arab League arrived. Palestinian leaders also exaggerated the atrocities at Deir Yassin, claiming children were murdered and women raped, to incite the Arab rank and file. This propaganda failed because it actually caused Palestinians throughout the country to flee when the Haganah or Irgun emerged, creating a refugee problem that remains today.

Political

The Palestinian resistance was very weak politically. Because the movement was unable to significantly reconstitute after World War II, the effort to protect Palestinian interests lay more with Arab nationalist governments (the Arab League) than with a formal Palestinian movement. In the latter months of the 1948 war, the Arab League, with the exception of Transjordan, supported the formation of the APG, with the grand mufti as its head. This was never effective enough and dissolved in a little over ten years.

A new movement emerged from the diaspora: the Palestine National Liberation Movement. Commonly known as Fatah, it would become a dominant force in the Palestinian fight.

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[50] Fatah is a reverse acronym for Harakat al-Tahrir al-Watani al-Filistini (The Palestinian National Liberation Movement)

CHAPTER 11.
FORMATION OF THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION, 1964–1967

All the Palestinians are natural members in the Liberation Organization exercising their duty in the liberation of their homeland in accordance with their abilities and efficiency.

—Draft constitution of the Palestine Liberation Organization, 1963

The Arab League's creation of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1964 was a key step in institutionalizing the Arab resistance against the State of Israel, but it occurred against the backdrop of the widening gap between the Arab states and Yasser Arafat's Fatah party. The question lingered in the years leading up to the Six-Day War: who owned the Palestinian resistance? In the ideological boxing match that resulted, the first round went to Egyptian President Nasser.

Many of the future leaders of Fatah and the PLO studied and worked with members of the Muslim Brotherhood (Ikhwan). The aspirations of both Muslim leaders and Palestinian nationalists seemed to coordinate in the 1960s, but the seeds of conflict between Islamist activists and the essentially secular PLO had been sown. It would take disaster in war and sustained failure in Palestine to bring the embryonic struggle between the two to full expression.

TIMELINE

January 13–16, 1964	Thirteen Arab heads of state meet in Cairo and resolve to enable the Palestinian people to organize to liberate Palestine.
May 28, 1964	The Arab League founds the PLO.
May 28–June 2, 1964	The Palestine National Council (PNC) meets in East Jerusalem and establishes the National Charter, Fundamental Law, and the Palestine Fund.
1964–1966	Nasser cracks down on the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and Gaza.
January 2, 1965	Fatah carries out its first military operation against Israel's National Water Carrier. However, the pro forma decision to prevent Israeli diversion of Jordan River water to the Negev is undermined by Arab disunity, including the ongoing civil war in Yemen, in which Egyptian troops and rebels are pitted against a monarchy supported by Riyadh.

ORIGINS AND COURSE OF THE RESISTANCE

In mid-January 1964, the first summit of the Arab League took place in Cairo. Member states included the United Arab Republic (Egypt),

Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Yemen, Libya, Sudan, Morocco, Tunisia, Kuwait, and Algeria. The intent of the meeting was to concoct a united Arab front in the face of Israeli "aggression" regarding riparian rights to the Jordan River and Lake Tiberias. However, the key dynamic of the effort was the sustained disunity among the Arab powers (chiefly Egypt, Jordan, and Syria) and between Palestinian leaders and the Arab states.

The most enduring legacy of the summit was the decision to take "practical decisions . . . in the field of organizing the Palestinian people and enabling them to play their role in the liberation of their country and their self-determination."[1] The Arab League commissioned Ahmad Shuqayri, a Palestinian diplomat, as the point man in this effort to organize a political body that would represent the aspirations of the Palestinians living in Palestine and abroad. From the start, however, there was a palpable division between the older generation of Palestinian representatives and the younger generation of activists. A growing cohort of younger Palestinians viewed the organization that emerged, the PLO, as the creation and puppet of the Arab League and its most prominent power, Nasser's Egypt.

Three global trends framed the birth and development of the PLO. First, among the Palestinian Arabs—both those in Palestine and those in refugee camps—literacy was on the rise. Dispossessed and unemployed Arabs often had the time to take advantage of educational opportunities offered through nongovernmental organizations and growing academic institutions throughout the Middle East. With literacy came the propensity to both understand and disseminate information on the plight of the Arabs dislodged by the Zionist expansion.

Secondly, from the 1960s on, the Western world began to take greater interest in the fate of the Palestinian Arabs. In part, this was because the violence of wars and terror in the region attracted attention. In addition to headline events, academic studies, nongovernmental organization reports, and word of mouth stories related the tragic nature of the refugees' lives. The PLO, particularly under the leadership of Yasser Arafat, was able to leverage this increased world attention and convert it into sympathy and political action.

Finally, the trend of decolonization impacted the PLO and the Palestinian insurgency. The main idea behind decolonization was the growing Mandate for colonial powers (chiefly the United Kingdom and

France) to disengage from their colonial holdings and turn the populations there over to autonomous local governments. Arafat successfully wedded this trend to his effort to “liberate” Palestine. He branded the Zionists as part and parcel of the colonial powers. He claimed (correctly) that Zionism came from Europe, and therefore, it represented yet another manifestation of European colonialism. While this logic may have been biased, it played well on the Arab streets and among academics worldwide.

As the course of Palestinian resistance toward Israel developed in the late 1960s, three entities vied for control of the movement: the Arab League, with its constituent members’ competing agendas; the PLO under Shuqayri, often viewed as a puppet of the Arab League and of Nasser in particular; and the younger Palestinian activists who eventually coalesced as the fedayeen (guerrillas). The fedayeen’s trump card was action. While the elder statesmen talked and postured, the fedayeen garnered popular support by conducting armed raids against Israel, albeit with little success. By 1969, the fedayeen had completed their consolidation of control over the PLO and the Palestinian resistance, but this outcome was by no means inevitable.[2]

LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, AND COMMAND AND CONTROL

Ahmad Shuqayri, the founder and first chairman of the PLO, was born in Acre (northern Palestine) in 1908 during the Ottoman period. His father, Sheikh As'ad Shuqayri, was an Arab politician who had served in the Ottoman parliament and, later, as the mufti of Acre. He was connected to the Nashashibi clan. Educated as a lawyer, in the 1930s and 1940s, he supported the Palestinian Opposition—led by Gharib Nashashibi—to the grand mufti, Haj Amin as-Husseini. Shuqayri was educated as a lawyer, and during the British Mandate, he joined the Independence Party. He later joined the Arab Higher Committee (AHC) and became a Syrian (and later Saudi) representative to the United Nations (UN). He served as secretary general of the Arab League from 1950 through 1956.

In line with the Arab summit decision, Shuqayri organized the inaugural meeting of the PNC that took place in May–June 1964. Shuqayri and nearly four hundred nominated representatives of the

Palestinian communities from Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, the Gaza Strip, Egypt, Qatar, Kuwait, Libya, and Iraq met from May 28 through June 2. The delegates wore badges carrying a map of Palestine and the words "We shall return." Shuqayri told delegates that it was time to rely on themselves to liberate Palestine from the Israelis. The conference announced the establishment of an executive body or "government," the PLO, to represent and lead the Palestinian Arab struggle. Shuqayri and his colleagues also announced the formation of the Palestinian National Fund, and at the Second Arab Summit Conference in Alexandria in 1964, they established a military wing—the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA). The PNC, as the "legislature," also resolved to conduct regular meetings as a sovereign body and promulgated a National Charter and Fundamental Law, which Shuqayri wrote. The democratic institutions were an attempt to mask the tacit dictatorship of the chairman and his handpicked PLO Executive Committee.[3]

Shuqayri viewed the creation of the PLO as an essential step to establishing Palestine's *kayaniyya*—"the quality of being an entity."[4] He struggled to portray to the world that the Palestinian Arabs formed a nation in their own right. Notwithstanding Shuqayri's words, however, the PLO was a creature of Nasser and the Arab League, not the Palestinian Arabs. It came into being amidst a power struggle with four poles: Cairo, Damascus, Baghdad, and Amman. Nasser's creation of the PLO was a bid to undermine the Hashemite regime in Jordan by placing control of the Palestinian issue in his hands, despite Jordan's control of the West Bank. Likewise, it was aimed at forestalling the creation of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza, as advocated by the Iraqi regime.[5] Jordan's King Hussein was concerned that Shuqayri's organization might try to undermine his government, especially given the fact that Palestinians made up about two-thirds of Jordan's population, but he received assurances that the PLO's activities would be properly limited.[6] Jordanian intelligence carefully monitored the proceedings of the PNC to ensure that leaders refrained from any threats against the regime.[7]

The Syrians likewise had an interest in the Palestinian resistance, but their main concern was their political struggle against Nasser. The Baathist (Revival) Party had come to power in a coup in 1963. The view in Damascus was that both Palestine and Lebanon were properly part of Greater Syria, and it was crucial for the regime's success that Nasser's encroaching control be checked. To that end, Colonel Ahmad

Sweidani, head of the Army Intelligence Department, recruited in Palestinian refugee camps for fedayeen to be trained by the Syrian army.

The Syrian regime also established fedayeen cells on the West Bank (against Jordan's wishes) in Qalqilya and Jenin and on the Shuneh farm east of the Jordan. Israeli forces destroyed all three in May 1965, but Syrian interest in the fedayeen continued. In 1966, a new Baathist faction came to power and named Yusef Urabi the new secret commander of Fatah. Urabi was a Syrian-trained officer in the PLA and complied with orders from Damascus. When he announced plans to dismiss Yasser Arafat, he was murdered in the Yarmouk refugee camp. Arafat was arrested for the murder but was eventually released, whereupon he moved to Beirut.

Thus, the PLO became a political football as Egypt, Syria, and Iraq vied for control of the organization and the Palestinian resistance, and Jordan strove to suppress their operations within its own borders. However, none of the four powers had included in their calculations the increasing role to be played by the fedayeen (the Palestinian guerrillas). The term *fedayeen* is derived from Persian history and denotes "those who sacrifice themselves" (in the service of God). Despite the ideological mixture within the PLO—a concoction that would include communists, socialists, pan-Arabists, Islamists, and others—there would be an enduring sense of religious fury associated with the Palestinian fedayeen. Originally based in refugee camps in the West Bank and Gaza, the fedayeen had been conducting raids into Israel since the Nakba of 1948. The formation of the PLO at the initiative of external Arab powers, though, represented a trend that the fedayeen would come to oppose as much as they opposed Israel: control of the resistance in the hands of Arab states. The emerging generation of fedayeen guerrilla leaders gradually came to oppose the idea that the Palestinians belonged to some external power, rather than constituting a sovereign people. For the time being, fedayeen guerrillas found themselves compelled to work with their Arab allies because states provided needed logistical support and diplomatic representation. However, the fedayeen quickly grew into a power in their own right.

Chief among the young guerrilla leaders was a group that called itself the Movement for the Liberation of Palestine. Eight fedayeen leaders formed the alliance: Salah Khalaf, Khalil al-Wazir, Khalid al-Hassan, Farouq Qaddoumi, Zuhayr al-Alami, Kamal Adwan, Muhammad Yusef, and their de facto leader Yasser Arafat. Arafat was born Abd

al-Rahman Abd al-Rauf Arafat al-Qudwa al-Husseini in August 1929. His birthplace has been variously reported as Cairo, Gaza, and Jerusalem, but the records are unclear. His mother may have been related to Haj Amin al-Husseini, and his father was a wealthy businessman in Gaza. Arafat grew up in Gaza, but after the death of his mother, he was sent to live in Jerusalem with a relative. In his teens, he joined a Palestinian student group, but his real interest in politics began during his sojourn as an engineering student in Cairo. During the 1948 war, he claimed to have fought alongside the Muslim Brotherhood in the vicinity of Gaza, but there is no clear record of his participation.

Figure 11-1. Yasser Arafat.

Arafat was elected president of the Palestine Students' Federation in 1952—the same year that Egypt's King Farouq was overthrown in a coup by the Free Officers' Movement. He and his associates were Muslims, and he was initially aligned with the Muslim Brotherhood, but he also embraced the doctrines of Marxism that were prevalent in the pre-1967 Arab world. In 1956, Arafat mobilized with the Egyptian army during the Suez crisis, but he did not actually fight. He soon found himself on the outs with the new regime in Cairo, primarily because of his association with the Muslim Brotherhood and his political activities.[8]

Arafat proceeded to Kuwait, where he engaged in both the oil business and politics. He and his friends established a Palestinian newspaper

and, in 1959, secretly founded Fatah, according to their later claims. Arafat began to travel throughout the Middle East, recruiting for his fledgling guerrilla army, and Fatah, backed by the Syrian regime, established cells in Jordan and Syria from 1963 to 1964 and trained with the Syrian army. In the following year, Fatah commenced guerrilla operations against Israel. These early raids, occurring during 1965–1967, were few in number and relatively minor compared with the onslaught that began in 1968.

These armed attacks provided Fatah and the other fedayeen their primary source of legitimacy within the Palestinian resistance. However, in the mid-1960s, the struggle for ownership of the movement persisted. Nasser's Egypt ruled Gaza with a firm hand, and Jordan controlled the West Bank. Both Syria and Iraq likewise aimed at controlling the Palestine question. Iraqi dictator Abd al-Karim Qassim vilified both Egypt and Jordan as being equally guilty (with Israel) of repressing the Palestinian people. It would require the trauma of the 1967 war to break this political deadlock, and when it occurred, it would clear the way for the fedayeen, and Fatah in particular, to seize control of the PLO.

Islamist leaders remained in the background during this period, in part because of Nasser's continued suppression of the Ikhwan (Muslim Brotherhood) and in part because the secular, leftist ideologies of the fedayeen and PLO were popular among Arabs. Many of the rising stars among the fedayeen were at least nominally Muslim and drew from the religious culture to strengthen their claims to legitimacy.

Underground Component and Auxiliary Component

The underground and auxiliary components remained embryonic during this period. The fedayeen maintained a presence in the West Bank, but it was difficult for them to act because they were opposed by both Israel and Jordan. During this period, Fatah began to organize and operate cells in the West Bank. The general population remained politically neutralized—support for the fedayeen was half-hearted—but each attempted fedayeen raid into Israel stimulated excitement and support for the guerrillas.

Armed Component

In September 1964, Shuqayri and the PNC announced the formation of the PLA as the military wing of the PLO. Although nominally under the control of the PLO, the PLA was in fact controlled initially by Syria. The army was organized into three brigades named for historically significant battles: Ayn Jalut, Qadisiyyah, and Hattin. Ayn Jalut was based in Gaza and later Egypt. Qadisiyyah was formed in Iraq but later moved to Jordan. Hattin was based in Syria. The brigades were manned by Palestinians but under the effective control of the host nations' military establishments. A number of officers in each brigade were from the host armies, and the brigades operated as extensions of the host nations' armies.

The PLA eventually grew to a strength of twelve thousand organized in eight brigades, but the army, subordinated as it was to host-nation leadership, was more of a showpiece than an effective military organization. Trained and equipped for conventional warfare, it was not suited for the guerrilla-style raids to which Yasser Arafat resorted.

Public Component

In the period leading up to 1967, the PLO under Shuqayri acted as the chief public component of the Palestinian resistance. There were certainly other voices competing for attention, including those of Fatah and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) (which came into being after the 1967 war through the amalgamation of several groups that predated the war), but the Arab world recognized the PLO as the legitimate voice of the Palestinians.

The PLO used available media to good effect in getting its message out, both to Palestinians and to the world. It operated a radio station in Cairo, Voice of Palestine, as well as its own newspapers and magazines.

IDEOLOGY

From the start of the Arab resistance, the insurgents and political leaders of the Arab states were anti-Zionist. They opposed the idea that Zionist pioneers and refugees from European turmoil had any right to establish a homeland, not to mention a state, in Palestine.

Religion was not at the heart of the Arab resistance, but it was near it. The Islamic culture of the Arab world lent weight to the resistance because of its dictum that any land once conquered and ruled by Muslims must remain Muslim. Most members of Fatah, including Arafat, genuinely practiced their Islamic faith, including praying five times per day. Likewise, Fatah would argue that Muslims in Palestine could not acquiesce to being ruled by Jewish infidels. The Islamic conquest of Palestine anchored its legitimacy in the land by establishing holy sites, chief of which was in the city of Jerusalem. According to Islamic tradition, Muhammad traveled miraculously on the heavenly steed Buraq from Mecca to Jerusalem, where he prayed and was transported into heaven. The episode was memorialized through the construction of the al-Aqsa ("the farthest") Mosque. Together with the Dome of the Rock, the mosque is located on Al-Haram al-Sharif (the Noble Sanctuary, known as the Temple Mount among the Jews—the site, according to Jewish, Christian, and Muslim traditions, of the First and Second Jewish Temples) and is the third holiest site in Islam.

PLO leaders, including Fathi Balawi, Salah Khalaf (also known as Abu Iyad), and Khalil al-Wazir (also known as Abu Jihad) had been members of the Muslim Brotherhood but switched their allegiance to the ideology of Palestinian nationalism in the late 1950s and early 1960s. In the early years of the resistance against the State of Israel, both Islamist and secular Palestinian leaders seemed to be striving in the same direction: the elimination of Israel. There was therefore little room for conflict between the two ideologies. Later, when the locus of the conflict switched to who would control the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza, the two different worldviews would spawn a struggle that would pit Palestinian against Palestinian.

Racial bias and hatred likewise colored the ideology of the Arab resistance. Although political leaders of the various movements that frequently coalesced insisted that they were not anti-Jewish but only anti-Zionist, the involvement of race hatred was inevitable (and, in part, possibly causative). The charter of Hamas does not try to hide its bigotry, but even the early pronouncements of the PLO betrayed a desire to destroy the Jewish presence in Palestine.

Within the PLO itself, exact ideology of the organization was a moving target. Beyond a general anti-Zionist stance, the core factions (Fatah; PFLP; and the Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, or PDFLP) embraced a leftist and Maoist worldview, including

the importance of armed struggle as the vanguard of revolution, but the latter two factions also detailed the class conflict that (in their view) undergirded the Palestinian resistance.[9] Zionism was invariably labeled as imperialist—an attempt to repeat the Crusades and establish client states that would serve the interests of the capitalist major powers.

Arafat and Fatah would achieve a notable ideological success by thus combining anti-Zionism with Islamic ideals and Marxism. The Marxist connection would be particularly powerful because, through this branch of the resistance ideology, Arafat would successfully link the Palestinian struggle to the Third World nationalist movements.[10] This trend became more pronounced after the 1968 Battle of Karameh, discussed in chapter 12.

In the meantime, however, Palestinians pegged their hopes on the pan-Arab rhetoric from Nasser and the general optimism that Egypt would eventually lead the Arab powers into a war that would remove Israel and restore Palestine to the Arabs. What would happen to Palestine after such an event remained in question. Most of the Palestinians involved in resistance looked to the creation of a separate Arab Palestinian state, but the Arab powers who sponsored the resistance looked more toward incorporating liberated Palestine into a larger pan-Arab state.

Arafat and Fatah, prior to 1967, likewise looked to an Arab invasion as the most promising answer to Israel's occupation, but they rankled at the delay. They developed the ideology that it was their responsibility to goad the Arab powers into war through an unrelenting guerrilla campaign against Israel. The Israelis would be compelled to strike back, and their blows would inevitably fall on the sovereign territories of Egypt, Syria, and Jordan. To defend themselves, the Arab powers would thus attack Israel.

Arafat looked to Algeria's success against France as the ideal model for Palestine. He believed that if Fatah acted as the revolutionary vanguard by conducting guerrilla attacks, the people themselves would mobilize and join the cause. This *foco* strategy[11] would soon send the Jews fleeing back to Europe, and the Palestinians, like the Algerians, would gain their independence. The flaw in his reasoning, however, was the supposition that the two conflicts were strategically analogous. In fact, the Algerian resistance succeeded because France grew tired of the war and conceded. In Palestine, however, the Jews were defending

what they considered their own homeland. By the 1960s, they had been on the land for generations and had built a substantial civilization. Arafat would consistently underestimate Israel's strength and base his party's strategy on this miscalculation.[12]

LEGITIMACY

There were two related struggles for legitimacy within the Palestinian resistance. The first was the general sense that the resistance itself was legitimate because the Zionists had conquered Palestine and forcibly removed part of its Arab population. Palestinian Arabs and their sponsors thus argued that on moral and ethical grounds, as well as according to international law, they had the right to resist, fight against, and seek to destroy Israel.

The second and more formative struggle for legitimacy occurred among those powers vying for control of the Palestinian resistance. Contenders included the Arab powers—Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and Iraq. Shuqayri and his compatriots likewise insisted that they were the real representatives of the Palestinians, having been appointed by the Arab League for exactly that purpose. Meanwhile, the younger generation of fedayeen insisted that the armed struggle they were conducting against Israel conferred on them true legitimacy as the actual leaders of the resistance, while all the others merely talked. Among the emerging fedayeen parties and factions, guerrilla leaders began to launch raids against Israel, in part to fight against the occupier and in part to strengthen their claims as the legitimate leaders of the resistance.

OPERATIONS

Paramilitary

Fatah conducted military training in Algeria, but Arafat sought bases closer to Palestine as well. Because Egypt was sponsoring Shuqayri's PLO and Jordan's leaders did not want any rival armed factions in their country, Arafat moved his headquarters to Damascus and sought training bases there in 1964.

Military action was central to Fatah's ideology, and the group commenced raids into Israel in the first days of 1965. On January 2, Fatah

guerrillas raided and sabotaged Israel's National Water Carrier (a canal that carried freshwater from the Sea of Galilee to the center and south of Israel).[13] This and following raids were usually unsuccessful militarily, but that was a secondary consideration. The action itself was the goal because Arafat reasoned that armed action alone would stimulate the political mobilization of the Palestinian people. Likewise, by conducting raids, Fatah could stake a claim as the legitimate representative of the resistance, while all other parties did nothing. Finally, military action would cause Israel to retaliate, which, Arafat hoped, would result in a general war that would destroy the occupier.

In 1965, Fatah conducted thirty-five raids into Israel: twenty-eight from Jordan and the rest from Lebanon and the Gaza Strip. The following year, Fatah increased the pace slightly and accomplished forty-four raids. In 1967, in the months leading up to the June War, there were thirty-seven raids. All of these initial efforts targeted civilian objectives.

It was fear of Israeli retaliation that prompted Fatah's Syrian supporters to insist that actual raids be based from Jordan and Lebanon, rather than from Syria itself. Fatah's operatives faced many difficulties and opposition from all sides as they increased the pace of attacks. Jordanian and Lebanese armed forces and police occasionally arrested or fired on the guerrillas. The Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) likewise killed and captured guerrillas. The Arab powers deprecated Fatah's actions, seeing them as a threat to their own control of events.

Syrian Army intelligence worked directly with Fatah, establishing, among other locations, a training base on the border with Jordan to facilitate staging raids from the kingdom's territory. Likewise, Fatah and other groups staged raids from the West Bank. On November 11, 1966, three Israeli soldiers were killed by a mine that IDF officials believed had been placed by Fatah operating out of Samu, a village in the southern part of the West Bank. Two days later, four hundred Israeli soldiers attacked the village, destroying houses of suspected militants. They also attacked guerrilla cells at Jenin and Qalqilya. Palestinians protested, insisting that King Hussein arm them, but the king instead deployed his army to block further guerrilla raids.

Figure 11-2. IDF raids, November 1966.

While facing opposition from all sides, Arafat also fell victim to political upheaval in Damascus when a coup replaced the ruling National Command of the Arab Socialist Baath Party with Baathist rival Salah Jadid. Jadid's government wanted to replace Arafat as Fatah's leader with an officer who was more pro-Syrian, Yusef Urabi. Urabi was killed under disputed circumstances while chairing a meeting aimed at reconciliation between Fatah and Ahmad Jibril's Palestinian Liberation Front. The Syrians arrested Arafat and several of his friends, detaining them in Mezzeh Prison. The men were charged with murder, found guilty, and sentenced to death by a jury set up by Hafez al-Assad. Jadid later pardoned the men, which angered Assad and soured relations between the future Syrian president and Arafat.

These initial raids and counterattacks from the IDF have been viewed as precursors (along with border disputes and air raids between Israel and Syria) to the June War of 1967. In this, Arafat had calculated correctly—that guerrilla raids and Israel's inevitable response would goad the Arab powers into a general war. However, neither Arafat

nor the Arab leaders could have foreseen the course of that war when it came.

Administrative

Arafat and Fatah recruited guerrillas from within Palestinian refugee camps and within student groups in Arab colleges and universities. The Syrians, anxious to solidify their control over both the PLA and the fedayeen, also recruited and trained guerrillas, primarily drawing from the refugee camps.

For funding, Fatah relied initially on donations from wealthy Palestinians, especially those in Kuwait, where Arafat had many friends and associates. Arafat also enjoyed support from Syria, until his break with Assad led him to look to Egypt for assistance.

Political

Arafat and his compatriots agreed on the need to politicize the masses both in Palestine and the refugee camps, as well as in the larger diaspora of Palestinian Arabs. Rather than pursuing a Maoist strategy of gradual political mobilization leading up to the commencement of guerrilla war, however, Fatah leaders preferred Che Guevara's strategy of *foco* (by which a small, revolutionary vanguard jump-starts the revolution through armed action). *Foco* strategy relies on the masses responding to the leadership and violence of the vanguard. Arafat was insistent throughout the period that only actual guerrilla action would provide the necessary spark to mobilize the people.

CONCLUSION

By the eve of the June War, both centripetal (unifying) and centrifugal (divisive) forces were at work within the Palestinian resistance. The chief unifying factors were anti-Zionism and the collective humiliation throughout the Arab world of having been beaten by Israel. The real legacy of the Zionist success festered for all to see in the wretched Palestinian refugee camps.

At least until the catastrophe of 1967, centrifugal forces were stronger. There were many competing agendas among prospective Arab

leaders of the resistance. The four major Arab powers who took an interest in leading the struggle (Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and Iraq) were too distracted by their competition with each other to develop an effective, strategic vision. Indeed, the surrounding Arab powers did not want an independent Palestinian state because it would represent another competitor for regional power. Instead, each power saw itself as the potential ruler of all or part of Palestine, and each was determined to restrain the others from attaining that goal.

Among the Palestinians themselves, there were also dividing lines. Shuqayri and the elites from Palestine looked to Egypt for support but tried to carve out an independent identity within the PLO. Against them were Fatah and the other burgeoning factions of fedayeen, who represented primarily the younger generation. A rough analogy could be drawn by comparing the Political Zionists with the Revisionist Zionists. The former looked to international cooperation as the solution for the Jews in Palestine, while the latter preferred armed action. In a similar way, the fedayeen continued to pursue violent raids against Israel—partly to mobilize the masses, partly to goad both Israel and the Arab powers into war, and partly to strengthen each faction's claim against competing factions.

Disunity thus became the most conspicuous characteristic of the Palestinian resistance. By the spring of 1967, nearly all the Arab leaders gathered around the resistance movement were disposed to military posturing. As they blundered forward toward a war to reconquer Palestine, though, the Israelis handed them a devastating strategic reverse.

ENDNOTES

1 Oroub Al-Abed, *Uprotected Palestinian in Egypt since 1948* (Institute for Palestine Studies, 2009), xix.

2 Faris Giacaman, "Political Representation and Armed Struggle," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 43, no. 1 (2013): 24.

3 Barry Rubin, *Revolution until Victory? The Politics and History of the PLO* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), 2.

4 Giacaman, *Political Representation and Armed Struggle*, 24.

5 Rubin, *Revolution until Victory?,* 8.

6 For a discussion of the dynamic between King Hussein and the PLO, see Mark Tessler, *A History of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* (Bloomington, IN: 2009), 379.

7 Rubin, *Revolution until Victory?*, 2.

8 Rubin, *Revolution until Victory?*, 6–7.

9 Giacaman, *Political Representation and Armed Struggle*, 24.

10 This is the argument and thesis throughout Paul T. Chamberlin, *The Global Offensive: The United States, the Palestine Liberation Organization, and the Making of the Post-Cold War Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

11 *Foco* strategy, articulated by French intellectual Régis Debray and practiced by Che Guevara, called for a revolutionary vanguard to "jump-start" revolution through decisive military action. In the expected sequel, the population would spontaneously mobilize politically in support of the vanguard.

12 Rubin, *Revolution until Victory?*, 10.

13 Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist–Arab Conflict, 1881–2001* (New York: Vintage Books, 2001), 303.

CHAPTER 12.
THE JUNE WAR AND AFTERMATH, 1967–1973

> We know that the principle that what has been taken by force cannot be regained by anything but force is a sound and correct principle. . . . This basis is clear and definite in UAR policy: no negotiations with Israel, no peace with Israel, no recognition of Israel, and no deals at the expense of Palestinian soil or the Palestinian people.
>
> —Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser,
> July 23, 1968

The impact of the Arab–Israeli War of June 1967 can hardly be overstated. Before the war, many Israelis were anticipating a devastating multipronged invasion of Arab powers, followed by the dismantling of the State of Israel. Arabs were salivating over the long-delayed vengeance they craved after the 1948 disaster. Then, almost in a moment, the tables were turned. The Israeli air force (IAF) destroyed its Arab counterparts, and the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) won a series of decisive victories, seizing the Sinai, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem. As the Israelis celebrated in near disbelief, the Arab world reeled from the deep humiliation. The vaunted ideology of pan-Arabism was exposed as weak and ineffective, particularly in the eyes of Palestinian refugees. In that context, the Palestinian Arab leadership decided to break decisively with their erstwhile masters in Cairo.

TIMELINE

June 5–10, 1967	The June War; the IDF inflicts a major defeat on the Arab states that threatened Israel.
1967–1970	The War of Attrition
March 1968	The Battle of Karameh
July 1968	The fourth meeting of the Palestine National Council (PNC) reduces seats to one hundred, half of which are reserved for fedayeen.
February 1969	At the fifth meeting of the PNC, the fedayeen take formal control of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). Dissatisfied with its quota of seats, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) temporarily boycotts the PNC.
September 1970	Black September. King Hussein of Jordan directs his forces to fight the PLO. The PLO commences international terrorism operations.
1970–1971	Jordan expels the PLO, which moves its headquarters and guerrilla forces to Lebanon.

ORIGINS AND COURSE OF THE RESISTANCE

In the spring of 1967, a series of miscalculations and intelligence failures led to the sudden outbreak of war between Israel and its Arab neighbors—Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and Iraq. In a bid to recoup political advantage both at home and over his Arab rivals, Nasser deployed his army into the Sinai, closed the Straits of Tiran to Israeli shipping, and ejected the United Nations (UN) Emergency Force. Israel's ongoing border and air skirmishes with Syria prompted the Damascus regime to pressure Nasser for help. Jordan's King Hussein likewise looked to Egypt for leadership and signed a mutual defense pact with Nasser, reinforcing fears within the Israeli cabinet that war was imminent. While Israeli Prime Minister Levi Eshkol hesitated, hoping for a peaceful resolution, the IDF, now led by Defense Minister Moshe Dayan and Chief of the General Staff Yitzhak Rabin, pressed the government for permission to strike preemptively. The citizenry, attentive to Nasser's bellicose declarations that Israel would be destroyed, feared a second Holocaust. On June 4, the government succumbed to the pressure and authorized the IDF to attack.[1]

The war began on June 5 with a surprise Israeli air campaign that destroyed nearly two hundred Egyptian aircraft on the ground and left their airstrips cratered and unusable. Later that day, a second wave destroyed a hundred more Egyptian aircraft, rendering the entire air force inoperative. The IAF also destroyed the Jordanian air force and half of the Syrian air force, with the rest fleeing the theater. Israeli casualties were negligible, and this initial onslaught handed Israel air supremacy over the battlefield for the duration of the war.[2]

Coordinated with the air attack, the Israeli army poured into the Sinai with the mission of defeating the Egyptian army there. The Egyptian soldiers in selected fortified positions put up a spirited defense initially along the frontier, but the Israelis quickly outflanked, surrounded, and routed the defenses. Over the ensuing few days, Egyptian commanders lost their grasp of the developing situation. Order, counterorder, and disorder followed, with most units retreating headlong toward the critical Mitla and Jidi Passes. Unrelenting Israeli airstrikes and armored thrusts kept the defenders from organizing any serious opposition. By June 8, the Israelis had captured the entire Sinai Peninsula and were poised on the Suez Canal, threatening the heart of Egypt.[3]

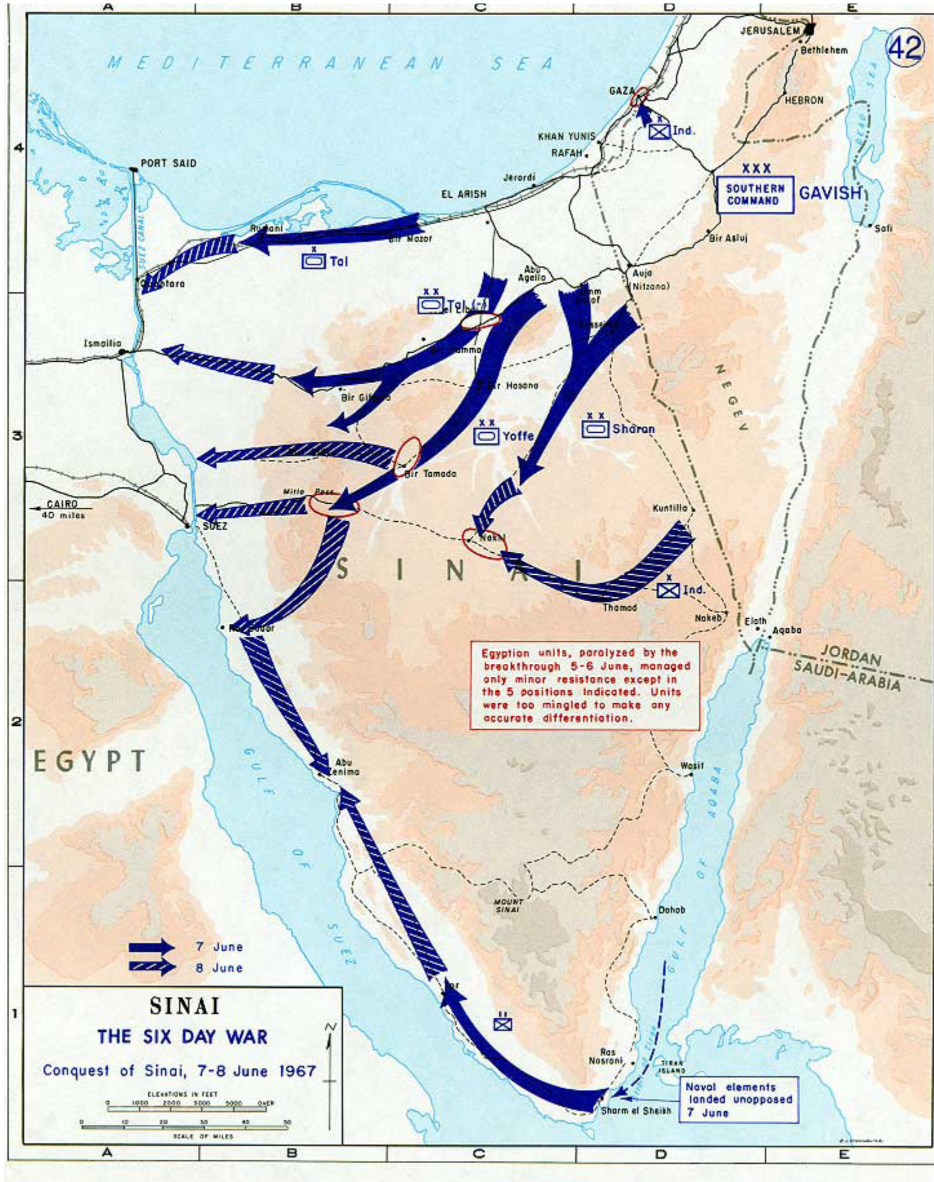

Figure 12-1. The IDF's Sinai offensive.

Initial Israeli war plans called for the IDF to maintain a defensive posture against Jordan, but events along Israel's eastern border soon overtook prewar assumptions. Prompted by Jordanian machine-gunning and shelling of Israeli territory starting at 10 a.m. June 5, initially along the East Jerusalem–West Jerusalem line and then on the outskirts

of Tel Aviv and the Ramat David air base in lower Galilee, Israeli forces later that day crossed the border and attacked Jordanian position. Twice that morning, before the Jordanians opened fire and afterward, Eshkol sent messages to King Hussein, through the UN and US diplomats, to hold or cease-fire and promised that Israel would not attack the West Bank or Jordan. However, Hussein's Legionnaires kept shooting. At about noon on June 5, Israeli forces counterattacked across the border south of Jerusalem and, over the next three days, conquered East Jerusalem and the whole of the West Bank. Eshkol and the senior cabinet ministers had been hesitant, and the order to take the Old City of Jerusalem was delayed for about twenty-four hours. The Jordanian provocation, and the attraction of gaining control of what had been the biblical heartland of the Jewish people (Hebron, Bethlehem, Bethel, Samaria, Jerusalem), along with the strategic desire to "straighten out" the border along the more defensible line of the Jordan River, however, proved too tempting. The West Bank and East Jerusalem ended up in Israeli hands and its Palestinian Arab population under Israeli occupation for the following decades.[4]

Figure 12-2. IDF offensive into West Bank and Jerusalem.

From June 5 through 8, the northern front had been relatively quiet, with both sides trading air and artillery assaults. During June 6–8, Syrian gunners intermittently shelled the Israeli kibbutzim in the Jordan and Hula Valleys (as they had since the early 1960s). Early on June 9, the IDF launched its assault to conquer the Golan Heights, which overlooked and dominated the valleys. Dayan, the defense minister, had held off on giving the order for days, apparently fearing possible Soviet intervention—and because the IDF, engaged against Jordan and Egypt, had what he thought were insufficient forces in the north. Syrian infantry were dug in on the escarpment overlooking the Jordan Valley and the Sea of Galilee. The Israeli assault commenced with infantry units supported by tanks, artillery, and airstrikes against a thoroughly

demoralized enemy looking for an excuse to retreat. Over a day and a half, the Israelis grinded forward, anxious to seize a defensible line as far east as possible before a UN-mandated cease-fire brought the action to a close. The IDF capped off its northern offensive with a heliborne occupation of Mount Hermon.[5]

With the superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, pressuring the combatants, and with the Arab powers desperate to prevent further disaster, the UN moved to end hostilities. On June 11, Israel signed the UN-brokered cease-fire, having occupied the Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Golan Heights. Territory under Israeli control expanded by a factor of three as a result of Israel's new conquests. Between two hundred thousand and three hundred thousand Palestinians fled the West Bank and Gaza Strip to Jordan, exacerbating the refugee problem. In most cases, they left voluntarily, but in others, they were driven out, and their homes were destroyed by IDF soldiers in contravention to government policy but with tacit approval from military authorities.[6]

The war's effect on the Palestinian resistance was monumental. In addition to Palestinian refugees, another one hundred thousand Syrians fled or were expelled from the occupied Golan Heights. However, the disastrous outcome for the Arabs—referred to as *an-Naksah* ("the setback")—reinforced Yasser Arafat's determination to abandon the Palestinians' reliance on the seemingly effete Arab powers and instead take matters into their own hands. If Palestine were to be liberated, the Palestinian Arabs themselves would have to do the job. Further, he argued that liberation would not happen primarily from conventional war because Israel could always draw on Western support, from America in particular, which would guarantee its dominance on the modern battlefield. Instead, guerrilla warfare would blaze the path to liberation.[7]

Israeli Settlements

Israeli citizens were as shocked by Israel's sudden victory as the rest of the world. Fearing disaster on June 4, Israel was now completely victorious over its enemies less than a week later. The euphoria was a catalyst for a movement that was to aggravate and deepen the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. With the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and all of Jerusalem

in their hands, Israelis now faced the opportunity of staking a claim to the captured lands.

The motivations for the resulting settlements were mixed. Some, especially among military and government leaders, looked to settlement and eventual annexation as a necessary national security measure. An enemy-occupied West Bank was like a dagger poised to cut Israel into two. By retaining the lands seized there and in the Golan Heights, Israel would gain strategic depth. Some also viewed the West Bank as the heart of Israel's ancient kingdom—called Judah and Samaria in the Bible. King David's descendants ruled Judah for nearly five hundred years before the Babylonian conquest. Afterward, the Jews returned to Judah under Persian control. The region became known as Judea when the Romans acquired it, but it was still the land of the Jews until the Romans expelled a large portion of the Jewish population in the first and second centuries AD. Many Israelis felt that the land thus belonged to them and they intended to keep it.

Religious Zionists following the teachings of Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook (1865–1935) and his son, Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook (1891–1982), looked to settlement as a necessary precursor to the arrival of the Messiah promised in the Hebrew scriptures. In their eyes, settlement of the captured lands was not an option but a divine commandment. The National Religious Party, which had remained relatively insignificant before 1967 (when it usually followed Labor's lead), found new direction after the stunning victory. It spawned the Gush Emunim movement, which was formalized in 1974—a movement that aimed at settlement and annexation of the captured lands.[8] The religious impulse to expand the State of Israel toward the borders of Greater Israel—in other words, the ancient (Davidic/Solomonic) Kingdom of Israel described in the Bible—would grow into an irresistible force after the Yom Kippur War.

Khartoum and UN Resolution 242

In September 1967, the Arab powers gathered at Khartoum to assess the damage from the war and decide their future course. The resulting Khartoum Resolutions insisted there would be "no peace, no recognition, and no negotiation with Israel." This attitude reflected the shock and humiliation of the defeat, but the realities of the geostrategic,

political, and diplomatic situation would soon see a shift from bombast to pragmatism, most especially in the case of Egypt.

Shuqayri likewise hardened in his postwar attitude. He wrote that Israel was surrounded by one hundred million Arabs who would not tolerate the Jewish state on Arab lands, and he advised the Jews to abandon Palestine and return to their "native" countries. His outlook was unrealistic on two counts. First, he underestimated Israeli determination. Second, he failed to grasp the centrifugal forces at work in the Arab world—forces that would foil any attempt at a coordinated, integrated plan to fight Israel.

In defiance of the Arabs' initial impulses, the UN Security Council (UNSC) passed Resolution 242 on November 11, 1967. Sponsored by Great Britain, it insisted that lands won by wartime conquest were "inadmissible," but it offered Israel peace in exchange for the return of land captured in the war. The text of the resolution insisted that lands captured through Israel's military conquest must be returned, and there must be a "just settlement" for refugees. This last provision fell short of the PLO's insistence on the right of return and the removal of Israel, let alone the concept of a Palestinian state, and became a major point of contention for them.

UN Resolution 242 gave Israel a strategic wedge that would split the Arab powers because in response to it, the Israelis declared their willingness to engage with each separate Arab country to achieve peace. This approach nullified the possibility of any consolidated "Arab" response and instead splintered the Arab world into separate groups that would negotiate with Israel according to their own interests. Because the PLO was not an "Arab country," it was initially left out of Israel's consideration. Despite the resolution's obvious variance from the hard-line positions declared in the Khartoum conference, Egypt and Jordan agreed with it—first grudgingly and only in principle as a basis for negotiating Israel's withdrawal. However, it eventually became the basis for Israel's peace with both countries. Syria initially rejected the resolution, and Israel maintained its hold on the Golan Heights as negotiations with Damascus failed. The PLO itself would bow to Resolution 242 twenty-six years later.

In another sense, however, Resolution 242 strengthened the PLO for exactly the same reason cited above: it separated the organization from the control of Arab powers. Thus, Egypt would eventually give

up claims to Gaza in favor of the PLO, and Jordan would do the same regarding the West Bank. For the time being, though, Fatah rejected the resolution because the party aimed at destroying Israel, not negotiating with it. In the mind of Arafat and his associates, "occupied territory" included all of Palestine that the Jews possessed, not just the West Bank and Gaza. Arafat also feared that the phrasing of the provision implied that control of the West Bank would revert to Jordan, rather than to an independent Palestinian state.[9]

The War of Attrition[10]

One month after the conclusion of the Six-Day War, Egypt began to shell Israeli positions along the canal. The two sides escalated the undeclared conflict with artillery duels, daring raids, and air strikes. Egypt's goal was to inflict unacceptable casualties on Israel to force it to abandon the Sinai. Israel was determined to remain in control of the Sinai and to retain its position along the canal to force Egypt into negotiating peace in accordance with UN Resolution 242. To maintain their precarious military position, the Israelis constructed an in-depth series of fortified positions and roads—what became known as the Bar Lev Line. Protected by their defenses and in response to Egyptian attacks, the Israelis unleashed punishing air strikes, cross-canal raids, and artillery attacks designed to weaken Egyptian defenses.

As the War of Attrition dragged on, Israel enjoyed the military and diplomatic support of the United States under President Nixon. Nasser continued to turn to the Soviet Union for help, and Secretary Brezhnev responded with antiaircraft missile systems, radar, aircraft, and other supplies. When the IAF proved able to destroy the Soviet equipment and imperil Nasser's regime, the Egyptians pleaded for greater assistance. The Soviets reluctantly began to deploy their own soldiers, pilots, and technicians to Egypt. Israel's nightmare scenario—the "Sovietization" of the conflict—had arrived. As the superpowers tried to warn each other off while providing succor to their respective clients, the Israelis fought both Egyptian and Soviet aircraft and missiles. Despite the IDF's best efforts, the Egyptians were gradually able to restore a robust system of SAM-2 and SAM-3 missiles along the canal, threatening the viability of the Bar Lev Line.

The UN sent Dr. Gunnar Jarring, the Swedish ambassador to the USSR, to attempt mediation between the warring powers, but in the end, the Arab powers refused to negotiate with Israel, and Israel refused to withdraw from the Sinai. An impasse played out in blood as casualties mounted on both sides of the canal.

The American secretary of state, William P. Rogers, put forth a plan in late 1969 that came to bear his name. The Rogers Plan called for an eventual Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai and direct negotiations between the two belligerents. It also called for demilitarization zones and an end of the occupation of the Gaza Strip. Initially rejected by all sides, the plan eventually gained momentum as the War of Attrition continued. Both sides needed a way out of the cycle of violence—Israeli raids embarrassed and threatened Nasser's regime, and Egyptian attacks were costing Israel's tiny population unacceptable attrition. A second version of the plan called for a cease-fire, and in August 1970, both sides agreed. However, almost immediately after signing the agreement, Nasser violated key terms by moving his Soviet antiaircraft missiles to the canal. Nevertheless, leaders within the PLO, especially Habash and Hawatmah, were outraged that Egypt would agree to any cessation of hostilities. The diplomatic setback was perhaps on their mind as the fedayeen birthed a new crisis in Jordan.

Arafat's Guerrilla Strategy

In the immediate aftermath of the Six-Day War, Arafat and his cohorts attempted to organize fedayeen cells in Jordan and the West Bank. Arafat himself operated in the West Bank for weeks and was nearly caught by Israeli security. As a consequence of the June War, the Israelis occupied the West Bank and systematically destroyed the fedayeen networks there. The Israelis' approach in the region was to treat the general population gently while targeting the fedayeen with severe attacks. They captured about a thousand guerrillas before the end of 1967, but the government's tolerant rule (except in villages suspected of harboring Fatah members) allowed average Palestinian Arabs to prosper. The rest of the population consequently cared little about the PLO or Fatah and instead were bifurcated into the old elite families who looked to Jordan for leadership and the younger generation of professionals who were attracted to the new ideologies infiltrating the Arab world: pan-Arabism, communism, Baathism, and others. If there

was any sentiment in favor of Palestinian nationalism, it did not convert to support for Arafat. It was Arafat's vision to create that sentiment, but his initial attempts to operate within the West Bank led nowhere. He was an unknown among the people, and he found little interest in prosecuting a people's war. Although he failed to mobilize a movement, his brief foray into the West Bank garnered him infamy that contributed to his image as a revolutionary hero.[11]

As the Israelis rounded up fedayeen and broke up cells in the West Bank, the Palestinian guerrillas and Arafat moved across the river into Jordan, and from there, they staged a series of raids in accordance with their ideology of armed resistance. Raids consisted of five to fifteen fedayeen armed with Kalashnikovs and were initially confined to the Jordan Valley and the West Bank. Arafat's goal in continuing the raids was to foil the Arab powers' attempts at negotiating peace with Israel. He hoped that tactical successes would politically mobilize the Palestinians, secure Fatah's leadership role, and goad Israel into counterattacks that would push Jordan and the other powers into another war with Israel.[12]

The Jordanian army initially cooperated with the fedayeen, leading to skirmishes between the Israeli and Jordanian military forces. In February 1968, Israeli shelling forced Jordanian civilians out of the Karameh area, and the fedayeen moved in. When Jordan's King Hussein, under American pressure, attempted to eject the guerrillas, the police forces were instead compelled to retreat—in indicator of the PLO's growing threat to the Jordanian regime.

Continued fedayeen raids from Jordan confronted the Israeli cabinet with a difficult situation. On the one hand, Prime Minister Levi Eshkol's government did not want to alienate the Americans or King Hussein, who had been secretly negotiating with the Israelis for years. On the other hand, they wanted to destroy Fatah or at least humiliate the organization and stop its raids. On March 18, a mine blew up an Israeli school bus, and the IDF went into action, resulting in the Battle of Karameh.

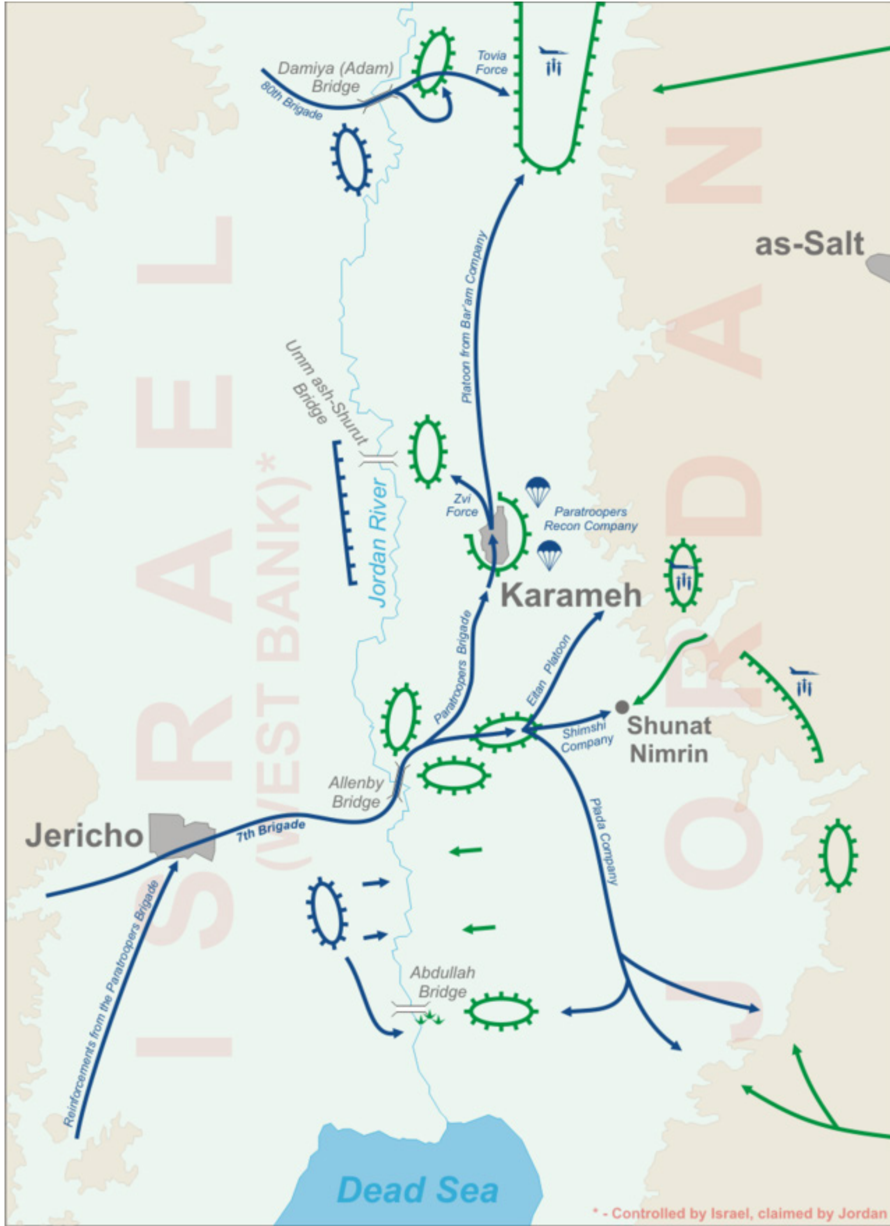

Figure 12-3. The Battle of Karameh.

Upon learning of the destruction of the bus by a suspected Fatah mine, the Israeli cabinet authorized the IDF to undertake a raid against Karameh. Jordanian army units had been positioned near the Allenby Bridge to resist any Israeli incursion. Leaflets dropped by the IAF

warning the Jordanians to stand clear of the impending conflict were ignored. On March 21, the IDF crossed into Jordan to deal with Fatah and the fedayeen camps around Karameh.

The Israelis crossed the Allenby Bridge and the Damiyah Bridge with the intent of converging on Karameh from the north and south simultaneously. Israeli paratroopers also inserted north of the village by helicopter, but Fatah guerrillas supported by Jordanian artillery exacted a heavy toll among the attackers. Jordanian army forces initially repelled several Israeli assaults, but the attackers eventually forced their way into Karameh and destroyed the PLO infrastructure there. Many of the Palestinian guerrillas, including Arafat, escaped the battle and fled eastward, thus denying the Israelis their primary objective of destroying the bulk of the guerrilla army. By the end of the battle, the Israelis admitted that they had lost twenty-eight dead and ninety wounded and claimed they had inflicted one hundred dead and ninety wounded from the Jordanian army, along with one hundred seventy fedayeen killed and two hundred captured. The IDF withdrew back into Israel by early evening.[13]

In a dynamic similar to the Tet Offensive earlier in the year, the winners of the tactical fight became the losers at the strategic level. Arafat and Fatah shaped postbattle propaganda, effectively portraying the IDF's destruction of fedayeen bases at Karameh as a great victory against Israel. Indeed, all over the Arab world, Fatah was hailed as the first Arab entity to stand up to Israel on the battlefield. Arafat's image of the heroic revolutionary fighter was greatly enhanced, and recruits flocked to join the fedayeen. Likewise, Fatah used the occasion of the battle to strengthen its ideological stance that the Palestinian struggle was not a local matter between Israel and the dispossessed Arabs but was part of a global struggle of national liberation against colonial, imperial powers. Thus, Arafat and his associates sought to link their struggle with the anti-apartheid conflict in South Africa, with the Vietnamese war against the United States, and even with the black civil rights movement in America.[14]

Yasser Arafat reaped the rewards of his successful propaganda when the Central Committee of Fatah designated him the party's official spokesman in April 1968. Arafat's elevated status became evident to all in July when the fourth PNC featured Fatah and the other fedayeen groups claiming half of the seats in the organization. Their numbers and growing popularity proved enough for the fedayeen to

take control of the PLO, and the following year, Arafat was elected chairman. There were also structural changes within the PLO. Under Shuqayri, the chairman chose the Executive Committee. Under the new arrangement, the PNC elected the Executive Committee, which in turn chose the chairman.

Arafat's administration of the PLO made clear his intent that the organization was not to be considered a tool of the Arab League, Egypt, or Nasser. Instead, it was to be an independent nonstate actor and the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. He was successful in pressing this view on the Arabs and the world, if not on Israel initially. By the end of the 1960s, Arafat and Fatah had cemented their control of the PLO, and the fedayeen were firmly entrenched in Jordan and Lebanon. However, their inclination to create a "state within a state" in both countries would lead directly to their hosts turning hostile to their presence. The first contest was in Jordan.

The Jordan Phase and Black September, 1970–1971

PLO operations in Jordan intensified immediately after the Six-Day War, but as the organization gained recruits and ramped up the volume of its attacks, the fedayeen began to view the moderate and vacillating Hashemite regime in Amman as an obstacle to Palestine's liberation. Part of the issue was that two-thirds of Jordan's population were Palestinians who had little loyalty to King Hussein. Further, Arafat claimed that the PLO was the sole representative of the Palestinian people, including those on the West Bank, which was technically still a part of Jordan. Thus, he was assuming sovereignty over territory and people ruled by King Hussein. Indeed, the king himself added to the confusion in his assertion that "We are all fedayeen."[15]

While Arafat gladly accepted (indeed, demanded) support from Arab nations, he refused to allow them to control the organization. Further, he insisted that the PLO had the unalienable right to operate from within any Arab country's borders against Israel. This institutional arrogance played out on the ground as Fatah guerrillas began to flaunt their growing popularity and to defy Jordanian authority. The fedayeen walked around with weapons, sometimes demanding contributions at gunpoint and refusing to acknowledge Jordanian police or soldiers. King Hussein, with only his own loyal Bedouin soldiers to rely

on, feared that a conspiracy between Egypt and the PLO would seek to overthrow him.[16]

In October 1968, King Hussein's government negotiated a deal with the PLO (under Egyptian pressure) that would have subjected the organization to Jordanian authorities and constrained their behavior. According to the agreement, the fedayeen would refrain from appearing in cities in uniform and armed, and the Jordanian authorities would strictly monitor and control the guerrillas' activities. However, the fedayeen did not comply with the arrangements, and as their popularity among Palestinians increased, they openly defied King Hussein and called for his removal. Some of the subgroups of the PLO acted as little more than criminal gangs roaming about with impunity. The fedayeen developed their own police force, operated a radio station, and organized countrywide demonstrations against the United States and the Hashemite regime. From 1968 through mid-1970, there were repeated clashes between the PLO and Jordanian forces, resulting in more than a thousand deaths—mostly Palestinians.

Matters quickly came to a head late in 1970. The proximate causes of what would be called the Jordanian Civil War, or Black September, were the fedayeen's threats against the Hussein regime and the PFLP's use of the country as a base for international terror. The PFLP always considered international targets legitimate, partly because of the West's support for Israel and partly because the group's Marxist ideology villainized Western democratic powers. Habash's organization staged a series of high-profile hijackings, seizing three international passenger airliners in one day on September 6, 1970. A fourth attempt was foiled by the Israeli flight crew. Two of the aircraft were diverted to Dawson Air Field in Jordan, and on September 9, another plane was forced to land there. The PFLP's standard methodology was to hijack the aircraft and force them to land, whereupon the PFLP would either release the passengers and crew and destroy the aircraft or retain hostages to be exchanged for imprisoned fedayeen. Because much of the action occurred in Jordanian territory, the attacks, in addition to the PFLP's threats to kill King Hussein, were viewed as a challenge to Jordanian sovereignty.[17]

On September 1, gunmen unsuccessfully ambushed a motorcade transporting King Hussein and his daughter in Amman. The king blamed the fedayeen for the attack and announced that his government would disarm the guerrillas. On September 15, the Jordanian army

commenced operations against PLO offices and bases in Amman and other towns throughout the country. The decision to attack the PLO was risky because Hussein had to contend with the possibility of Iraqi, Syrian, or Egyptian interference. However, the attacks were successful, and by the end of the month, the Jordanians had recaptured control of the country's major cities. Syrian troops invaded from the north in an attempt to bolster the PLO's defenses, but Jordanian air strikes, American diplomatic pressure, the threat of Israeli involvement, and political infighting in Damascus doomed the enterprise. The Syrians withdrew toward the end of September, leaving the PLO isolated and friendless in the country. Egypt negotiated a brief cease-fire on September 27, but President Nasser died the following day, depriving Arafat of his strongest supporter.

In October, Arafat signed an agreement with Hussein similar to the previous agreement that would have subordinated the PLO to Jordanian authorities. The PFLP and Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PDFLP) refused to abide by the restrictions and continued to defy the government, though, giving the Hashemite regime the excuse it needed to continue the war. Operations continued in phases throughout the spring of 1971, with the Jordanian army confiscating weapons and attacking those groups that refused to comply with orders. Arafat and Fatah ramped up their rhetoric along with the PFLP and PDFLP, calling for Hussein's overthrow, and the army responded by attacking the PLO's last holdouts in the northern mountains. By mid-summer 1971, the PLO had been entirely expelled from the country, and King Hussein was firmly in control.[18]

Within the PLO and much of the Arab world, the PLO's expulsion from Jordan was blamed on the extremism of the PFLP, strengthening Fatah's control of the organization. Fatah responded to King Hussein's aggression by secretly establishing the Black September group, whose goal was to wage terror worldwide to bring attention to the plight of the Palestinians and to avenge Hussein's treachery.

The Lebanon Phase and the Period of International Terror, 1971–1973

The PLO and its subgroups had based in and staged raids from Lebanon for years before Black September, but with the PLO's expulsion

from Jordan, the once-prosperous country became the main focus for Arafat and the other leaders. Now unable to launch raids across Jordan, and with Syria continuing to prohibit raids from its soil, the PLO looked to the Lebanese border as the main avenue for guerrilla attacks into Israel.

Before his death, Nasser had coerced the Lebanese government into accepting the PLO and facilitating its operations. According to the Cairo Agreement of 1969, the PLO would be permitted to retain its arms in Lebanon and to carry out raids into Israel from Lebanese soil. By thus surrendering part of its sovereignty to the PLO, the Beirut regime doomed the country to the bloody ramifications of the PLO's war with Israel. Into the chaotic crucible of Lebanese politics that pitted Maronite Christians, Shiite Muslims, and Druze (among others) against each other, the PLO now began to insert itself as a force to be recognized. This period also corresponded with Fatah's decision to engage in international terrorism. This was a deliberate change of course for the faction because previously (and afterward), it viewed operations external to Israel as a distraction from its main goal of striking the Zionist state. After the debacle in Jordan, however, Arafat grew ever more concerned that Western states, and the United States in particular, would successfully pressure the Arab states into making peace with Israel, which in turn would isolate and doom the PLO. He was determined to demonstrate to all that the Palestinian resistance concerned everyone, and defiance of the PLO would exact a price. The Black September group would be his primary vehicle for terror.

Their first target was the hated prime minister of Jordan, Wasfi al-Tal. On November 28, 1971, as Tal was returning from a lunch engagement with the secretary general of the Arab League in Cairo, gunmen assassinated him at close range and even stooped to lick up his blood as he lay dying. The murder was allegedly in response to al-Tal's torture and murder of Abu Ali Iyad, a Fatah field commander. The gunmen were captured but later released and hailed as heroes.

One month later, Black September struck again, this time in London. Its target was the Jordanian ambassador in London, Zayd al-Rifai. The attackers managed only to wound him and then fled to France, where they were arrested and subsequently released. Fatah, through Black September, continued to target Jordanian officials and repeatedly attempted to assassinate the king himself.

As Fatah and the PLO evolved, Arafat was able to replace the dead Nasser's support with backing from Libya, Algeria, and Syria. With adequate finances, the Black September group continued to plan attacks, and at the 1972 Munich Olympics, the group pulled off its most spectacular exploit. Gunmen seized the Israeli athletes' compound, killing two and taking the rest hostage. Having negotiated their escape with the West German officials, the terrorists took their hostages aboard a bus and headed for the airport. When snipers attempted to stop them, the terrorists detonated explosives, killing themselves and nine more Israeli athletes.

On May 30, 1972, fedayeen struck again, but this time, it was the PFLP with the assistance of Japanese Red Army operatives. They entered the Lod Airport (now Ben Gurion International Airport) in Israel, pulled Kalashnikovs from their suitcases, and murdered twenty-six civilians (mostly Puerto Rican Christian pilgrims), wounding another eighty. Two of the gunmen were killed and the third captured. Wadie Haddad, head of PFLP External Operations, had planned the attack.

In March 1973, Black September sent gunmen to seize the Saudi embassy in Khartoum and took hostages, including American diplomats. Before any governments could intervene or negotiate, the kidnappers murdered the American ambassador and charge d'affaires, along with a Belgian diplomat. Subsequent intelligence pinned the blame directly on Arafat, who allegedly gave the order to kill the hostages.

Even as Fatah's Black September group was achieving such notoriety, Arafat was losing interest in external terror operations. His main goal had been to keep the world's attention on the Palestinian resistance while he consolidated his base in Lebanon. By the end of 1973, he had secretly met with US Central Intelligence Agency officials and negotiated a deal in which the PLO would avoid attacking Americans. Arafat slowly came to the position that he could achieve more by working with, rather than against, the United States.

In Lebanon, Arafat and the other leaders of the PLO were able to build up a resilient infrastructure. The delicate political constitution of the country had begun to unravel under the pressure of changing demographics and Middle Eastern upheaval that turned the various ethnic and religious groups there against each other. The Palestinian refugee camps, PLO bases, and most of southern Lebanon became de facto mini-states within the state, and the PLO jealously guarded

its prerogatives to govern the refugees there as it saw fit. In addition to running the economy and social services, the constituent groups of the PLO focused on building up their military capabilities. As had happened in Jordan, the PLO soldiers proved unruly and arrogant toward government authorities, which created growing friction. Lebanon, like Jordan, was a weak state that could oppose the PLO only at the risk of incurring the wrath of Syria and Egypt.

The PLO's fragmented organization led fringe groups to align with political figures in Lebanon. Thus, what normally would have been strictly internal affairs within Lebanese politics were exacerbated by numerous armed groups threatening to attack each other and any Lebanese authorities that tried to coerce them. Arafat, nominally in charge of the PLO, attempted without success to rein in the various groups.

Meanwhile, fedayeen attacks in Israel were prompting counterattacks in increasing number and intensity. From 1969 through 1970, the PLO conducted 560 attacks, only two of which were against Israeli military targets. In 1968, Israeli commandos stormed the Beirut Airport and blew up thirteen airliners in retaliation for PLO attacks. In May 1970, the IDF raided "Fatahland,"[19] killing and capturing hundreds of fedayeen. In the wake of Israel's raid, the PFLP General Command (PFLP-GC) attacked an Israeli school bus, killing eight children and four adults and wounding twenty others. Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir warned Lebanon that it must control its territory or would face the consequences. The Israelis shelled Lebanese villages in retaliation, killing twenty and destroying eighty houses.

In September 1972, the IDF invaded and occupied part of southern Lebanon. The government in Beirut repeatedly attempted to rein in the PLO but without success. In November, however, Kamal Jumblatt, the leading Druze politician among the leftist opposition and founder of the Progressive Socialist Party, allied his faction with the PLO, further aggravating the country's political conflicts. On April 9, 1973, in response to terrorist attacks on Israeli targets in Europe, the Mossad and Israeli commandos attacked a series of targets in downtown Beirut, killing three top Fatah leaders and destroying a PDFLP headquarters. This brash violation of Lebanon's sovereignty caused outrage in Beirut. Israel's response was that Lebanon was to blame for failing to control the PLO within its borders. As in Jordan, the PLO had become the poison pill that now Beirut had to swallow.

In the spring of 1973, the PLO waged a terror campaign against the Lebanese government as the country moved ever closer to civil war. The Christian-dominated government faced Jumblatt's National Lebanese Movement (LNM)—a loose confederation of antigovernment factions—and the PLO. Jumblatt wanted an end to the sectarian constitution, and Arafat wanted impunity and sovereignty within Lebanon's borders. Hafez Assad sent a Palestine Liberation Army (PLA) brigade into the country against the government's wishes and used his influence to pressure the government into talks with the PLO. The resulting Melkart Agreement provided for the PLO to restrain itself from carrying arms in towns or setting up roadblocks, but it basically reiterated the provisions of the 1969 Cairo Agreement, which granted the PLO the right to maintain arms and to raid into Israel from Lebanon.

Throughout the PLO's Lebanon phase, Arafat and the other fedayeen leaders searched for an effective strategy that would achieve unity in the PLO and advance their agenda of destroying Israel. In Arafat's strategic calculation, Israel's destruction would occur through the combination of fedayeen terror aimed at destabilizing the country and a final, coordinated attack by Arab powers to destroy the Zionist state and hand Palestine back to the people. However, when that war finally came in 1973, its results were to imperil all of Arafat's designs and eventually led to him changing course in an unforeseen way.

LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, AND COMMAND AND CONTROL

The PLO was governed, at least in theory, by the PNC, but real power devolved on the eighteen-member PLO Executive Committee, which the PNC elected.

Ahmad Shuqayri resigned as chairman of the PLO in December 1967, and in his place, Yahya Hamudda became the interim leader. Arafat's Fatah had led the charge in criticizing Shuqayri, deprecating him as an ineffective leader who contributed to the disaster of the war. It was during this period that the fedayeen began to join the PLO in greater numbers and to dominate the leadership. In 1969, their control was formalized as the number of delegates on the PNC was cut to one hundred, and half of those seats were reserved for fedayeen. Arafat's Fatah Party took thirty-eight of those seats, and the PFLP took ten.[20]

Arafat controlled Fatah fairly effectively, but his grip on the PLO was less strong. By 1969, fourteen smaller groups within the organization did not recognize his leadership. Fatah was the largest of the fedayeen groups, but the Marxist Popular Front was a strong competitor for leadership. The Front included George Habash's PFLP and Nayef Hawatmah's PDFLP.

George Habash was born in Lydda (1926) and educated as a doctor of medicine at the American University of Beirut (graduated 1951). There he founded the Arab National Movement (ANM), a student organization that aligned with Egypt against Syria. Habash was raised in an Eastern Orthodox Arab family, and his roots were among the Arab Christian community. Composing some 7 percent of the Arab population in Palestine, Christians are called *Nasrani* (the Arabic word Nazarene) or *Masihi* (a derivative of Arabic word Masih, meaning "Messiah"). Many Christians had been expelled from their homelands during the 1948 war, so that Christian Arabs suffered the same dispossession that Muslims experienced as well. For this reason, the Palestinian Arab resistance was never simply a Muslim reaction to Zionism. George Habash personified the eclectic nature of the Arab insurgency.

Originally a pan-Arab Nasserite, he gravitated toward Marxism, although he favored Red China over the USSR. He was a member of the Palestine Liberation Front, but in 1967, Arafat sidelined him, after which he decided, along with his longtime ally Wadie Haddad, to found his own group, the PFLP. Habash's faction included three subgroups—the so-called Heroes of the Return (a commando group formed in 1966), the Youth of Revenge, and the Palestinian Liberation Front, led by Syrian army officer Ahmad Jibril.

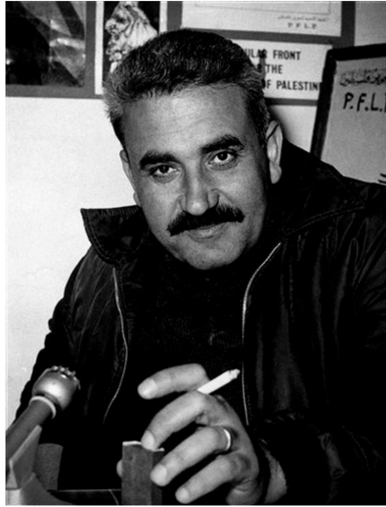

Figure 12-4. George Habash.

Ahmad Jibril was born in Jaffa in the Palestine Mandate, but he was raised in Syria and served in the army there, rising to the rank of captain. He was eventually expelled on suspicion of being a communist and went on to found the Palestinian Liberation Front. In 1967, he joined with George Habash to establish the PFLP. The following year, however, he split from Habash because of the latter's devotion to radical Marxism and antipathy toward Syria, and he established the PFLP-GC, a pro-Syrian guerrilla group. (Habash resented the Syrian regime's refusal to allow fedayeen raids from its territory.) Jibril and the PFLP-GC eventually fell out of favor with mainstream Palestinians due primarily to Jibril's cooperation with the Syrian government. Habash's faction retained the PFLP label.

The Syrian Baathists sought to maintain control of the PLO and to counter the influence of Egyptian-backed Arafat by creating and sponsoring the Vanguard of the Popular Liberation War, also called *asSa'iqa* (Thunderbolt). It was a Palestinian Baathist group recruited primarily from refugee camps in Syria. It was second in numbers to Arafat's Fatah faction.

Nayef Hawatmah was born in Jordan in 1938 and was a founding member of the PFLP and the ANM before the PFLP. He was convicted of Nasserite activities in Jordan in 1957 and sentenced to death, but he escaped to Iraq and served in the ANM there. He was involved in an attempted coup in 1959 and jailed until the Baathists overthrew the

government in 1963. By this time, his views had shifted toward left-wing ideologies, and he joined with Habash and Haddad to found the PFLP. In August 1968, Nayef Hawatmah outlined his vision that the workers and peasants among the Palestinians were the center of gravity of the mass movement, and they must be mobilized through armed struggle. The following year, he and his young guard split from the PFLP and founded the PDFLP. It was a secular, Marxist organization. Its ideology was even more extreme than Habash's, and the two groups came to blows in Amman. Yasser Arafat managed to negotiate peace between them.

Arafat desired unity among Palestinians and wanted to avoid a civil war among resistance groups, so he shaped the PLO to accommodate a wide variety of views, ideologies, strategies, and tactics. The resulting confederation was difficult to control as various groups "shanghaied" strategy and operations by staging independent, sometimes spectacular, operations in the name of the PLO. The major competing factions among the fedayeen included:

- Fatah—led by Yasser Arafat and Abu Iyad
- PFLP—led by George Habash
- PFLP-GC—led by Ahmad Jibril
- Vanguard for the Popular Liberation War (as-Sa'iqa)—led by a succession of Syrian-appointed secretaries general
- PDFLP—led by Nayef Hawatmah

In February 1969, Fatah consolidated its control of the PLO at the fifth session of the PNC, when Yasser Arafat was elected chairman. In part, Fatah's dominance and the other parties' acquiescence were due to the faction's popularity in Palestine, particularly in the aftermath of the battle of Karameh. However, the other groups found potential power bases in Syria, Iraq, and Libya, whose leaders were always anxious to curb Egypt, Arafat's main sponsor. The fedayeen leadership attempted to achieve unity through the so-called Unified Command of the Palestinian Resistance Movement, but real unity of command was nonexistent, and unity of action and purpose remained elusive as well.

Even though the fedayeen dominated the PNC membership (with independents and trade unionists constituting the other two blocs), they were seldom able to direct the body effectively because they embraced a wide variety of political agendas. Each of the fedayeen factions was armed, and this led to a sense of independence from the authority of

the PNC. Thus, from an early date, the PLO's main governing body was weakened from the inclusion of divergent, semiautonomous factions competing for leadership. Instead of resolving matters of policy through voting, groups would simply act on their own ideas within a loose confederation of resisters.

Armed Component

The PLA continued to be integrated with and led by the host nations of the separate brigades. Syria used the PLA as a proxy force during the Black September crisis and sent it (with Syrian tanks) into Jordan to aid the fedayeen there. The PLA was later forced to return to Syria—a humiliating development that helped facilitate Hafez al-Assad's rise to power.

In 1968, the PLO established the Popular Liberation Forces that became known as the Yarmouk Brigade, operating in the Gaza Strip. The Ayn Jalut Brigade of the PLA had also operated there but later based out of Egypt after the Six-Day War.

The Qadisiyyah Brigade of the PLA had been based in Iraq, but in 1967, it was transferred to Jordan. As with other PLA forces, the brigade was only nominally related to the PLO, and effective command and control emanated from the host countries that trained and administered the force. The same was true for the PLA's Hattin Brigade based in Syria.

Al-'Asifah was Fatah's military wing. After the IDF routed fedayeen cells from the West Bank, the guerrillas moved to Jordan and began to conduct daily incursions from there. For the most part, guerrilla raids were thwarted or contained, and they were unable to seriously challenge the Israeli security apparatus. From 1967 through 1970, though, fedayeen raids killed some 115 civilians and wounded nearly 700 more. Israel's first-line response was to pressure King Hussein to rein in the guerrillas or suffer the consequent Israeli counterattacks.

Why Terror?

PLO leaders decided to unleash a sustained campaign of terror—first against Israel and later against Western (and Jewish) targets. This weapon of choice was in some sense a last resort and the group's only option at the time. The fedayeen could not compete with the Israelis

in conventional warfare for lack of equipment, training, logistics, and bases. In accordance with the writings of Mao Tsetung and Che Guevara, they desired to build up an effective guerrilla army, but this option, too, was denied them. Guerrilla operations to date had been small in scale and generally ineffective. They avoided the IDF and military targets in general, primarily because defeating the Israelis in battle was unfeasible. The only violent recourse left to the PLO was to attack civilians and soft targets.

Likewise, the PLO could not rely on the Palestinian population of the West Bank or Gaza to help sustain a guerrilla army. Deprived of an effective underground and auxiliary, guerrillas had no chance of operating in significant numbers within the borders of Israel or the occupied territories. The population of Palestinians—defeated and depressed—could cheer for the PLO's acts of spectacular terror, but they were disinclined to make the sacrifices necessary to sustain a guerrilla war. Arafat and other leaders within the PLO were reluctant to share political power with Arab elites in Palestine for fear they might take control of matters and perhaps even negotiate peace with Israel.[21] Finally, terror attacks that killed Israeli men, women, and children were deemed appropriate because the PLO's struggle in the early years was in essence a war of conquest—in other words, a struggle between two peoples, both of whom wanted sole ownership of the same piece of land. In such a war, compromise is impossible. One population had to be removed completely. Thus, the PLO claimed that its goal was not to defeat the IDF but rather to destroy Israel and remove it from Palestine. It therefore aimed attacks at vulnerable civilian populations and infrastructure in an attempt to cause societal collapse.

Public Component

The PLO published a magazine entitled *Filastin al-Thawra* to communicate to the wider world its aims and perspectives. Each of the constituent groups within the PLO likewise maintained their own newspapers, magazines, and radio stations. The PFLP's newspaper was *Al-Hadaf* (*The Victory of Revolutionary Law*). The organization also enjoyed support and enthusiastic coverage throughout the Arab world. Because Fatah and the other groups were able to stage spectacular

(if often unsuccessful) raids and acts of terror, Arab newspapers typically hailed their activities and contributed to Arafat's reputation as a revolutionary hero.

IDEOLOGY

The Arab resistance after the Six-Day War sprang from a mixture of ideological positions that competed with one another. Marxism was a major factor among some Palestinians, but even among leftists, there were those who endorsed a Marxist-Leninist approach and those who looked to Maoism as the correct model. The former sought to win over the proletariat and peasants and eventually lead them in a revolution against the bourgeoisie and the imperialists—in this case, Israel. The latter looked to political mobilization as a means of recruiting, training, and building up a powerful and disciplined guerrilla force that would gradually capture territory until it could contend with the occupying power in conventional battle. In reality, the conditions in Palestine defied either strategy, but Marxist Arab leaders nevertheless sought to indoctrinate their followers and to politically mobilize them.

Fatah, on the other hand, aimed at achieving eventual political mobilization not through indoctrination or creating a political base, but rather through immediate armed action. Che Guevara's *foco* strategy looked to the creation of a dedicated revolutionary vanguard that would initiate military action before any political base was established. Military success itself would stimulate the people's vision and interest, and they would, according to the theory, spontaneously mobilize to follow the vanguard. The resulting guerrilla war would, in accordance with Maoist thinking, exhaust Israel through attrition until a full revolution could come about.

Arafat himself was most conspicuously a Palestinian nationalist. Beyond that, he postured himself as a leftist revolutionary, in part so that he could align himself and his party with national liberation movements across the world. When it served his purpose, he could pose as a pan-Arabist, an Islamic warrior, or a Marxist. His Muslim faith was genuine, but it did not lead him in the direction of, for example, Salafist jihad. Above all he wanted to lead Palestinian Arabs in a successful bid for a nation-state of their own comprising all of Palestine: "We do

not have any ideology—our goal is the liberation of our fatherland by any means necessary."[22]

The PLO charter, laid down in 1964 under Shuqayri and modified in 1968 under Arafat, insisted that the organization's aim was the establishment of a Palestinian state in all of Palestine and the destruction of Israel. Zionism, according to the ideology, was not a legitimate Jewish national movement but was instead a deliberate European and American imperialist enterprise that aimed at keeping the Arabs of the Middle East divided and weak. Article 22 of the charter insisted that Zionism was "racist," "fanatic," and "fascist." Just as the world of the 1950s and 1960s was seeing national liberation movements throwing off imperialism and colonialism in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, so to would the Palestinian national liberation movement throw off Zionist imperialism. Furthermore, the PLO aimed at reversing the consequences of 1948, not just 1967.

In the early 1970s, the PLO's constituent groups struggled politically over the issue of Palestinian statehood. From 1974, mainstream fedayeen groups, including Fatah, Sa'iqa, and the PDFLP, were ready to accept a Palestinian state in the part of the territory that the Palestinians controlled as a first step toward liberating all of Palestine. However, the "Rejectionist Front," including the PFLP and smaller groups, rejected anything but total annihilation of Israel and a state encompassing all of British Mandate Palestine.

Regarding the PLO's relationship with the Arab powers, Arafat espoused ideas that found few advocates abroad. He rejected Nasser's idea that Palestinian liberation would follow the unification of all Arabs, instead insisting that destroying Israel and liberating the Palestinians was the necessary first step. Further, he declared that the PLO's fedayeen had the unalienable right to operate bases and stage raids from any Arab lands. In practice, however, Syria and Egypt vetoed such notions, and Jordan and Lebanon may have soon wished they had.

The PLO charter's ideology was uncompromising and absolute, looking for the destruction of Israel, deprecating any attempt at negotiating with it, and demanding a Palestinian state. In practice, however, through war and peace, and in the face of Israeli determination, Arab intransigence, uninspired Palestinians, and desultory cooperation from the international community, the PLO's resolve fell short of its fiery rhetoric.

The fedayeen of all political colors aimed at recruiting and mobilizing support in the Palestinian refugee camps because these populations seemed most likely to accept agitation for change. Palestinian refugees, including most of the Arab population of the Gaza Strip, about a quarter of West Bank Arabs, and those in camps outside Palestine, were a reliable source of man power. The settled population of the West Bank, on the other hand, had conspicuously less interest in nationalist zeal.

During the early 1970s, as the PLO and Fatah rose to the zenith of their power, the nascent Islamist movement grew to regard Arafat and the other leaders as their chief rivals—more dangerous than even Israel. Elements of the Muslim Brotherhood were recovering from the harsh repression suffered under the Nasser regime, and Islamist leaders deliberately kept their disciples out of the PLO's guerrilla war with Israel, instead focusing on putting the Palestinian people themselves on to the "straight path" of Islam. As Arafat's fortunes rose, however, his erstwhile allies in the Muslim Brotherhood took a dim view of his leftist ideology. The center of gravity of the conflict between Islamist and secularist had become the question of who would control the hearts and minds of the Palestinian people themselves. For its part, Israel was happy to see early Islamist movements grow because they represented potential counterweights to the PLO. Elements of the Muslim Brotherhood operating in Palestine pursued a long-term strategy of building networks among the people of Gaza and the West Bank, primarily through extending social services to those in need and preaching and teaching the fundamentals of Islam. Talk of jihad against Israel and the PLO secularists was sidelined for the time being.[23]

The Muslim Brotherhood was founded in Egypt in 1928 by Islamic scholar Hassan al-Banna. It looked to patiently spread Islamic influence over the Arab world through social work and political activism. The essential ideology of the Brotherhood was that "Islam is the solution." That is, it sought to recreate the Arab world with the Koran and Sunnah as the sole authoritative guides for religion, culture, society, and politics. It drew both ideological inspiration and material support from Saudi Arabia, the birthplace of Wahabbism. The Brotherhood, in turn, influenced the development of Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), and Hizbollah.

In Palestine, the Brotherhood viewed the period after the 1967 war as the time for building up a social network among the Arabs through charity work, poverty relief, and a growing shadow government. Its chief

adversary was not Israel, but rather the PLO and Fatah in particular. The struggle was initially for the hearts and minds of the Arab population, not territory. This would change with the emergence of Hamas and PIJ after the First Intifada.

LEGITIMACY

The main effort of Palestinian resistance leaders during this period was less about achieving legitimacy in the eyes of the Palestinian people and more about securing their position as the legitimate representatives of the resistance in the eyes of the international community and the Arab world. Before 1967, Egypt and Jordan insisted that they "owned" the Palestinian problem because they had exercised sovereignty over the territories in Palestine that the Israelis had seized, and Syria sponsored elements of the Palestinian resistance as well. Yasser Arafat and the other resistance leaders thus struggled to take control of the resistance from the Arab powers and instead led it as a non-state entity through the PLO.

Tangential to that effort was the problem of *which* resistance movement would dominate and lead the Palestinians. Arafat's Fatah party became the most successful of the contenders, relying on its relentless campaign of guerrilla actions against Israel as the basis for its legitimacy. However, it was this competition dynamic that worked against effective integration of the resistance in the PLO because the constituent groups began to stage their own attacks, hoping to achieve greater intergroup legitimacy through some spectacular violence against Israel. Hence, guerrilla and terrorist operations during this period had the secondary intent of wearing down Israel, but most often, the primary intent was to demonstrate leadership within the resistance to strengthen the various parties' claims to legitimacy.

Arafat in particularly strove to gain credence in the eyes of the Palestinians he wanted to lead. He wore the Palestinian headscarf (the *kaffiyeh*) and donned a military uniform, walking around armed in public. The intent was to portray a revolutionary, heroic soldier—a man of action and not just of words.

CONCLUSION

The Six-Day War radically changed the course of the Palestinian resistance, primarily by removing the Arab powers from center stage. Arafat's Fatah party emerged from the conflict politically stronger, and the group capitalized on its waxing strength to capture control of the PLO. However, the centrifugal forces of ideology and factionalism kept him from effectively ruling the organization. Throughout this period, the PFLP, PFLP-GC, PDFLP, and the other subgroups alternately contended with and cooperated with Arafat. The resulting PLO policy and strategy thereby evolved as the organization struggled to find a place first in Jordan and later in Lebanon. In both countries, the PLO's presence proved an existential threat to the ruling regimes. As a result, Arafat and the others found themselves gradually isolated.

Meanwhile, the other prevailing dynamic affecting the Palestinian resistance was Israel's military, economic, and diplomatic strength. The Jewish state denied Arafat and the PLO the option of forming a guerrilla army in Israel or the occupied territories. It likewise harassed and disrupted the PLO's operations from Jordan and Lebanon. Israel's unforeseen victory in the Six-Day War set up a series of diplomatic dominos that would eventually fall in its favor and further isolate the PLO.

Most conspicuously, however, the Palestinian resistance suffered from disunity. The leaders of Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and Iraq used the Palestinian cause for their own power plays, with little regard for the actual needs and desires of the Palestinians in the West Bank, Gaza, and the refugee camps. The leadership of the PLO remained fractured, contentious, and problematic despite Arafat's rise to the chairmanship. Facing a seemingly unbeatable enemy, the fedayeen lost focus and hope, instead allowing the organization to fester with numerous competing (and ultimately pointless) ideologies.

Similar to what had happened in 1967, the days leading up to the Yom Kippur War of 1973 were filled with the hope that the Arab powers would be able to dislodge the Zionists from the land and open up the path to national liberation. However, the war, when it came, instead would lead to a radical realignment of power in the Middle East, with the PLO again the loser.

ENDNOTES

[1] Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist–Arab Conflict, 1881–2001* (New York: Vintage Books, 2001), 302–311.

[2] Chaim Herzog, *The Arab–Israeli Wars: War and Peace in the Middle East* (New York: Vintage Books, 1984), 151–153.

[3] Ibid., 154–166.

[4] Ibid., 167–183.

[5] Morris, *Righteous Victims*, 325–326.

[6] Ibid., 328–329.

[7] Barry Rubin, *Revolution until Victory? The Politics and History of the PLO* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), 13.

[8] Morris, *Righteous Victims*, 331–332.

[9] Ibid., 15.

[10] Herzog, *Arab–Israeli Wars*; and Morris, *Righteous Victims*.

[11] Rubin, *Revolution until Victory?*, 16.

[12] Mark Tessler, *A History of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009, 422-426; Morris, *Righteous Victims*, 367-372.

[13] Tessler, *A History of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, 425-426.

[14] Paul T. Chamberlin, *The Global Offensive: The United States, the Palestine Liberation Organization, and the Making of the Post-Cold War Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

[15] "1968: Karameh and the Palestinian revolt." *Telegraph*. May 16, 2002. Accessed September 3, 2008.

[16] Tessler, 456-64.

[17] David Raab, *Terror in Black September* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007).

[18] Tessler, 456-64.

[19] Parts of southern Lebanon, mostly along the Israeli border, were called Fatahland by Israelis because Fatah was the de facto ruling power there.

[20] Faris Giacaman, "Political Representation and Armed Struggle," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 43, no. 1 (2013): 25.

[21] Rubin, *Revolution until Victory?*, 26.

[22] Ibid., 19.

[23] Beverley Milton-Edwards and Stephen Farrell, *Hamas* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2010), 208–212.

CHAPTER 13.
FROM THE OCTOBER WAR TO THE FIRST INTIFADA, 1973–1987

Anger begins with madness, but ends in regret.

—Arab Proverb

Our lands and homes were taken from us and we had to fight. From this early age I dreamt of martyrdom if it would bring freedom.

—Sheikh Ahmed Yassin

The Yom Kippur War of 1973 nearly brought disaster to Israel, but its long-term effects were more detrimental to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). Six years after its conclusion, Egypt made peace with Israel—the next step in the strategic isolation of the PLO and an event that would fundamentally change the framework of the Palestinian resistance.

TIMELINE

October 6–25, 1973	Yom Kippur War. Egypt and Syria conduct surprise attacks on Israel in the Sinai and Golan Heights. The Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) mobilize and conduct desperate defense before launching counterattacks that defeat the attacking armies.
October 1973	Sheikh Ahmed Yassin forms the Mujamma in the Gaza Strip.
1973	The Arab League recognizes PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people.
December 17, 1974	United Nations (UN) General Assembly Resolution 3336 reaffirms sovereignty of “Arab states and peoples whose territories are under Israeli occupation” over their natural resources and wealth.
July 3–4, 1976	Entebbe Raid
January – April, 1979	The Iranian Revolution brings Ayatollah Khomeini to power.
1980	Secular PLO supporters battle Mujamma’s Islamist supporters in the Gaza Strip.
1981	Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) establishes its first cells in the Gaza Strip.
1982	IDF invades Lebanon; the PLO is expelled and forced to move to Tunisia.
1983	The PLO splits.
1984	Israeli authorities arrest Sheikh Yassin and others for weapons possession and illegal funding.
1985	Yassin is released from jail as part of an Israel–Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine General Command (PFLP-GC) prisoner exchange.

ORIGINS AND COURSE OF THE RESISTANCE

The Yom Kippur War, October 6–25, 1973

On October 6, 1973, Egypt and Syria launched coordinated surprise attacks in the Sinai and Golan Heights, respectively, during Yom Kippur and caught the Israelis initially unprepared. Since 1967, Israeli military leaders had come to believe two fundamental truths, both of which were proved untrue in the war. First, they believed that their sophisticated intelligence apparatus would be able to detect any threat of war early enough to permit mobilization in time. Second, they believed that in any conflict they could easily achieve air supremacy and that their air advantage would enable them to dominate activities on the ground. In the event, the Arab nations were able to mount strong attacks before the Israelis could mobilize, and newly supplied Soviet antiaircraft missile systems nullified the Israeli air advantage.[1]

In the first days of the war, the Arab armies advanced. Egypt's forces crossed the Suez Canal, breached the Bar Lev defensive line, and then halted. Egyptian President Anwar Sadat aimed at forcing Israel to negotiate a withdrawal from the Sinai, not conquering Palestine. He halted his forces after their initial success so he could continue to defend his army from the secure antiaircraft missile system arrayed along the canal. The Syrian forces, five divisions strong, attacked and nearly ejected the beleaguered Israeli forces from the Golan Heights. However, the Israelis rallied, firmed up their defenses, and then launched counterattacks. When their attacks in the Golan Heights began to succeed, Egypt's forces attempted to advance further into the Sinai but were stopped cold. The Israelis launched a sustained ground battle between the seams of the two Egyptian armies and managed to cross the Suez Canal and threaten Egypt's interior.[2]

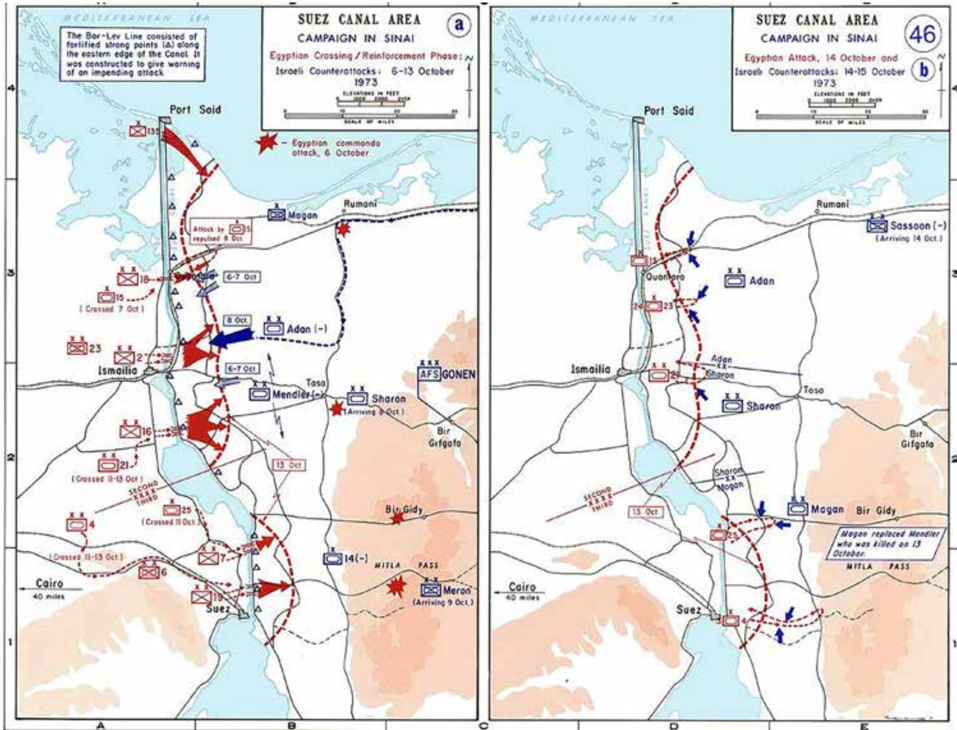

Figure 13-1. The war in the Sinai.

On October 15, the IDF launched a counteroffensive across the Suez Canal, by October 25 surrounding and cutting off Egypt's Third Army on the east bank of the canal and threatening to surround the Egyptian Second Army. Their armies faced with annihilation, the Egyptians called for a cease-fire, and their Soviet patrons threatened to unilaterally intervene against Israel, persuading the United States and the UN Security Council (UNSC) to issue the call; the guns fell silent. Egypt's President Anwar Sadat had maintained throughout that his war aim was to force Israel to withdraw from its 1967 conquests and negotiate peace seriously. In this, he was somewhat successful, as the United States worked to broker a deal between Egypt and Israel. A mere five years later, the United States sponsored the Camp David Accords, and in 1979, Egypt and Israel made peace and normalized relations.

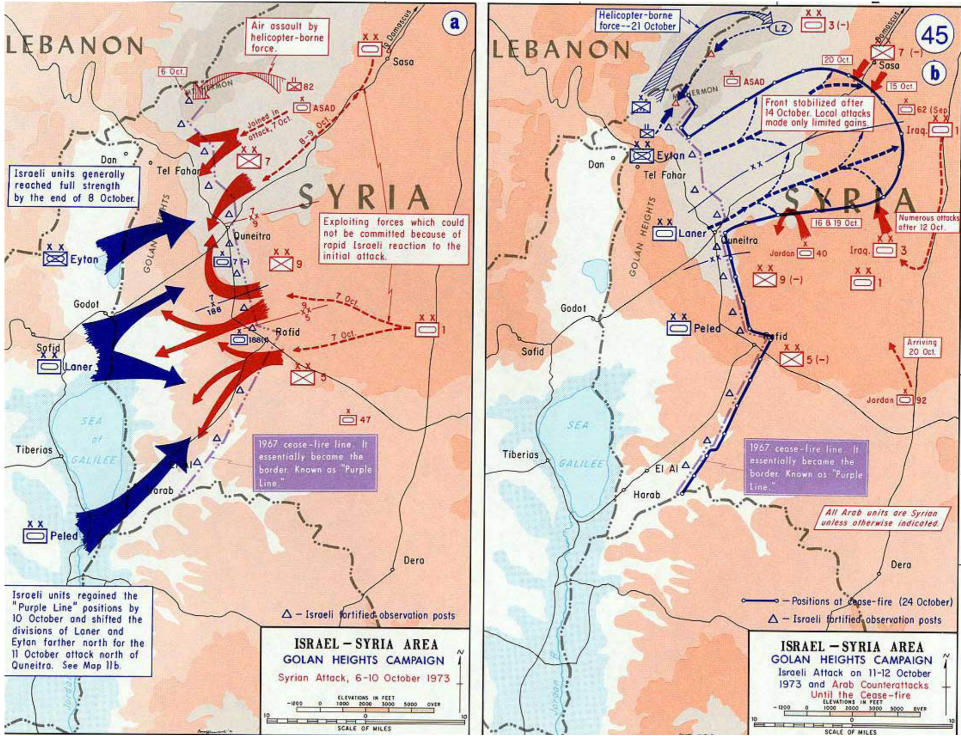

Figure 13-2. The war in the Golan Heights.

The Yom Kippur War, although a vindication for Arab pride, was a disaster for Arafat and the PLO. The two major Arab powers had planned and executed the war without consulting the PLO, and then they negotiated with Israel and the United States on separate cease-fire deals, again without reference to Arafat or other Palestinian leaders. The UN-brokered cease-fire included UNSC Resolution 338, which referred back to a peace process based on Resolution 242, the land-for-peace principle, which the PLO continued to reject.

Arafat and the Ten-Point Plan

Yasser Arafat scrambled to recoup some advantage. He feared that Egypt, Syria, and Jordan might soon negotiate separate deals with Israel on the basis of UNSC Resolution 242, which would leave the PLO with nothing. To forestall this possibility, he led the Palestine National Council (PNC) in July 1974 to adopt a positive plan of action that became known as the Ten-Point Plan. The essence of the document

was that, as an initial step toward full liberation, the PLO would seek to establish Palestinian rule over any part of Palestine that was liberated. Under no circumstances would the PLO negotiate peace or any deal with Israel for the territory. While thus reiterating its aim to destroy Israel and establish a democratic Arab state throughout Palestine, the PNC officially acknowledged that this might have to happen in stages. It implied that in addition to armed struggle, diplomacy might have to play a role in achieving the PLO's aims. Arafat insisted that the PLO would represent the Palestinians in any US-sponsored Geneva talks. His declaration resulted in the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PDFLP) leaving the PLO. (They returned in 1977.)[3]

The plan illustrated the increasingly difficult position in which Arafat found himself. Because the verbiage hinted at diplomacy, hard-liners including the PFLP and the PDFLP excoriated the plan as capitulating to Israel. For their part, the Zionists viewed the plan as codification of the PLO's nefarious goal of eradicating Israel in stages and through deception. The plan gave Iraq and Syria excuses for working against Fatah and Arafat, instead backing their own proxies within the PLO. Despite the varied responses it elicited, the nuanced shift in Fatah's strategy was the first step in the direction of a Palestinian Authority in the occupied territories.

In 1974, Arafat achieved a measure of legitimacy for his organization when the Arab League designated the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. In many ways, the declaration was ironic and had unforeseen, cascading effects. Most conspicuously, it was an odd admission of the real situation on the ground in Palestine that the Arab League would decide who would represent the people, rather than the people themselves. This gesture toward Arafat was in keeping with the PLO's origins as a creature of the Arab powers (and Egypt in particular), but it also hinted at the eventual rift that would grow between the PLO and the people that it was charged to represent.[4]

Secondly, some viewed the Arab League declaration as a de facto withdrawal from the Palestinian problem. By commissioning the PLO as the sole legitimate representative, Cairo, Damascus, Baghdad, and Amman essentially let themselves off the hook. Arafat had gotten what he wanted, but the question remained: what would he do with it once he had it? He hoped, of course, that he would continue to enjoy support

and sponsorship from the Arab states, but that support was always problematic and conditional and would remain so.

On November 13, 1974, Arafat achieved another important milestone. He was invited to address the UN General Assembly. In his famous speech, he made the case for the liberation of Palestine from the Zionist invasion, and he sought to justify the violence that Fatah and the other members of the PLO had wrought on Israel and the world. Dressed in his traditional garb, he pushed for the world community to back the Palestinians' demand for their own democratic state in the whole of Palestine, and he warned that he had come "bearing an olive branch and a freedom-fighter's gun. . . . Don't make me drop the olive branch." He garnered applause, observer status within the UN, and, a year later, the General Assembly's designation of Zionism as racism.[5]

Figure 13-3. Arafat addresses the United Nations.

It was a high point in Arafat's career. In 1975, the PLO became a full member of the nonaligned movement and, in the following year, a member of the Arab League. The diplomatic advances were evidence of real progress with regard to the PLO's messaging to the international community. In 1985, Spain became the first nation to afford the organization full diplomatic status. However, the 1970s and 1980s

would demonstrate that the PLO's rhetoric and messaging skills were not matched in terms of internal integrity, military might, or skillful diplomacy toward the issues that mattered to the Palestinians.

The Limitations of Terror[6]

On June 27, 1976, Wadie Haddad ordered the PFLP External Operations group to hijack an Air France flight from Tel Aviv to Paris with 248 passengers onboard. The aircraft was diverted to Athens and then Tripoli, finally landing in Entebbe Airport in Uganda. Dictator Idi Amin welcomed the hijackers and cooperated with them. The terrorists moved the passengers into the old terminal building and separated the Israelis and flight crew from the others. Non-Israeli hostages were soon released and flown to Paris, but the terrorists threatened to kill the remaining captives unless Palestinian prisoners were released in Israel and Western Europe.

Israel responded and acted on intelligence gathered by Mossad. After a week of detailed planning, they secretly flew one hundred commandos to the airport in several Hercules transport aircraft and rescued the hostages in a ninety-minute operation. The commandos killed the hijackers and forty-five Ugandan soldiers, and they also destroyed numerous Soviet-supplied Ugandan aircraft. Three hostages were killed in the fight, along with the Israeli commander, Yonatan Netanyahu, the younger brother of future Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu. In retaliation for the attack, Idi Amin ordered the murder of a Jewish hostage who had been taken to the hospital earlier. She was shot, along with the doctors and nurses who tried to protect her. Amin also ordered the mass murder of Kenyan nationals who were in Uganda because their country had aided Israel.

World reaction to the Israeli raid was mostly positive. Most saw the action as heroic defiance of criminal terrorists. The response demonstrated the conflicting feelings throughout the Western world concerning the PLO and terrorism. While Arafat and the other leaders within the PLO had been successful in highlighting the grievances of the Palestinian people and attracting the support of national liberation movements around the world, their recourse to terrorism repelled many in Western nations. This and similar episodes eventually convinced Arafat and Fatah that "external operations"—in other words, operations

outside of Palestine that involved other than Israeli targets—were distracting and potentially harmful. However, it would not be until the mid-1980s that Arafat finally decreed that his agents would refrain from international terror.

Lebanese Civil War

Meanwhile, the PLO was headed for disaster in its primary base. As Lebanon moved toward civil war, Kamal Jumblatt allied himself more firmly with the PLO, Syria, and the USSR. The fragile government, dominated by the Christians, found itself opposed by leftist secularists and Muslim religious factions. As all parties began to build up militias, and Jumblatt headed the Lebanese National Movement (LNM), which called for an end to the sectarian basis of the constitution, widely viewed as discriminatory against Muslims. The PLO, although officially neutral, supported Jumblatt, as did even the more radical factions of the Palestinian Rejectionist Front (those who opposed Arafat's Ten-Point Plan, which critics viewed as too moderate regarding Israel). When the violence commenced, the PLO was thus positioned to involve itself in the chaos.

The civil war was triggered by the drive-by shooting, by unknown gunmen, of a Christian outside a church in the Ain al-Rumana district of Beirut where Pierre Jemayel was attending Sunday service. The Phalangists retaliated by ambushing a bus carrying Palestinians near the Tel al Za'atar refugee camp, killing twenty-six and wounding twenty-nine. PLO and Muslim gunmen then attacked a score of Phalange offices and Maronite businesses. Private armies and militias entered the fray, and the national economy plummeted. Both the Christians and the PLO were guilty of massacres against each other. When it appeared that Kamal Jumblatt, the LNM, and allied forces were about to defeat the beleaguered Christians, Hafez al-Assad's Syrian army moved in to fight in support of the Christians. His main motivation was to rein in the leftist PLO and to reassert his control both of Lebanon and, if possible, of the PLO. Although the Syrian invasion was a severe setback for Arafat, the PLO survived and expelled its pro-Syrian members.[7]

The other complicating aspect of the PLO's operations in Lebanon was that its strikes against Israel inevitably attracted counterattacks. On May 15, 1974, Nayef Hawatmah's PDFLP sent a team of terrorists into

Israel across the Lebanese border. In the town of Ma'alot, they killed two Israeli Arab women and executed an Israeli couple and their four-year-old son before moving into a high school and taking 115 hostages. Refusing to meet their demands, the IDF sent the Golani Brigade to retake the compound, during which the PDFLP operatives murdered twenty-five (mostly schoolchildren) and wounded many more. In November of the same year, the PFLP-GC attacked at Kiryat Shemona, again across the Lebanese border, and murdered eighteen, mostly women and children. The following year, on the anniversary of Arafat's UN speech, Fatah agents detonated a bomb in Jerusalem, killing seven and wounding forty more. In all, from 1971 through 1982, PLO attacks killed 250 Israelis and wounded more than 1,500.

Israel responded to the continuing attacks by trying to pressure the Lebanese government into controlling the PLO within its borders. However, the chaos of the civil war and the essential weakness of the Lebanese sectarian constitution prevented any effective measures.

Israeli Settlements

The problem of what to do with the occupied territories—chiefly the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza—became severe and existential for Israel. Before 1967, the Zionists had carved out and defended a modern, democratic Jewish state in Palestine. After 1967, though, in the captured territories, they were exercising military rule over about two million Palestinian Arabs—occupying and settling lands that they had no right to in the eyes of the international community. What was to be done with the subject Arabs? If they were enfranchised, then Israel would no longer be Jewish. If they were instead persistently deprived of the right to vote or have a hand in their own government, then Israel would cease to be democratic. For successive Israeli governments, then, occupation of the West Bank and Gaza came with an existential question: do you want to be Jewish, or do you want to be a democracy? You cannot be both.

The conclusion of the Yom Kippur War exacerbated the problem of Israeli settlements on the lands conquered in the Six-Day War. What had started as a spontaneous movement undertaken by a handful of citizens motivated by nationalism and religion had evolved into a government-sponsored enterprise to gradually incorporate portions of the

West Bank, Gaza, East Jerusalem, the Golan Heights, and Sinai into the State of Israel. While avoiding a definitive public statement on the matter, successive governments encouraged and promoted settlement of the territories, perhaps with the intent of presenting the world with a fait accompli once the Jewish population grew and the demographics became irresistible and irreversible.

Between 1967 and 1973, Labor governments had kept the number of settlers in Judea low—about three thousand. However, the Yom Kippur War weakened Labor significantly, and the settlement movement gained momentum. Thousands of Israelis joined the drive to force the government to allow settlements. Golda Meir continued to resist the popular will, demolishing unauthorized settlements and fending off the growing fervor. The Gush Emunim religious movement strengthened and garnered support from both religious zealots and secular nationalists. After all, many Israelis reasoned, the essence of Zionism was unrelenting settlement in Palestine, despite opposition from ruling authorities.

Settlers did not wait for government authorization or sponsorship. Instead, they organized themselves and embarked on journeys toward coveted lands in Judea and Samaria. They built their communities on the terra firma of ancient Israel, but their legal grounds were to remain dubious, vague, and bereft of international sanction. Subsequent Israeli governments ignored, winked at, or openly encouraged settlements, so that the resultant Jewish populations in the captured territories eventually became entities that could not be ignored or easily removed.[8]

Camp David Accords

In November 1977, Anwar Sadat, frustrated with the costs of seemingly endless war with Israel and the low potential for success through multinational negotiations at Geneva, addressed the Egyptian parliament and announced his willingness to travel to Israel to speak before the Knesset. Arafat was outraged. His greatest fear was about to become a reality. Syria and Iraq were equally shocked and angered by Sadat's move. Egyptian and Israeli ministers scrambled to set the boundaries for Sadat's bold move and to carve out diplomatic positions in advance of it. If either side hoped the other would significantly shift its stance before the historic visit, they were to be frustrated. Sadat would insist

on full Israeli withdrawal from captured territories, including the Sinai, the West Bank, the Golan Heights, and Gaza. Menachem Begin would likewise maintain his own viewpoint, insisting on retaining portions of eastern Sinai, the West Bank, the Golan Heights, and Gaza. Despite the impasse, the visit would proceed as planned.[9]

Key factors in Sadat's momentous move toward peace with Israel included the roles played by Egypt, Israel, the United States, and the PLO. Arafat and the other senior leaders of the PLO theoretically had an opportunity to follow Sadat's lead. As the most important leader in the Arab world, Sadat could potentially negotiate a favorable deal for the PLO. However, in reality, Fatah, the PFLP, and the other constituent groups were hamstrung by their own ideological positions and by the internal political dynamics within the PLO. Arafat knew he could not survive an attempt to moderate his position, and neither could any Arab leader, other than Sadat. The "I hate Israel more than thee" dynamic threatened any Arab politician with ruin and perhaps death if he appeared to weaken his rhetoric toward the Zionists. Thus, the PLO was to avoid following Sadat toward peace.

On September 4, 1975, Israeli and Egyptian negotiators signed the Sinai Interim Agreement in Geneva. Also known as the Sinai II Agreement, it declared that the differences between the two countries would not be resolved through military action but by negotiation. The United States' involvement in the Middle East peace process stalled after Sinai II, primarily because of the Watergate scandal that ousted Nixon and disrupted the American political scene. With the rise of Jimmy Carter to the presidency, the US government put its weight behind the abortive Geneva process, preferring a multinational approach in lieu of seemingly impossible bilateral negotiations. Both Sadat and Begin viewed Geneva more realistically, realizing that the dynamics of multilateral diplomacy among Arab powers would lead precisely nowhere. As a result, Sadat determined to work around the Americans and engage the Israelis directly. Carter was initially dismayed and angry, but he hurried to catch up and reenter the process on Sadat's terms when Egypt reached out to Washington for assistance in bringing Begin to heel.

Menachem Begin, former leader of the Revisionists and Irgun, had been marginalized by Labor governments throughout his life (except for his three years in the National Unity Government of 1967–1970) and was branded a terrorist and man of war by Ben Gurion and others. With his elevation to the premiership in 1977, he had an opportunity

to wage peace and repair his reputation. Just as "only Nixon could go to China," so also Begin had the political clout and credibility as a fighter to lead the nation toward peace. He initially balked at Sadat's seeming intransigence—what amounted to an ultimatum in the eyes of many in the government—but a spontaneous propeace movement, Peace Now, quickly gained traction among an ever-growing number of Israelis all along the political spectrum. They made their voices heard, and Begin, also facing international pressure to make a deal, softened his stance as the historic opportunity at Camp David approached.

Sadat's visit to Israel and his appearance before the Knesset in November 1977 likewise influenced the course of events. Vilified by his Arab partners, he came face to face with former archenemies and managed to speak with them with grace and dramatic effect. He greeted Menachem Begin with the words: "No more war. Let us make peace." Israelis lined the streets of Jerusalem to laud him, waving Egyptian flags. Despite the wide gap between the Egyptian and Israeli positions, Sadat was able to impress even hawks, including Moshe Dayan, with his resolve toward peace. Sadat and the Israeli leadership came away from the episode having breached the psychological wall between them. Their mutual courage and determination would shortly change history.[10]

US President Jimmy Carter sponsored twelve days of talks between the governments of Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin at Camp David in September 1978. The key motivation was the ongoing failure of multilateral talks (the Geneva process) because the Arab powers had conflicting agendas. Begin was open to relinquishing control of the Sinai (despite the fact that the government had established a swath of settlements in the peninsula's northeastern corner), but he refused to consider giving up the West Bank. Thus, an arrangement with Egypt was possible, but not if Jordan, Syria, and the Palestinians were involved, not to mention the USSR—its involvement would complicate the matter by imposing a Cold War dynamic. The bilateral negotiations thus achieved what an international conference could never have approximated: a framework for peace between Israel and Egypt.

Figure 13-4. Sadat, Carter, and Begin (left to right) at Camp David in 1978.

At Camp David on September 17, Sadat and Begin, chaperoned by Carter, reached two agreements, one relating to future Israeli–Egyptian relations and the other to future Israeli–Palestinian relations. The first agreement, called simply Framework, provided for an Israeli–Egyptian peace settlement based on complete Israeli evacuation of the Sinai Peninsula and the establishment of normal relations between the two states, including full diplomatic relations. During the following months, the two sides, pressured by Carter, hammered out the details, and in March 1979, Israel and Egypt signed a peace treaty.

The second agreement reached at Camp David, called Framework for Peace in the Middle East, provided guidelines for the resolution of the Palestinian problem. It provided for the establishment of "full autonomy" for the Arab inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and for transitional arrangements before a comprehensive peace settlement was reached, in which borders and security arrangements would be defined, as well as "the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and their just requirements."

The PLO rejected the Camp David accords. Arafat had not been consulted in developing the framework, but the document spoke of eventual "full autonomy" for the Palestinians in the occupied territories in consultation with Egypt, Israel, Jordan, and the Palestinians.

How could the "Palestinians" participate if not through the PLO, the "sole legitimate representative" of the people? Clearly, the PLO's dysfunction and intransigence had led to it being sidelined by Egypt. Still, the framework represented an opportunity for the Palestinian resistance to attain at least a measure of independence, but Arafat was unable to seize the opportunity. Naturally cautious, he was responsible to too large and diverse a group of colleagues in the PLO, so he lacked the diplomatic flexibility to compromise. He was compelled to take a hard-line stance to maintain his tenuous hold on leadership. He also fundamentally disagreed with any deal that would leave any part of Palestine in Israeli hands. In the end, the UN rejected the Framework for Peace because it did not recognize the Palestinian right of return, acknowledge Palestine's right to national sovereignty, or discuss the fate of Jerusalem.

The peace between Egypt and Israel, along with his crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood, cost Anwar Sadat his life. He was assassinated by Islamic radicals two years later in October 1981. For making peace with Israel, Egypt had its membership in the Arab League suspended for ten years. However, as the Arab world's strongest country, Egypt's move toward peace could not be ignored or wished away. It became yet another unwelcome reality for the Palestinian resistance.

Iranian Revolution and Iran/Iraq War

In January 1979, the Persian monarch Mohammed Reza Shah Pahlavi departed Iran after more than a year of political upheaval, demonstrations, and strikes. Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini returned from fifteen years of exile and, on April 1, was installed as supreme leader of the country. Radicals then stormed the American embassy and took 66 hostages, keeping them captive for 444 days. This unforeseen setback for the United States was a source of encouragement for Arafat because he viewed the sudden revolution as a type and precursor of what would happen in Palestine. He decided to travel to Iran and was welcomed there. The ayatollah's government even assigned the PLO offices in Tehran, seizing the former Israeli embassy for that purpose.

However, the superficial appearance of solidarity between the Shiite theocratic state and the PLO could not disguise the fundamental points of disagreement between the two. Khomeini disapproved of the

leftist nationalism that Arafat's Fatah party espoused and encouraged him instead to embrace Islamic fundamentalism. Arafat, of course, had no intention of moving in that direction. The PLO was to remain a confederation of incompatible ideologies that had in common only two points: hatred of Israel and a desire to build an Arab state in the whole of Palestine.

Additionally, Saddam Hussein's Baathist regime in Iraq elected to seize the opportunity of the Iranian Revolution to invade what he perceived as a weakened country. His goals were to resolve age-old border disputes and to prevent the Shiite revolution from spreading into his own country and inspiring the long-repressed Shia there. As Arafat tried to insert himself into negotiations between the two powers, both sides rejected his interference. For the PLO and Arafat, the war was a disaster that deepened the rift between Shiites and Sunnis and distracted the Arab world from the Palestinian cause. Further, it led directly to increased American involvement in the Middle East—an eventuality that could not but harm Arafat's agenda. Saddam Hussein pressured Arafat into siding with his regime—a decision that became yet another example of Palestinian activists backing the losing side. The Iran/Iraq War would drag on through 1988, when a UN cease-fire was finally accepted by both sides.

The Iranian regime survived the war and grew in both power and influence in the Middle East. As the center of Shi Islam, the theocratic government saw itself as the natural protector of minority Shiite populations within the Sunni powers to the west. This ideology led to Iran's sponsorship of Hizbollah in Lebanon, whose leadership turned decisively against Israel following the 1982 invasion. The continued success of the Iranian revolution and its material support thus gave succor and inspiration to one of the key resistance movements against Israel.

Likewise, Iran found a willing partner in Hamas. This unforeseen friendship crossed confessional lines—in itself a surprising development. Hamas was born of Sunni roots, and it first grew as an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood. However, its singular focus on warring against Israel and eventually liberating Palestine gradually underscored the ideological cleavage between Hamas and the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, whose leadership opted for peaceful competition rather than violent jihad. Iran proved willing and able to sponsor Hamas, whom it saw as a useful proxy to strike at Israel and, indirectly, at the United States.

Expulsion from Lebanon

The PLO continued to make itself known within the borders of Lebanon. In March 1978, fedayeen terrorists based in Lebanon infiltrated by sea into Israel, murdered an American woman, seized a bus, and killed thirty-four Israelis. Israel responded by invading southern Lebanon (Operation Litani) and killing hundreds of PLO fighters. Israel also agreed to the insertion of a special UN force (United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, or UNIFIL) on the Lebanese side of the border to patrol and monitor the area south of the Litani. Between UNIFIL and the Israeli border, the Israelis consolidated what they called a security zone running the length of the border to a depth of some five miles on the Lebanese side, manned by a (mainly) Lebanese Christian proxy force, the South Lebanese army, thus introducing a second layer of security for the Galilee.

Meanwhile, Musa al-Sadr, a theologian and philosopher as well as the spiritual head of the Shiite militia known as Amal, complained that the PLO was terrorizing the Lebanese people and acting like little more than a criminal gang. Arafat himself concluded that his organization's operations in Lebanon were having little effect on Israel and were leading to deeper involvement in Lebanese infighting that would likely work against his goals. In 1981, Fatah changed its strategy and decided to begin recruiting, training, and equipping regular military units to supplement its former guerrilla strategy. In the summer of 1981, the PLO increased its Katyusha rocketing of Israel's northern border settlements, leading to massive Israeli air strikes on its camps in Lebanon and eventually to a US-brokered cease-fire. At the same time, after Phalange–Syrian clashes, the Syrians introduced more than a dozen surface-to-air missile batteries into eastern Lebanon's Bekaa Valley, curtailing the Israeli air force's (IAF)'s freedom of movement over Lebanon.

At the same time, Arab powers led by Saudi Arabia offered a new peace plan that would turn over the occupied territories to a UN force that would create conditions under which a Palestinian authority could assume control. However, Arafat found himself to be ideologically constrained. Because the arrangement implied negotiation with Israel, he could not agree to the plan for fear that radicals within Fatah and the PLO would label him a capitulationist. Another diplomatic stalemate

accentuated the PLO's deteriorating reputation within Lebanon, and by 1982, the group's friends and supporters in the country were few.

On June 3, 1982, Palestinian gunmen from the Abu Nidal faction broke the de facto cease-fire between the PLO and Israel by attempting to assassinate Shlomo Argov, the Israeli ambassador to the United Kingdom. Argov was hit in the head and left paralyzed from the neck down. On June 6, 1982, the IDF invaded with the goal of destroying the PLO's presence in Lebanon. Defense Minister Ariel Sharon hoped that crushing the PLO in Lebanon would facilitate Israeli control over the West Bank and Gaza and, perhaps, smooth the way to Israeli annexation of the territories. He may have hoped that the Palestinians would then shift their gaze to Jordan and try to turn Jordan into a Palestinian state. Few Lebanese intervened against the invading IDF to help the PLO, although the Syrians, with large units in the eastern Bekaa Valley and in Beirut, ended up fighting against the invaders alongside the PLO. The IDF pushed northward and, within a week, reached the outskirts of Beirut and then laid siege to Palestinian–Muslim west Beirut. In the south, the Shiite majority population at first welcomed the Israelis as liberators from the PLO's oppressive presence and behavior. The Israelis, who physically linked up with the Phalange militia east of Beirut, hoped to install Bashir Jemayel as Lebanon's new prime minister and convert Lebanon into an ally in which the Maronite Christians would fully dominate. This would lead to expulsion of the Palestinian refugee communities and of the Syrian military, both longtime aims of Bashir Jemayel.

The two-month siege of West Beirut resulted in Israel attaining its goal of a PLO (and Syrian military) exit from Lebanon (with Arafat and company eventually establishing their new headquarters in Tunis). Immediately after Jemayel's election was engineered, however, he was assassinated by Syrian agents. This led to a brief IDF occupation of West Beirut and a September 16–18 Phalange massacre of six hundred to eight hundred Palestinian civilians in Sabra and Shatila camps in southern Beirut, followed by a world outcry against the Israeli invasion. In Israel, mass protests—including a threat of resignation by President Yitzhak Navon—led to the establishment of a judicial commission of inquiry, which in February 1983 forced the resignation of Defense Minister Sharon and several senior IDF commanders (in effect, they were found remiss in allowing the Phalangists to enter the refugee camps). Begin was not incriminated, but in August 1983, with age, chronic

depression, and the failed war taking their toll, he resigned (to be succeeded by Yitzhak Shamir, his foreign minister and one of the pre-1948 leaders of the Stern Gang).

In the east of the country, the imposition of UN cease-fires resulted in a deadlock between the Syrian army and invading Israeli army (although the Israelis managed to wipe out the Syrians' extensive antiaircraft surface-to-air missile network in the Bekaa). Although unwanted by most Lebanese, the Syrians managed to stay in Lebanon for two more decades. However, starting in September 1982, the IDF was gradually forced the withdraw southward, leaving West Beirut, the Shouf Mountains, and the Bekaa, and, by 1985, had pulled back to the security zone established in 1978 (where it stayed, under Hizbollah harassment, until finally pulling back to the international Israeli–Lebanese frontier in 2000).

Arafat tried desperately to spin the PLO's defeat in Lebanon as a political victory. The reality was that because of corruption, poor discipline, dysfunctional leadership, and erratic policy making, the PLO had run out of friends. Syria was an avowed enemy of Arafat and Fatah. Egypt was banned among Arabs for making peace with Israel. Jordan despised the PLO. No Arab power came to the group's rescue in Lebanon, and only distant Tunisia offered Arafat a place to flee. The PLO's media operations had to operate from Cyprus because no Arab regime wanted to countenance the PLO's disruptive influence. Arafat was now under fire from without and within, as even members of his own Fatah party questioned his ability to lead. His sole remaining source of power was on the streets of Palestinian cities and towns, where he remained a popular figure. However, even that support depended on his continued tough stance and thus limited his diplomatic room for maneuver.

The Reagan Plan and the PLO's Search for Solutions

In September 1982, US President Ronald Reagan's administration proposed a plan to resolve the Palestinian problem. It recommended a deal in which the Palestinians would have local autonomy under Jordanian sovereignty. Initial reaction to the plan was universally poor. Israel rejected it, feeling it would leave the country vulnerable to terrorist bases in the West Bank and Gaza. The PLO and Arab powers likewise rejected it because it was viewed as acquiescing in Israel's existence

and would involve negotiations with the Zionists. In February 1983, the PNC officially rejected the plan. The proposal for a way ahead merely resulted in reiteration of the PLO's hard-line ideology.

Even within the PLO, however, moderate elements were critical of the organization's unrelenting failure over the past ten years. Isam Sartawi, a Fatah moderate, urged leaders to abandon the failed policies of the past, and he reached out, with Arafat's tacit permission, to Israeli doves. Sartawi rejected Fatah propaganda that tried to spin the PLO's failures in Jordan and Lebanon as victories. He jokingly remarked, "Another victory such as this, and the PLO will find itself in the Fiji Islands." When Sartawi tried to resign from the PLO, the Syrian-backed Abu Nidal group murdered him. It seemed that the organization had little capacity for significant and visionary leadership.

Just as in the context of American politics and foreign policy, with the idea that "only Nixon could go to China," so also in the PLO, only Arafat had the political clout to make a major shift in policy. He was to exercise that ability in two surprising moves that nearly cost him his leadership and life.

First, he reopened negotiations with his hated rival, King Hussein of Jordan. Hussein was widely viewed in the region as a puppet of the Americans and the British—an unfair and inaccurate judgment, but one that reflected his openness to Western ideas and initiatives. He tried to push the Reagan plan with Arafat, suggesting that the PLO and Jordan join forces in the interests of the Palestinians in general and the West Bank's population in particular. To avoid aggravating sensitivities, Hussein used language that would leave the exact relationship between the PLO and Jordan vague. Despite his best efforts, the king could not move Arafat toward any constructive solution. Some observers believed that Arafat's only purpose in engaging in the negotiations was to keep Jordan from making a deal with Israel. All the effort accomplished was to strengthen the hand of Arafat's hard-line critics against him.

The problem remained that, in the words of the PLO's own magazine in November 1982, "the confirmation of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people contradicts the existence of the Zionist state." Thus, in the face of repeated failures and without any real prospect of a turnaround in their fortunes, the PLO's leaders found themselves immobilized by their own absolutist rhetoric. They were structurally incapable of compromise. Indeed, the hard-liners went so far as to ally

themselves fully with Syria in response to Arafat's attempt to negotiate with Jordan. Hafez al-Assad made a bid to take over the PLO at a time when the PFLP and PDFLP, both headquartered in Damascus, had turned against Arafat and suspended their relationships with the PLO. Abu Musa, a senior Fatah leader, joined the revolt against his erstwhile ally. In May 1983, the attempted rebellion came to a head, but Arafat was able to retain his position because the rank-and-file constituents on the street believed in him. He successfully isolated his opponents by equating their efforts to destroy him with what Israel tried to do in Lebanon. His opponents' lack of political skill among the masses doomed their efforts, and Arafat remained in power. The Syrians and their Palestinian allies removed Arafat and the PLO from their last toehold in Lebanon, in the northern city of Tripoli, in December 1983.

Arafat thereupon made a second significant shift in policy: he turned to Egypt and met with President Hosni Mubarak. His critics decried the move, insisting that he was committing treason by meeting with the villainous Arabs who had made peace with the enemy. By this time, though, his main opponents had become known by allying with Syria and shedding Palestinian blood. Despite his Egyptian move, Arafat maintained his position, and those few hard-liners still with him were able to convince his followers that they would prevent Arafat from making concessions to the United States or Israel.

Wither the PLO?

By 1984, there were three seemingly irreconcilable factions within the PLO: Arafat and his Fatah allies; the Syrian-backed rebels who fashioned themselves the Palestinian National Front; and the Democratic Alliance of the PFLP, PDFLP, and their allies who looked to Iraq for support. More and more, Arafat began to look for diplomatic options because his continuous armed struggle seemed to be capable of nothing but failure. However, diplomacy requires an ability and willingness to compromise and make deals, which neither Arafat nor the PLO as a whole was yet ready to do. He again refused to work with King Hussein, primarily because he did not want to become a client of either Jordan or the United States. Arafat was loath to attempt to mend fences with Syria, and Assad in turn despised him. Instead, Arafat kept to the PLO's hard-line rhetoric.

In 1985, King Hussein declared that there was an historic opportunity to achieve peace and to advance the cause of the Palestinians. The dovish Shimon Peres, prime minister of Israel, was to remain in power until his replacement by the more hard-line Yitzhak Shamir the following year. He wanted to work a deal with Israel before it was too late, and to that end, he convinced Arafat to sign an agreement calling for an exchange of land for peace, in accordance with the principles of Resolution 242. Predictably, the hard-liners in the PLO torpedoed the deal by forcing negotiations down a narrow, inflexible path. In turn, they rejected each Jordanian proposal: adherence to Resolution 242, a PLO–Jordanian federation, a joint delegation that would include PLO and non-PLO members, and finally, the prospect of agreeing to peace with Israel.

The PLO's internal dynamics thus doomed any deal, and to add to King Hussein's troubles, Syrian President Assad waged a campaign of terror against both Jordan and the PLO to weaken them and to derail any attempt at peace. Syria's proxy in Lebanon, the Shiite militia Amal, continually attacked the PLO and inflicted even greater civilian casualties than at Sabra and Shatila. The more the PLO's strength waned, the more Arafat felt compelled to deal with Hussein.

However, trying to negotiate a deal with the United States, let alone Israel, would be daunting. The American preference was for a bilateral deal between Israel and Jordan/PLO, with the United States mediating. The Arabs, however, wanted an international conference and full UN participation because they believed they would have more allies and thus a stronger position in that venue. The United States was worried that more participants meant a stalemate, and they rejected the idea of letting Moscow into the proceedings. There was also the troublesome issue of who would compose the PLO delegation in any proceedings. Arafat wanted his own PLO officials to dominate the meetings, but the United States and Israel wanted a broader representation of Palestinians. The PLO was faced with, from its perspective, an impossible choice between either sharing control of the Palestinian resistance with other, more moderate representatives or instead moderating its own position vis-à-vis Israel. It accepted neither alternative.

Instead, the PLO continued to use terror. Fatah's secret armed unit Force-17 was discovered transporting explosives for missions in Palestine and Western Europe. In September 1985, Force-17 agents murdered three Israeli tourists in Cyprus. The IDF retaliated by bombing

PLO offices in Tunis, killing several key officials, and reaction from the Western powers was that Israel was justified in defending itself. The PLO was losing whatever moral high ground it once claimed to own.

On October 7, four gunmen from the Palestine Liberation Front (led by Abu al-Abbas) hijacked the Italian cruise ship *Achille Lauro* off Egypt's waters and took the crew and passengers hostage. When Syria refused to allow the commandeered ship to dock at one of its ports, the perpetrators murdered a sixty-nine-year-old wheelchair-bound Jewish man, Leon Klinghoffer, and threw him overboard. Eventually, the hijackers released the ship in exchange for safe passage, but when their aircraft departed Egypt, American jets from the Sixth Fleet intercepted it and forced it to land in Sicily, where the Italian authorities detained the hijackers but allowed Abu al-Abbas to depart.

The *Achille Lauro* incident illustrated that international powers, including Arab and West European nations, disliked associating with the PLO but likewise feared the group enough to defy the United States. When this latest terrorist behavior attracted unwanted infamy, Arafat finally came around to a decision he had been considering for nearly a decade, and he foreswore further terror attacks outside of Palestine. The United States was unimpressed, insisting that terror anywhere was unacceptable. The PLO's hard-liners, including Abu Iyad, replied that giving in to international pressure would equate to capitulation to Israel, and the organization would never do that.

Once again, Arafat and the PLO let slip an opportunity to achieve Palestinian autonomy in the occupied territories. King Hussein finally abandoned any attempt to rope Arafat into the process in 1986, instead moving to assert his own influence and control in the West Bank. The Palestinian resistance seemed increasingly to be in the hands of an organization that was inept, corrupt, internally divided, and utterly unable to achieve anything for the people it alleged to represent.

Instead of accomplishing autonomy for Palestine, Arafat focused his energy instead on repairing relations with George Habash and Nayef Hawatmah, leaders of the PFLP and PDFLP, respectively. With Moscow's assistance, Fatah worked out an agreement with the two groups that brought them back into the fold of the PLO. The essence of the agreement was the abandonment of a course that might lead to a negotiated agreement with Israel or the United States. The organization even began to cooperate with the PIJ, a fundamentalist group with ties

to the Muslim Brotherhood. Thus, in the name of unity, the PLO was to remain, for the time being, an irresolute and loose confederation unable to find a feasible solution that would improve the lives of or achieve the objectives of the people it represented.

In response to the strategic impasse, the Palestinian people themselves, increasingly frustrated with the PLO's lack of progress, began to assert themselves, rather than leaving the initiative in the hands of people who did not even reside in Palestine. Palestinian leaders who lived in the West Bank and Gaza began to realize that they had more practical experience living under the occupation and dealing with the Israelis on a daily basis than the PLO could ever have. They began to remind the vaunted, famous revolutionary leaders that their entire purpose was to represent the Palestinian people, not further their own careers and fatten their foreign bank accounts. The native leaders who emerged among the middle class tended to favor more moderate goals than the unrealistic expectation that Israel would be destroyed.

The other manifestation of the growing dissatisfaction was the rise of fundamentalist Islam. Popular especially among the lower classes, Islamic leaders tied the problem of liberation to the need for Islam to rule over what was once a part of the caliphate. Through a patient strategy of building social services and developing a religiously indoctrinated constituency, Islamic leaders were poised to present a serious challenge to the PLO's secularism for control of the Palestinian resistance.

LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, AND COMMAND AND CONTROL

Key leaders within the Palestinian resistance during this period included Yasser Arafat (Fatah), George Habash (PFLP), Ahmad Jibril (PFLP-GC), and Nayef Hawatmah (PDFLP), described in chapter 12. Other important leaders also emerged or were active at this time.

Salah Khalaf (also known as Abu Iyad) was the second most senior Fatah leader and headed the secretive Black September group under Arafat. He described the group's purpose: "to make the world feel that the [Palestinian] people exist." The organization also served to satisfy the emotional demands for action from younger fedayeen who had little appetite for diplomacy, planning, and administration. Khalaf became a member of the Muslim Brotherhood during his sojourn at

the Dar al-Ulum teacher's college in Cairo, where he also met Arafat in 1951. After some years teaching in Gaza, he moved to Kuwait where he became a founder of Fatah.

Sheikh Ahmed Yassin continued to lay the groundwork for the emergence of Hamas during the First Intifada. Yassin was an inspiring and beloved theologian who had been raised as a refugee in Gaza and was paralyzed in an accident and confined to a wheelchair for the rest of his life. He was an ideological disciple of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and believed that the solution to the problem of Israel was a spiritual return to the purity of Islam. He spent decades building up his organization in Gaza and focused on the proliferation of social services to win the people's devotion and to guide them into obedience to the faith.

Dr. Mahmoud Zahar graduated from the Cairo University faculty of medicine and, five years later, received his master's degree in general surgery from Ain Shams University, Cairo. Zahar became a hard-line Islamist and eventually cofounded Hamas during the First Intifada.

Armed Component

During the Lebanese Civil War, Syria used the PLA as a proxy force against the PLO, but the organization suffered mass defections when Palestinian soldiers refused to fight against their brothers. When the IDF invaded in 1982, the Israeli army effectively destroyed the PLA.

IDEOLOGY

The 1980s saw the rise of Islamist movements—primarily Hamas and PIJ—as the chief rivals against Fatah and the PLO for control of the Palestinian people. For years, the Islamists had bided their time and focused their efforts on building networks among the people of Gaza and the West Bank and on staying out of Israel's crosshairs. However, with the PLO's expulsion from Lebanon, Islamist leaders saw an opportunity to expand their reach and influence among the people.

Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, a refugee from the 1948 war, was an educator and theologian who became the chief organizer and spiritual leader of Islamists in Gaza. He was convinced that the best hope for resistance against Israel was to cultivate a deep faith among Palestinians and to

retrain the secularized youth in the tenets of their religion. He founded al-Mujamma' al-Islami (The Islamic Center) and attracted a generation of Islamists who would lead Hamas later, including Mahmoud Zahar, Abdel Aziz Rantissi, Ibrahim Yazouri, and others. Yassin's growing network of mosques, schools, teachers, theologians, and others bent its efforts to providing education, medical treatment, food, shelter, clothing, summer camps, and a host of other social services, with the dual aim of improving the lives and religious loyalty of the people but also winning their support for the organization that would become Hamas.

Arafat and the PLO regarded the Islamists with contempt, claiming that they could never pose a serious threat to the PLO's rule, primarily because they had not been involved in most of the struggle against Israel. Arafat reasoned that the Palestinian people would regard Fatah as the true hero of the revolution against Israel and its international partners while dismissing the Islamists as anachronistic and passive. They likewise accused the Islamists of being complicit with Israel against the PLO and put forth their belief that Israel had armed the Islamists, hoping they would fight against their own people.[11]

LEGITIMACY

As detailed in the historical narrative, the competition for legitimacy was a central factor in the development of the Palestinian resistance. The four Arab powers—Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and Iraq—each fought to become the legitimate parent of the Palestinian resistance. Likewise, Fatah and the PLO advanced their cause with the aim of becoming the sole legitimate representatives of the Palestinians. Within the PLO, each constituent group simultaneously struggled to become the dominant faction by either relying on a strong Arab sponsor or grabbing headlines with spectacular acts of terror. After 1967, Fatah and the PLO achieved steps toward being viewed as legitimate, but their war for legitimacy within the international arena, among the world's Arabs, among the Palestinians themselves, and within the PLO was never truly won.

ENDNOTES

1 Chaim Herzog, *The Arab–Israeli Wars: War and Peace in the Middle East* (New York: Vintage Books, 1984), 225–238.

2 Ibid., 239–306.

3 Barry Rubin, *Revolution until Victory? The Politics and History of the PLO* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), 46–47.

4 Ibid., 47.

5 Ibid.

6 Herzog, *Arab–Israeli Wars*; Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist–Arab Conflict, 1881–2001* (New York: Vintage Books, 2001), 383–385.

7 Rubin, *Revolution until Victory?*, 49.

8 Ari Shavit, *My Promised Land: The Triumph and Tragedy of Israel* (New York: Spiegel & Grau, 2013), 201–225.

9 Morris, *Righteous Victims*, 444–477.

10 Martin Gilbert, *Israel: A History* (New York: Morrow, 1998), 489.

11 Beverley Milton-Edwards and Stephen Farrell, *Hamas* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2010).

CHAPTER 14.
THE FIRST INTIFADA, 1987–1993

Our masses, in the name of our Palestinian people . . . who have made precious sacrifices represented by the martyrdom of scores of their most beloved sons and daughters, the thousands of detainees, the hundreds of injured. . . . We affirm the determination of the people and the masses of the glorious uprising to foil all plots regardless of the different masks used by those behind them.

—Unified National Command of the Intifada: Call No. 6, February 4, 1988

The First Intifada was a spontaneous uprising that occurred in the West Bank and Gaza independent of any prior planning by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) or its constituent groups. Indeed, the sudden disruption among the people who the PLO was charged to represent caught the organization's leadership flat-footed and unprepared. Fatah, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PDFLP), the smaller groups, and the surrounding Arab powers had to scramble to adjust to events, and the PLO had to struggle for "ownership" of the uprising. The First Intifada witnessed a decisive shift in power over the Palestinian resistance from the exclusive and ineffective control of the PLO to a more balanced (and effective) power sharing—however unwilling—between the PLO and Palestinian leaders within the occupied territories. The upheaval cost a considerable number of Palestinian lives, but it generated a shift in mindset and behavior among both Palestinians and Israelis, paving the way for the Oslo Accords during the 1990s.

The First Intifada also gave decisive rise to Islamist leadership among the Palestinians, and Hamas entered the stage as a serious challenge to Fatah's control of the resistance. However, the more immediate Muslim contender was the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) led by Fathi Shiqaqi and Sheikh Abdel Aziz Auda. From the mid-1980s, PIJ, drawing inspiration from the Iranian Revolution, launched armed attacks against Israel as an expression of its belief that liberation had to emanate from armed jihad.

TIMELINE

1987	Hamas, the Islamic Resistance Movement, forms.
December 8, 1987	The First Intifada begins.
1988	Hamas publishes its covenant.
1988	Yasser Arafat declares Palestinian "independence" and appears to renounce terrorism and to accept Israel's right to exist.

1989	Hamas conducts its first attacks against Israeli military targets; Israel outlaws Hamas and imprisons Sheikh Yassin.
1990–1991	During the Gulf War, the PLO alienates Arab powers and Gulf State funding partners by allying with Saddam Hussein; Hamas refuses to ally with Hussein.
1991	During the Madrid Peace Conference with Israel, Jordan, Syria, and a Palestinian delegation, Hamas denounces the peace initiative and announces establishment of Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades, the military wing of Hamas.
September 13, 1993	Israel and the PLO sign the Declaration of Principles, initiating a process designed to lead to a final settlement; Hamas rejects the Oslo Accords and escalates attacks on Israel.

ORIGINS AND COURSE OF THE RESISTANCE

On December 6, 1987, an Israeli soldier shopping in Gaza was stabbed to death. On December 8, an Israeli truck rammed into a car at the Erez Crossing, killing four Palestinians. Rumors quickly circulated that the events were related and that the "accident" was a deliberate act of vengeance by Israel. Protests and demonstrations commenced and spread throughout the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip as well as Jerusalem. The following day, anti-Israeli rioting—stone- and Molotov-cocktail-throwing incidents—began in the Jibalya refugee camp in Gaza. When a Palestinian teenager threw a Molotov cocktail during the upheaval, Israeli forces fired on him, killing him. Riots ensued throughout the area.[1]

The following week saw mass demonstrations, rock throwing, tire burning, and road blockages—first in Gaza and later in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. On December 12, Palestinians detonated a gasoline bomb near the US consulate in East Jerusalem (there were no injuries.) The violence spread, and as the PLO gradually accommodated itself to events, the intifada became better organized and planned. The uprising lasted until the 1991 Madrid Conference, but the violence did not abate fully until the advent of the Oslo Accords in 1993.

Although the intifada was characterized as "unarmed," there were numerous incidents of violence as Palestinians threw thousands of Molotov cocktails as well as occasional grenades. Operatives also used guns and explosives in planned attacks. Most of the violence, though, featured rock throwing, which became a sort of symbol of the romantic heroism of a repressed David (the Palestinians) defying the gigantic Goliath (Israel). Palestinian attackers targeted both soldiers and civilians, killing eleven and sixteen, respectively, in the first several years and injuring thousands. The Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) and police in turn killed about eleven hundred Palestinians in trying to control the uprising. The PLO and other rebels murdered between eight hundred and one thousand Palestinians they identified as collaborators.

The intifada also featured acts of civil disobedience, including strikes and boycotts of the Israeli Civil Administration and businesses. Other forms of disobedience included work stoppages in Israeli settlements (which were built by mostly Arab laborers), refusal to pay taxes, erection of barricades, and graffiti. Beyond the catalyzing events that initiated the intifada, the Palestinian people were angry at the Israeli occupation in general; the stagnated peace process; and Israel's use of deportations, illegal killings, home demolition, and imprisonment. The Palestinian population in the occupied territories was growing. Underlying the frustration on the street was increasing impatience with the PLO's leadership. Israeli historian Benny Morris described the ongoing occupation as "a brutal and mortifying experience for the occupied" and "founded on brute force, repression and fear, collaboration and treachery, beatings and torture chambers, and daily intimidation, humiliation, and manipulation."[2]

The other thorny problem that contributed to the violence was the rapidly growing Israeli settlements in the territories. From 1984 through 1988, the settler population doubled from more than thirty thousand to more than sixty thousand. By the 1990s, the number had reached one hundred and thirty thousand. The decision to allow, encourage, sponsor, and defend settlers in the territories seized during the 1967 war was the most controversial and determinative aspect of Israeli governance regarding the intifada and events afterward. Some within Israel pointed to the settlements as illegal, ill advised, and destructive to the nation's integrity and democratic ideals. Others insisted that the settlements were justified because the West Bank corresponds to lands that were, until the second century, the Jewish lands of Judea and Samaria.

Further, advocates claimed the occupied territories should belong to Israel to make the country defensible by providing strategic depth. Israeli settlements since 1967 attracted unremitting international condemnation but some support as well, mostly from among right-wing Americans. The salient issue remained: if Israel was promoting settlements in the West Bank, it was a clear indication that it had no real intention of withdrawing in favor of a Palestinian state. Instead, the settlements would require that the West Bank be divided and apportioned to accommodate the various Israeli and Palestinian populations.

As the PLO's various factions assumed leadership of the intifada, their chief rivals were Islamic groups—mainly Hamas and the PIJ. The Islamists had been laying the groundwork for their bid for control of the Palestinian resistance for years through patient indoctrination in mosques and through effective social services. They were able to exploit the Palestinians' long-felt frustration with corruption and inefficiency among the PLO leadership's elite.

A unique feature of the First Intifada was the decision to generally refrain from armed violence and, at least initially, to avoid attacks against Israeli settlers. The rationale was that the use of weapons would invite disproportionate violence from the Israelis and would harm Palestinian fortunes in subsequent peace talks. Unarmed resistance also had the benefit of winning sympathy from the international community and among Israeli doves. However, the nonlethal strategy would continue to test the PLO's leadership of the masses, and eventually the Islamists departed from the policy, widening the rift between them and the PLO.

Another innovation during the intifada was the leadership's ability to simultaneously prepare for compromise and peace talks and still continue to use rhetoric calling for extreme outcomes such as the liberation of all of Palestine. In part, the publicly proclaimed objectives served two functions. First, they appeased the radical factions (both within the PLO and the Islamists) by staying true to their extremist ideals. Second, they served as diplomatic leverage against Israel by holding up the possibility of extreme positions if the Israelis were not forthcoming on a reasonable peace deal.

The Founding of Hamas

During the first six months of the intifada, Israeli authorities largely ignored Hamas because their focus was on the PLO. Hamas leaders, drawing on the influence they had garnered over years of patient networking at mosques and through provision of social services, gathered their strength and, through speeches and printed media, began to publicize that they had no interest in peace negotiations but instead intended to fight the occupation by force of arms. They proclaimed that their aim was the victory of Islam over the infidel invaders of Palestine, not merely the Palestine's achievement of a quasi state.[3]

By summer 1988, they had issued their covenant, also known as the Hamas charter. It quoted some of the more bellicose anti-Jewish language found in the Koran, and it drew from such dubious sources as *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and similar conspiracy literature. The charter insists that all negotiation is in vain and that jihad is the only legitimate means of wresting control of Palestine away from the Zionists and their infidel supporters. As is typically the case for an embryonic insurgency, the charter is extremist, absolutist, and uncompromising. In the years since the charter's publication, Hamas has had to struggle to justify, minimize, and explain it away, but as of this writing, the group has not modified it. The ideology expressed in the document immediately pitted Hamas against both Israel and the PLO.[4]

During the first two years of the intifada, however, Hamas and Israel were not in reality the mortal enemies they grew to be. At first, Israeli leaders were pleased to see the rise of Islamism among the Palestinians because they believed (rightly) that the ideology would draw people and support away from Arafat, Fatah, and the PLO. Hamas benefited from its tacit relationship with Israel because Israeli authorities often looked the other way regarding Hamas's funding activities while simultaneously clamping down on the PLO at every opportunity. However, as the intifada dragged on, Hamas began to see this semicooperation as a potential problem. Its detractors insisted that Hamas was not anti-Zionist enough, while the PLO had a long record of fighting Israel. Thus, as the conflict went on, Hamas hardened not just its rhetoric but its actual policy against the Zionists. Sheikh Yassin was arrested along with other leaders and rank-and-file members after Hamas's murder of Israeli soldiers in early 1989.[5]

Still, Hamas's chief enemy during the intifada was Fatah. Because strikes were one of the most effective tactics of the resistance during the uprising, the two factions competed in organizing, calling for, and enforcing them. Not only did the strikes and resulting work stoppages show the world a facade of unity among the Palestinians, but also control of the strikes implied leadership.

As the intifada dragged on, leaders and the rank and file showed signs of frustration and desperation to find resolution. In their anger, they increased the number of attacks against suspected collaborators, eventually killing eight hundred or more. Yasser Arafat endeavored to justify the killings and stated that the leadership investigated the executions that took place, finding nearly all of them justified. The few "innocents" the Palestinians murdered were hailed as martyrs in the uprising. A remarkable feature of the execution of collaborators was that Arafat and other leaders were able to retain their respectability among their supporters in the international community, despite their endorsement of extralegal executions.

On August 2, 1990, Iraq invaded Kuwait, initiating a series of events that would lead to an American-led coalition liberation of Kuwait and an invasion of Iraq. Yasser Arafat committed a grave strategic blunder by endorsing Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein's move. Arafat's decision alienated the Gulf States, one of Fatah's longtime sources of finances. Just as the Grand Mufti Haj Amin al-Husseini had backed the loser of World War II, so Arafat aligned himself with Saddam Hussein's failed enterprise. Arafat's enemies, including Hamas, would reap the reward of his miscalculation because Arafat had set himself against the United States and most of the world.

In the final years of the First Intifada, the Palestinians grew more violent and their attacks more lethal. In October 1990, riots on the Temple Mount resulted in Israelis killing twenty-two Palestinians, and the demonstrators responded by stabbing to death four Israelis in the weeks that followed. In 1992, Hamas agents kidnapped an Israeli soldier and demanded the release of Sheikh Ahmed Yassin for his return. When Israel refused, they murdered the soldier, whose body was soon discovered. Outrage throughout Israel propelled the government into action, and it rounded up around four hundred men believed to be members of Hamas and PIJ. The men were deported into Israel's security zone in Lebanon and left to languish in tents on a snowy hilltop, despite international protests. The resulting international attention

brought renewed support for Hamas among the Palestinian people, but there was a wide gulf between Hamas and the people they aspired to lead in their attitudes toward the prospect of peace.

Israeli Government Countermeasures[6]

The government of Israel had settled on harsh measures—the "iron fist"—for curbing nationalist sentiments in the occupied territories long before the intifada began. Under Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin, the Israelis used deportations, arrests, harsh treatment of prisoners, curfews, and home demolitions to deter demonstrations and uprisings. However, as the conflict widened, they quickly adapted to media exploitation of their overreaction and worked to find methods that would discourage Palestinian actions while avoiding blowback from the Palestinians, Israeli domestic population, and the international community.

The use of lethal countermeasures proved generally unproductive. Deaths led to public funerals, which in turn led to more mass demonstrations. Rabin responded by employing a policy of "might, power, and beatings" with the intent of strongarming the demonstrators (in many cases, Palestinian youths) without resorting to bloodshed. The Israelis also imposed various curfews and at times cut off offending communities from food, water, and electricity. When Palestinians refused to pay taxes, the government responded with confiscations and destruction of agricultural property. The Israelis also closed schools as a way of collective punishment against the Palestinian youth. In response, leaders of the resistance established a network of underground schools.

The Israelis monitored the course of the intifada carefully and used robust intelligence and analysis to determine who was leading the uprising. Often, they would respond to provocations by arresting key public figures and keeping them detained for long periods. Sometimes, however, their response was more severe. On April 16, 1988, Israeli commandos raided a PLO headquarters in Tunis and assassinated Abu Jihad, the PLO's main coordinator of the intifada.

Palestinian boycotts angered Israeli officials, and Yitzhak Rabin responded by directing the imposition of heavy fines, confiscation of goods, and expropriation of private property.

Israel's countermeasure strategy included the age-old technique of divide and conquer. Officials recognized early the conflicting

ideologies and agendas of Hamas and the PLO, and they viewed the infighting favorably because it had the potential to weaken the PLO. The government, including Rabin, met with Hamas agents and, as late as 1989, allowed Hamas to operate relatively unmolested unless the group resorted to violence. In February of that year, however, a Hamas cell murdered two Israeli soldiers, and all tacit cooperation ceased. Israel cracked down, rounded up some three hundred Hamas members, and stopped all communication with the insurgent group.

The United Nations and Israel

The United Nations (UN) General Assembly and the UN Security Council (UNSC) scrutinized the disproportionate casualty figures during the intifada. In January 1988, the UNSC passed Resolution 607, insisting that the Geneva Convention of 1949 protected civilians during times of war and that Israel must cease deporting Palestinians from the occupied territories. When Israel continued to deport activists, it repeated its condemnation later that month in Resolution 608, from which the United States abstained. Later in the year, the General Assembly further condemned Israeli actions, with a large majority endorsing the finding.

After the Temple Mount riot in October 1990, the UNSC passed Resolution 672, condemning Israel's killing of twenty-two Palestinians and resolving to send a delegation to investigate. The resolution also reiterated the ideals of Resolutions 242 and 338 (land for peace) and urged Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories. Israel refused the delegation, claiming that the UNSC's actions were one-sided, in that it did not attempt to investigate incidents in which Israelis were killed at the Wailing Wall. The UNSC thereupon passed Resolution 673, condemning Israel's refusal. The secretary general, Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, authored a report on the incident, which was included as part of a later resolution.

The First Intifada was characterized by the initiative of the Palestinian people themselves, independent of sponsorship by external Arab powers. The collective action implied a sort of national identity among the participants and demonstrated an imperfect but largely effective self-governance during the affair. The uprising promoted a strengthening of political and national consciousness among the Palestinian

masses in the territories and outside Palestine, including among members of Israel's own Arab minority, who increasingly referred to themselves as Palestinians instead of Israeli Arabs. In July 1988, Jordan finally severed its administrative and legal links to the West Bank in favor of the PLO. King Hussein explained the move by saying his intent was to clear the way for the PLO to exercise control. As the international community turned decidedly against Israel and the United States moved to recognize the PLO, the Israeli government found itself facing the prospect of carrying on without any allies. Under pressure from Israeli citizens as well, the government grew more amenable to negotiating toward an end to the conflict.

The Madrid Conference

The administration of US President George H. W. Bush aimed at restarting the peace process after the American-led victory over Iraq during Operation Desert Storm in 1991. Since the end of the Reagan administration, the Americans had signaled to the Israelis that patience was growing thin, and Israel would have to make a move toward a comprehensive and fair resolution of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. To that end, Bush put forward his intention to begin negotiations at the Madrid Conference, and the USSR, though distracted by its own impending disintegration, signed on to the effort as well.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir (Likud) maintained his pro-settler policy in the run-up to the Madrid Conference, and he attempted unsuccessfully to maneuver President Bush into agreeing to guarantee loans of eleven billion dollars. Israel was seeking these lower cost loans from American and international banks to finance the absorption of hundreds of thousands of Russian Jews recently freed by Moscow to immigrate to Israel. Despite strong support among pro-Israel American constituents, Bush delayed the loans and threatened to cancel them outright if Israel did not commit to peace talks. Shamir backed down and agreed to meet in Madrid.

The purpose of the meeting was to restart the peace process by initiating a dual-track strategy consisting of (1) a series of bilateral negotiations aimed at achieving peace between Israel and the Palestinians and between Israel and its Arab neighbors Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon and (2) multilateral negotiations that would aim at resolving the key

issues in the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. Talks between the Israeli and Jordanian delegations demonstrated the beginning of a thaw in the relationship, but the Israelis "negotiating" with the PLO were cold and uncooperative toward the process.

While the Madrid Conference proceeded, rejectionist elements within the PLO (the PFLP, Nayef Hawatmah, and others), along with Hamas and PIJ, railed against the whole process. The PLO and Hamas took to the streets, and fistfights and occasional gunfire erupted in the West Bank and Gaza. Iran sponsored a conference of rejectionists and likewise denounced the Madrid Conference.

Arafat and the PLO made an attempt to politically absorb Hamas by offering the organization representation within the Palestine National Council (PNC). Hamas responded by insisting on 40 percent of the seats and guarantees that the council would never recognize Israel—preconditions that the PLO could not accept. Having failed at reaching a political deal, the two factions returned to the streets to fight it out.

As a precondition for continuing bilateral and multilateral negotiations, Israel demanded a revocation of UN Resolution 3379, which, in 1975, had condemned Zionism as racism. With the breakup of the Warsaw Pact and the crumbling of the Soviet bloc, the Palestinians could no longer command a significant majority within the UN to resist the Israeli demand. Consequently, in the run-up to the Madrid Conference, President Bush delivered a speech to the UN calling for the revocation, insisting in his address that Israel had remained a member in good standing and that Zionism was the force that created the State of Israel. The measure passed easily.

In June 1992, Likud was bounced out of power by a resurgent Labor Party. Yitzhak Rabin's party worked out a coalition with the leftist Meretz Party and cemented a narrow majority by bringing ultra-Orthodox Shas into the fold.

The Oslo Accords

After the Madrid Conference, an Israeli academic, Yair Hirschfield, arranged to meet the PLO's finance minister, Abu Alaa, in London. From the perspective of the new Israeli Labor government under Yitzhak Rabin, the resulting meetings were unauthorized, and he placed little confidence in them. However, subsequent talks in Oslo

produced a Declaration of Principles that called for Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and eventually from the West Bank and a gradual transition to Palestinian self-government. Although it failed to bring about a resolution of the conflict, the declaration was useful in defining roles and demonstrating that dialogue could occur. It likewise created the Palestine Authority and led to limited autonomy in the occupied territories. However, reactionary trends from both sides doomed the process and, in the end, led the participants back to violence.[7]

As the talks proceeded, the Rabin government cracked down on Islamists operating in the West Bank after the murder of eight Israeli soldiers. Israeli forces rounded up some 1,600 Islamists and deported 415 members of Hamas and PIJ. Yasser Arafat condemned the action and temporarily suspended the PLO's participation in the Madrid talks (but not the Oslo back channel), but he likely was pleased that Israel had strengthened his hand against his Islamist rivals. In the spring of 1993, Hamas and PIJ commenced new terror attacks, and Rabin responded by sealing off the territories from Israel, which thwarted further terrorist infiltration but also left thousands of Palestinian workers unemployed.

The guiding principle of the Oslo Accords was UNSC Resolution 242 and 338, which were based on land for peace after the 1967 Six-Day War. Hence, to lend substance to the Oslo process, Israel would have to withdraw from conquered territories—principally the Gaza Strip, West Bank, and East Jerusalem—and the PLO would have to both renounce violence and demonstrate its ability to maintain peace.

The secret Oslo talks continued, and Rabin's government eventually agreed to participate officially. A deputy foreign minister carried on the negotiation with Abu Alaa, and in the summer of 1993, Rabin and Arafat exchanged letters indirectly. Arafat's letter stated that the PLO recognized Israel's right to exist in peace and security, promised to stop using terrorism and violence of all kinds, and promised to revise the PLO charter to bring it in line with the Oslo Accords. Rabin's letter back to Arafat stated that, in light of the PLO's commitments, the government of Israel recognized the PLO as a representative of the Palestinian people. Shimon Peres, Rabin's foreign secretary and longtime rival, continued the difficult negotiations through his agents and secured US President Bill Clinton's assistance in formalizing the agreement with a ceremony on the White House lawn. On September 13, 1993, the

agreement on the Declaration of Principles was signed, and Rabin and Arafat shook hands.

Figure 14-1. Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat shake hands after agreeing to the Oslo I Accord.

Oslo I

The Oslo I Accord was entitled "Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements," referring to the plan to institute a form of local autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza. The document called for Israel to withdraw from Gaza and a part of the West Bank, including Jericho. It also provided for elections among the Palestinians and a staged movement toward self-government and autonomy. The PLO would renounce terrorism, remove the language in its charter calling for Israel's destruction, and recognize Israel's right to exist.

Hamas and PIJ realized that the majority of Palestinians welcomed the diplomatic breakthrough, so they crafted their terrorist strategy accordingly. They began a series of terrorist strikes designed to goad the Israeli hawks into action, thereby pressuring Rabin's government. If Israelis were to respond to the attacks too harshly, the resulting violence might torpedo the peace process.

However, the peace negotiations proceeded, and the Palestinian Authority (PA) was created. The plan called for a gradual shift of responsibility for the economy and security from the Israelis to the PA over a period of three years. At the same time, both parties would work toward achieving a withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Gaza Strip and

Jericho area, concurrent with the PLO creating a Palestinian police force that would restrain terrorist elements within its territory.

As the First Intifada gradually subsided, there appeared to be hope for peace for many on both sides of the conflict who sincerely looked for a solution. However, the insurgent elements opposed to the process had no intention of acquiescing. Israeli hard-liners, including the settlers and their political backers, did not want to leave the occupied territories. The Islamist resistance—Hamas and PIJ—had no interest in either negotiating with Israel or endorsing Arafat's betrayal of the cause. It remained to be seen whether the forces for peace could restrain their fellow citizens.

LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, AND COMMAND AND CONTROL

During the First Intifada, the PLO had to deal not only with its longlived problem of internal division but also with the emergence of two new sources of competition for leadership of the Palestinian resistance: local leaders in the occupied territories and Islamists.

Emergence of Local Leadership

Among the more notable and influential leaders were Hanan Ashrawi, Faisal Husseini, and Haidar Abdel-Shafi.

Hanan Daoud Khalil Ashrawi was born in Nablus in 1946. Her parents were Christian Palestinians, and her father was one of the founders of the PLO. Her family was forced to flee to Jordan during the 1948 war, but in 1950, they resettled in Ramallah. Ashrawi was educated at the American University in Beirut and received her bachelor's and master's degrees there. During the Six-Day War, she was banned from reentering Palestine and instead traveled abroad, eventually earning her doctorate in literature from the University of Virginia. She rejoined her family in 1973. She became an activist for human rights, women's rights, and the Palestinian resistance. She went on to establish and lead the English Department at Birzeit University near Ramallah.

During the intifada, she joined the Intifada Political Committee. She served as the official spokesperson for the Palestinian Delegation to the Middle East peace process.

Faisal Husseini was born in Baghdad in 1940 and was related to the Husseini clan and to Haj Amin al-Husseini, the former grand mufti. He helped to found the General Union of Palestinian Students in 1959. He joined both the PLO and the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA) in the 1960s. During the First Intifada, the Israelis arrested Husseini several times, but he emerged as a spokesman for the Jerusalem National Council and later helped lead the Palestinian delegation to the Madrid Conference. He was a member of Fatah.

Haidar Abdel-Shafi was born in Gaza in 1919. He studied medicine at the American University of Beirut and there met George Habash, joining his Arab National Movement (ANM). He served as a physician for refugees and troops during the 1947–1948 war and later studied in the United States before returning to Palestine in 1954. He practiced medicine as a surgeon and became friends with Nasser while in Gaza. In the early 1960s, he chaired the Palestinian Legislative Council for two years and helped to found the PLO. He went on to serve on the PLO Executive Committee and was a leading PLO figure in Gaza. After the Six-Day War, Israeli authorities noted Abdel-Shafi's affinity for the PFLP and deported him twice, in 1969 and 1970. He founded the Palestinian Red Crescent in Gaza but fell afoul of the emerging Islamist leaders there, and they burned his clinic in 1981.

Toward the end of the intifada, Dr. Abdel-Shafi led the Palestinian delegation to the Madrid Conference and later at the resulting talks in Washington, DC. He opposed the Oslo Accords over the issue of Israeli settlements, which the agreement failed to address.

Islamist Leadership

Both Hamas and PIJ rose during this period to challenge the leftist and secularist leadership of Fatah and the PLO. Hamas leaders, including Sheikh Ahmed Yassin and Dr. Mahmoud Zahar, introduced in the previous chapter, aimed at liberation through a sustained Islamicization of the people, while PIJ insisted on violent upheaval, analogous to Fatah's early ideology of armed struggle.

Fathi Shiqaqi was born in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip into a family of eight children. He was educated in UN schools and studied mathematics and physics at the Bir Zeit University in the West Bank. After teaching mathematics at a school for orphans in East Jerusalem,

he studied medicine in Egypt and earned a degree in pediatrics. He practiced medicine in Jerusalem and opened a medical clinic in Gaza. During his studies, he became acquainted with the teachings of Sheikh Yassin (founder of Hamas), as well as with Sheikh Omar Abdel-Rahman (Egyptian Islamic Jihad). His personal ideology also drew from the ideas of Sayyid Qutb and Hassan al-Banna. He was disenchanted by the PLO's secular leadership, corruption, and ineffective resistance against Israel. In the wake of the Iranian Revolution, Shiqaqi authored *Khomeini, The Islamic Solution and the Alternative*, an expression of his belief in Islamic revolution as the answer for Palestinian resistance. Shiqaqi and his confederates (including Abd al-Aziz Auda) founded PIJ in 1981. The group's ideology rejected political solutions in favor of armed struggle.

Sheikh Abdel Aziz Auda was born in 1950 in the Gaza Strip and was educated in Cairo. He served as an imam and became the spiritual leader of PIJ. He would later (1995) be designated a terrorist and hunted by American and Israeli authorities. He found refuge in Syria, where he likely continues to reside at the time of this writing.

Armed Component

In 1991, Hamas established its armed wing, the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades, named for the famed martyr who led opposition to the British Mandate in the 1930s. The Qassam Brigades would grow to be a serious threat against Israel, but they also acted as a political counterweight to more moderate factions within Hamas itself. Thus, in the future, the armed wing of Hamas would act to neutralize any diplomatic engagement between the Islamists and Israel.

IDEOLOGY

Shiqaqi and PIJ favored armed struggle as the engine of liberation from Israeli occupation. In this regard, PIJ's ideology mirrored Fatah's secularist strategy by emphasizing action over politics. Although he spouted jihadist rhetoric, Shiqaqi insisted that his aim was national liberation, and he envisioned a Palestinian state supplanting Israel and including the entire British Mandatory Palestine. The resultant state, according to Shiqaqi, would welcome Jews, Christians, and Muslims but

would reject Zionism, colonialism, and imperialism. PIJ was nominally Sunni, but the organization's leaders played down the differences in a search for unity. Islamic revolution, rather than secular, leftist socialism or communism, would lead the people to liberation.[8]

Sheikh Yassin and Hamas voiced similar rhetoric, but their own brand of Islamism focused initially more on defeating the nationalist secularists and the PLO, which they regarded as apostate and corrupt. Hamas's charter and repeated verbal harassment of Arafat and his cohorts made clear its position that Muslims had an unalienable right to all of Palestine, not just a portion of it. Hamas further argued that negotiation was in vain and that only through jihad could the Zionist enemy be removed.

The PLO had once endorsed a similar hard-line position, but the realities of Israeli strength, international opinion, and the Palestinians' longing for peace had moved Arafat ever so slowly to a willingness to give the peace process a chance. Having lost the Soviet Union as a sponsor, and having alienated the international community by his endorsement of Saddam Hussein, Arafat had little choice but to enter into peace negotiations with Israel to remain in control of the PLO.

President Bill Clinton invited Arafat and Rabin to Washington to sign the Oslo Accords, but behind the smiling faces and awkward handshake, there was a growing political crisis that impinged on the legitimacy of the Palestinian resistance. American Zionist leaders in the American Israel Public Affairs Committee lobbied strongly against the agreement, and they found an ear among American Republicans in Congress. Less than two years later, Congress passed the Jerusalem Embassy Act, which undermined negotiations between the Israelis and Palestinians over the future of East Jerusalem. These developments heralded a sustained change in the historically bipartisan American support for Israel. Democrats, once the staunchest supporters (dating from the presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt), now became skeptical of Likud's policy direction, while Republicans, fueled by evangelical fervor for Israel, took on the role of Likud's greatest ally.

ENDNOTES

1 Mark A. Tessler, *A History of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict.* Indiana Series in Arab and Islamic Studies (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1994), 679–680.

[2] Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist–Arab Conflict, 1881–2001* (New York: Vintage Books, 2001), 341, 568.

[3] Martin Gilbert and Arka Cartographics Limited, *The Illustrated Atlas of Jewish Civilization* (New York: Macmillan, 1990), 530.

[4] Beverley Milton-Edwards and Stephen Farrell, *Hamas* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2010), 56.

[5] Ibid., 58–59.

[6] Tessler, *A History of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, 698–708.

[7] Morris, *Righteous Victims*, 616–29.

[8] Milton-Edwards and Farrell, *Hamas*, 212–215.

CHAPTER 15.
SUMMITS AND CONFERENCES, 1994–2000

I am profoundly honored to be the first American President to address the Palestinian people in a city governed by Palestinians. . . . I know that the Palestinian people stand at a crossroads; behind you a history of dispossession and dispersal, before you the opportunity to shape a new Palestinian future on your own land.

—US President Bill Clinton, Speech to the Palestinian Leadership, December 14, 1998

The Oslo Accords appeared to offer the Middle East and the world a solution to the Arab–Israeli conflict. Two implacable enemies were negotiating, seemingly in good faith, and they were approaching the substantive and complex problems that stood in the way of a peaceful solution. However, within less than a decade, Yitzhak Rabin had been assassinated, and Yasser Arafat had declined a deal that many believed was in the best interest of the Palestinian people. The failure of both the Israelis and the Palestinians to achieve the internal integration needed for real peace led to the breakdown of negotiations and the onset of the next round of violence.

TIMELINE

February 25, 1994	Baruch Goldstein, a fanatic Israeli settler, kills twenty-nine Muslims at prayer in Hebron during Ramadan.
April 1994	Israel begins withdrawing troops from Jericho and Gaza. A Hamas suicide bomber kills thirteen Israelis in retaliation for the Hebron massacre.
July 1994	Yasser Arafat returns to Gaza after three decades in exile.
October 1994	A Hamas suicide bomber kills twenty-two people in Tel Aviv. Jordan and Israel sign a formal peace treaty.
December 1994	Yasser Arafat, Yitzhak Rabin, and Shimon Peres share the Nobel Peace Prize.
1995	With the Oslo Interim Agreement, the Palestinian Authority (PA) is established. Israel withdraws from most major towns in West Bank. Israel and PA arrest numerous Hamas figures.
November 1995	Yitzhak Rabin is assassinated.
1996	Arafat is elected president of the PA in the first Palestinian general election.
January 1996	Yahya Ayyash, a notorious Hamas bomb maker, is assassinated by Israel. First Palestinian parliamentary and presidential elections occur, and Hamas boycotts.
February 1996	A Hamas suicide bomber kills twenty-six in Jerusalem.

May 1996	Benjamin Netanyahu (Likud) is narrowly elected prime minister of Israel.
October 23, 1998	The Wye River Agreement is signed by Israel and the PA.
July 1999	Ehud Barak (Labor) is elected prime minister of Israel.
May 2000	Israel withdraws from south Lebanon.
July 11–25, 2000	US President Clinton hosts the Camp David Summit, but Yasser Arafat rejects Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak's concessions; no agreement is reached.

ORIGINS AND COURSE OF THE RESISTANCE

In 1994, Yasser Arafat added another momentous achievement to his resume: he won one-third of the Nobel Peace Prize, sharing it with Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres. He soon returned in triumph to Ramallah and took up duties as the elected president and prime minister of Palestine. However, his performance failed to live up to either the ideals of Alfred Nobel, the expectations of the Palestinian people, or, indeed, of the international community. One could easily point equally to the Israelis' failure, duplicity, and provocation as an explanation for why the Oslo process ultimately failed, but if Yasser Arafat and the leaders of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) had fulfilled their duty as the government of the semiautonomous entity they led, then the fault for failure would have rested squarely on Israel. Instead, the PA leadership fell short of making the crucial transition from revolutionary movement to functioning, efficient government.

The Oslo process benefited from strong American leadership, but the fundamental dynamic that led to the diplomatic success was secrecy. In the early 1990s, Arafat and Fatah conducted a series of secret negotiations with Israeli officials. The need for secrecy was almost entirely due to the nature of the Palestinian resistance. The culture of "I hate Israel more than thee" among the leaders of the Palestinian resistance threatened the political viability of any figure who appeared to be compromising with the United States or Israel. A Palestinian negotiator would thus have to sense the mood in the Arab streets in Palestine, in the refugee camps, and in the greater Muslim world before he or she could negotiate with confidence and make public statements. In the

end, the Oslo process revealed that the PLO was unable to speak for and represent all interested parties among the Palestinians.

Nearly two-thirds of Israelis and Palestinians approved of the Declaration of Principles, but Islamists, led by Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), had no interest in pursuing peace with Israel. They continued their strategy of terror aimed at splitting Israel's political leadership and provoking Israeli overreaction. Deir Yassin, the leader of Hamas, declared the peace process anathema but refrained from initiating a civil war with the PLO. Fathi Shiqaqi, leader of PIJ, was also a key member of a coalition that called itself the National Alliance in opposition to the Oslo Accords. The confederation included eight groups from the PLO, PIJ, and Hamas. Fatah was thus further removed from a growing body of Palestinians who resisted moves toward peace with Israel. Arafat could, however, present himself as a diplomat who had foresworn terror, all the while benefiting indirectly from the violence perpetrated by the National Alliance. Amidst the continued bloodshed, the negotiations proceeded.[1]

Signed on May 4, 1994, after seven months of diplomatic back and forth, the Gaza–Jericho Agreement provided for Israel's partial withdrawal from the subject areas and the establishment of the PA. Israel's and Palestine's economies were integrated, and Palestinian prisoners held by Israel were to be released. Baruch Goldstein's massacre of Muslims in Hebron in February had sparked an upswing in the violence as extremists on both sides tried to halt the progress toward peace and avenge their fallen. Still, Rabin, Peres, and Arafat pushed on, trying to tap into popular support for peace as a means to holding together political support within their respective governments. Arafat, unhappy with the concessions he felt forced to make, publicly called for jihad to recover Jerusalem and implied that he would not be bound by the agreements he signed.[2]

The Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) withdrew from Jericho and most of the Gaza Strip immediately after the agreement, and PA police took over responsibility for security. In July, Arafat returned to Palestine from his long exile and made Gaza City his capital. His government quickly gained a reputation for duplicity, corruption, and brutality, even among Palestinians, but Arafat's personal popularity initially remained high, except among the Islamists. It began to suffer, however, as the cash-strapped PLO lacked the funds to administer the government. Would-be donors from abroad were concerned that the PLO's

endemic corruption would see their donations wasted, and they therefore withheld the needed cash.

Arafat was increasingly bereft of flexibility. On the one hand, he was charged with proving that his government could provide security against terror attacks on Israel. On the other, his diplomatic success in the Oslo process was failing to bring about economic relief for the Palestinian people, and his actions against Hamas and PIJ, groups that continued to carry the torch of revolutionary sentiment, were viewed with contempt. For his part, Rabin found it increasingly difficult to concede land to a PLO government that was not keeping its end of the bargain.

The Israeli–PLO peace process gave rise to another diplomatic success for Israel—the long-awaited peace treaty with Jordan. Signed in October 1994, the agreement was the product of growing mutual respect and often complementary interests. Jordan viewed Israel as a potential counterweight to Syria and the PLO, and King Hussein knew that a peace treaty with the Israelis would garner support from the Americans. Over the opposition of Jordanian Islamists and Israeli hard-liners, the two countries achieved the formal treaty—Israel's second with a major Arab state.

Hamas and PIJ continued their use of suicide bombings over the ensuing two years. Israeli authorities responded with a series of closures and punitive measures, with the cycle of violence bringing more and more pressure on the peacemakers. Right-wing Israelis demanded action from "Rabin the traitor" to clamp down on the terrorists. Israeli settlements continued to expand, and critics on both sides insisted that the Oslo peace efforts were failing to fulfill expectations. Still, the diplomats pressed on and, in 1995, achieved the next crucial step.

The "Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza Strip," popularly known as the Oslo II Accord, was signed on September 28, 1995, and divided the West Bank into Areas A (the most populated areas), B, and C (the rural, sparsely populated areas). In effect, it protected Israeli settlements and excluded Palestinian Arabs from about 60 percent of the territory. It also called for elections and the establishment of the Palestinian Legislative Council, which would serve as the parliament. The accord provided for Israel's withdrawal from Area A, to be replaced by Palestinian police. It also called for safe passage between the West Bank and Gaza. Finally, the agreement

specified that talks on the final status of disputed locations would commence by May 1996.

Before the next agreement could take place, however, the character of the Oslo peace process was dramatically changed with the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin on November 4, 1995. Rabin had been attending a peace rally aimed at garnering support for the Oslo Accord and was walking toward his car to depart when Yigal Amir, an Orthodox Jew who opposed the peace, shot him to death. Shimon Peres assumed the premiership and vowed to continue the vision of the nation's slain leader.

On January 26, 1996, the Palestinians held elections, and Arafat and Fatah were the clear winners. In the meantime, Israel was also preparing for elections, and to many, the upcoming contest would serve as a referendum on the Oslo process. At first, it seemed that Labor and Peres would win handily, but continued Islamic terrorism would play a major role in the political struggle over who would govern Israel. In October 1995, Mossad agents killed Fathi Shiqaqi, leader of the PIJ, and the following January, the Israelis killed Yahya Ayyash, the chief Hamas bomb maker. To avenge these deaths—and perhaps at the urging of Iran—Hamas and PIJ launched a series of attacks. Meanwhile, Hizbollah in Lebanon also initiated a new campaign of rocket attacks into northern Israel. Peres responded with Operation Grapes of Wrath, with an aim to punish Lebanon and force Beirut to rein in the terrorists. Instead, after an Israeli artillery barrage that accidentally killed about a hundred civilians, international pressure brought about an unsatisfactory cease-fire that left Hizbollah with the advantage. The concentrated terrorist attacks in the wake of the IDF's withdrawal from the cities of the West Bank and Peres's seeming mishandling of the threat to the north worked to tip the balance in favor of the hard-line Likud Party, and Benjamin Netanyahu narrowly won the premiership. He promised "peace with security."

Figure 15-1. Map showing areas as divided by the Oslo II Accord.

Netanyahu made the fateful decision to press ahead with a controversial move in Jerusalem to open a tunnel from an archaeological site that ran parallel to the Western Wall and that would facilitate tourism in the area. Muslims viewed the move as part of a conspiracy to destroy their holy sites and replace them with a Jewish temple. Riots broke out, with Arafat's support, and the violence subsided only when Netanyahu threatened to send tanks into Palestinian cities and President Bill Clinton sent an envoy to negotiate a cease-fire.

Hopes for a resumption of the peace process dwindled, but both the Americans and King Hussein of Jordan eventually persuaded the combatants to take the next step—an agreement on an Israeli withdrawal from Hebron. Signed on January 17, 1997, the Hebron Protocol was an agreement between Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat that provided for Israeli forces withdrawing from 80 percent of the Hebron area while retaining control of the 20 percent that contained Israeli settlements.

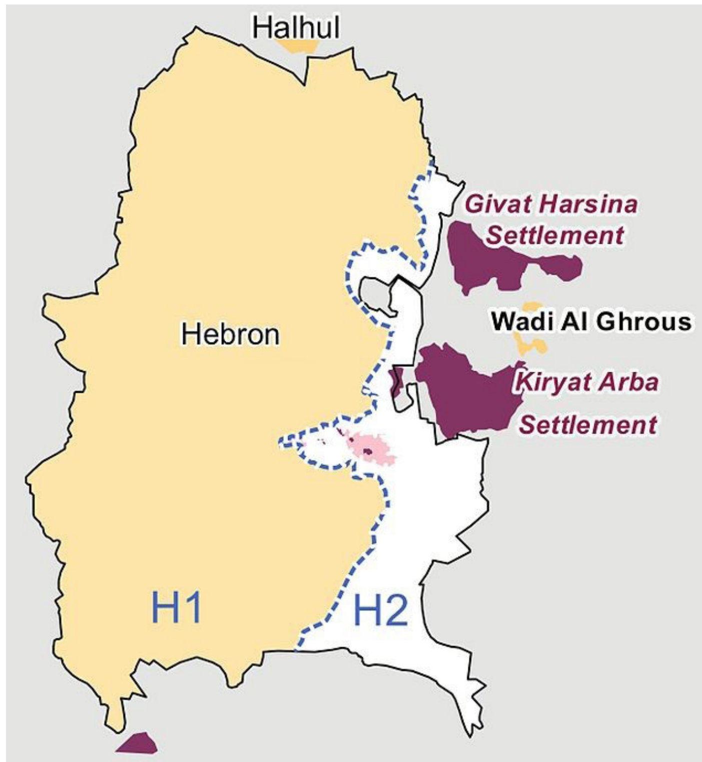

Figure 15-2. Map showing areas as divided by the Hebron Protocol.

The protocol was a tentative step along the lines laid out in Oslo II, and it was significant that Netanyahu's Likud-led government achieved the arrangement with Labor's support in the Knesset. However, both Arafat and Netanyahu deeply distrusted the other, and Likud would prove resistant to further concessions. With determination, the American diplomats and the Israeli Labor Party continued to pressure Netanyahu to move forward.

The Wye River Summit was held in the United States from October 15 through October 23, 1998. The purpose was to continue the implementation of Oslo II and the Israeli withdrawal from the occupied West Bank. President Bill Clinton was instrumental in overcoming Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu's resistance to sign. The Israeli and Palestinian legislatures ratified the deal, and implementation began. Despite initial optimistic expressions from the United States and the European Union, both sides eventually accused the other of violating the agreements, and the overall process remained unfinished. With Netanyahu under intense pressure from the right not to cede anymore territory, Likud and Labor agreed to dissolve the government and called for elections in May 1999. In the intervening six months, the Israelis halted any further implementation of agreements, prompting Arafat to threaten that he would declare statehood unilaterally. When his advisers convinced him that doing so would only strengthen the Israeli hard-liners, he stopped. In the Israeli elections, Ehud Barak, the Labor candidate, won a clear majority.

Camp David Accords

From July 11 through July 25, 2000, President Bill Clinton hosted Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat at Camp David in an effort to sustain the Oslo peace process. The Oslo Accords looked to complete a comprehensive peace deal within five years of implementation, but by 2000, both sides felt the other was violating its commitments. Clinton aimed to restart the process and complete a peace arrangement at Camp David, as President Carter had done between Israel and Egypt in 1978.

The meeting was unique in that there was no official written record of the proceedings. Instead, the negotiations were oral and were focused on achieving a comprehensive agreement, rather than just more incremental steps. No such agreement was reached, with the result that the meeting produced only a theoretical framework for peace. Yasser Arafat's refusal to accept a final deal at Camp David invited charges from the Israelis and others that the PLO was not serious about achieving peace.

The summit was useful, even if not ultimately successful, in clarifying Palestinian and Israeli positions regarding key areas. One of the

more important subjects of dispute was the territorial boundaries of the proposed Palestinian state. Israel made what it considered generous offers to withdraw from and demolish certain Israeli settlements in the West Bank and to compensate Palestinians with Israeli land for territories in the West Bank that Israel wanted to retain. However, the Palestinian negotiators rejected the offers because they felt that the resulting Palestinian state would be divided into enclaves separated by Israeli territories, not to mention the fact that the Israeli proposal fell somewhat short of the ideals expressed in UNSC Resolution 242.

Equally contentious were negotiations over the future status of Jerusalem. The Palestinians demanded full sovereignty over East Jerusalem, including the Temple Mount, which contained the al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock. The Israeli proposal instead offered the Palestinians a portion of territory within East Jerusalem and its environs, while the city overall would remain sovereign Israeli territory. Both sides felt strong attachment to the issue and demonstrated little flexibility, which was one of the main reasons no final agreement was reached.

Another ongoing area of dispute was the issue of Palestinian refugees and their right of return. The refugee problem began with the 1948 War of Independence and worsened during the 1967 Six-Day War, leaving some 750,000 Palestinians as refugees. During the 1948 war, the infamous Israeli Plan D aimed at securing key sites in Palestine that would be required for the overall security and integrity of the Jewish state. Additionally, some Arab leaders urged Palestinians to flee during the war, promising them that Palestine would quickly be liberated, allowing them to return. In 1967, the Israelis seized the West Bank and Gaza, causing more Palestinians to leave. Over the years since the wars, the number of refugees has grown to about four million, which is about half of the world's Palestinian Arab population. At Camp David, Arafat insisted on the full right of return for any displaced Palestinian and their progeny if they so chose.

The Israelis insisted instead that the refugee problem was not of their making, and they were under no obligation to solve it. Some historians stated that there were an equal number of Jewish refugees resulting from expulsions from Arab lands during the wars, and the State of Israel had undertaken to resettle its own people in Israel. The Arabs, then, should do the same. They further discuss that allowing millions (or even hundreds of thousands) of Arabs into Israel would radically change the demographics of the country, threatening its

Jewish character. They countered with a modest proposal of allowing about one hundred thousand refugees to return for humanitarian reasons, while an international fund (to which Israel would contribute) would bear the cost of resettling the refugees in other lands. The PLO rejected the Israeli proposal.

Finally, the two sides disagreed over matters of security and sovereignty. Israel wanted to be able to use Palestinian airspace and to have the right to deploy troops into Palestinian territory in an emergency. It also wanted the right to approve of any foreign alliances that the Palestinian state might want to negotiate and insisted that no foreign troops would be allowed west of the Jordan River. Finally, Israel demanded that Arafat and the PA disband remaining terrorist groups within their borders. The PLO was unable or unwilling to meet these demands.

The Camp David summit meetings ended without an agreement, despite optimistic sentiments expressed by all sides and by President Clinton. Events were soon to overcome the entire Oslo process as the Second Intifada erupted, soon followed by the 9/11 attacks on the United States.[3]

GOVERNMENT COUNTERMEASURES

To combat the growing threat of terrorism, the Israeli government conducted high-profile attacks designed to kill key individuals. Although the policy of "targeted killings" did not become official until 2000, military and intelligence operatives mounted attacks with varying degrees of success. On October 26, 1995, Mossad operatives assassinated Shiqaqi in Malta. His removal disrupted PIJ because there was no clear and competent replacement who could assume effective control of the organization. In January 1996, Shin Bet agents booby trapped a mobile phone and used it to kill Yahya Ayyash in Gaza. The target had been an effective bomb maker for Hamas. Although Israel was thus successful in eliminating a key figure, the backlash included a wave of revenge-driven bus bombings that killed fifty Israelis. The most embarrassing attempt at targeted killing came in 1997 when Mossad agents succeeded in poisoning Khaled Meshaal, chief of Hamas's political bureau in Amman. The agents were caught, and Prime Minister Netanyahu was pressured into giving the antidote to Jordanian officials

and releasing Sheikh Ahmed Yassin from prison to secure the agents' return to Israel.

ENDNOTES

[1] Beverley Milton-Edwards and Stephen Farrell, *Hamas* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2010), 71–74.

[2] Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist–Arab Conflict, 1881–2001* (New York: Vintage Books, 2001), 623–624.

[3] Mark A. Tessler, *A History of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, 2nd ed. Indiana Series in Arab and Islamic Studies (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1994), 818.

CHAPTER 16.
THE SECOND INTIFADA, 2000–2005

All the land of Palestine is a part of the Islamic faith and the Caliph Omar bin al-Khattab declared it for all Muslims. Therefore, no individual or group has the right to sell it or give it up.

—Abdel Aziz al-Rantissi

The Second Intifada, like the first, erupted spontaneously and caught the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) leadership by surprise. It was followed by the devastating and world-changing 9/11 attacks on the United States, and both episodes changed the direction and character of the Palestinian resistance.

TIMELINE

September 28, 2000	Israeli opposition leader Ariel Sharon tours Temple Mount, prompting Palestinian riots. The Second Intifada begins.
February 2001	Ariel Sharon (Likud) is elected as prime minister of Israel.
April 2001	The first rocket is fired into Israel from the Gaza Strip.
June 1, 2001	A Hamas suicide bomber kills twenty-one Israelis, mostly teenagers, in Tel Aviv.
August 2001	Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) claim responsibility for a bombing in Jerusalem that kills fifteen.
September 11, 2001	Al-Qaeda orchestrates a complex attack on the United States that destroys the World Trade Center and damages the Pentagon.
December 2001	A Hamas double suicide bombing kills eleven Israelis in Jerusalem; a suicide bombing kills fifteen in Haifa; Arafat orders cessation of attacks on Israel.
January 2002	Wafa Idris, the first Palestinian female suicide bomber, kills one and wounds 150 in Jaffa; al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade (Fatah) claims responsibility.
March 2002	An al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade suicide bombing kills eleven in Jerusalem; a Hamas suicide bomber kills thirty Jews in Netanya; Israel launches Operation Defensive Shield in the West Bank, besieging Arafat's compound in Ramallah.
July 2002	The Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) drops a one-ton bomb in Gaza, killing Salah Shehadeh, a Hamas military commander, along with fifteen others.

2003	Mahmoud Abbas becomes the first prime minister of the Palestinian Authority (PA).
March 2003	A Hamas suicide bomber kills seventeen in Haifa.
June 2003	A Hamas suicide bomber kills seventeen Israelis in Jerusalem; Hamas later declares a cease-fire.
August 2003	A Hamas suicide bomber kills twenty-three in Jerusalem; Israel continues its assassination campaign against Hamas.
October 2003	A suicide bombing in Haifa kills twenty-one Israelis; a bomb kills three American convoy guards in Gaza.
March–April 2004	An Israeli air strike kills Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, founder of Hamas; Dr. Abdel Aziz Rantissi succeeds him and is assassinated in April; Khaled Meshaal, in Damascus, is believed to be the new Hamas leader.
August 2004	Hamas suicide bombings kill sixteen in Beersheba.
November 2004	Yasser Arafat dies in Paris.
January 2005	Mahmoud Abbas becomes president of the PA. Abbas and Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon agree to a cease-fire.
April–May 2005	Cairo Declaration: Hamas and Fatah agree to reform PLO; Hamas competes in municipal elections and wins big.
August 2005	Prime Minister Sharon directs unilateral withdrawal of forces and settlers from the Gaza Strip; Hamas declares victory.

ORIGINS AND COURSE OF THE RESISTANCE

The Second Intifada signaled the end of the Oslo process (at least temporarily) and a return to violent confrontation between the various manifestations of the Palestinian resistance and Israel. Both sides expressed disappointment in the aftermath of the Oslo Accords, and both accused the other of failing to live up to commitments.

On September 28, 2000, Israeli opposition leader Ariel Sharon and an entourage, including ruling Labor Party members, arrived on the Temple Mount. The visit, though strongly discouraged by Palestinian leaders, including Arafat, had been coordinated in advance. The Israelis assured the Palestinians that Sharon would not attempt to enter

any mosques and that he would not publicly pray or display any other provocative behavior. As the brief visit proceeded, Palestinian youths attempted to pelt the visitors with rocks but were restrained by police. After a short speech to the media, Sharon departed. This action was the unlikely spark that started the Second Intifada, also called the al-Aqsa Intifada, in reference to the famous mosque on the Temple Mount.[1]

Beyond the fact that East Jerusalem and the Temple Mount were at the center of ongoing disagreements between both sides of the conflict, Ariel Sharon was a notorious figure among Palestinians because he was defense minister during the Sabra and Shatila massacres in 1982, and he strongly supported Israeli settlers in the occupied territories.[2] Angry Palestinians viewed his walkabout in the most cynical terms—that it was a political move designed to catapult him into the premiership, which indeed it did four months later.

The uprising was spontaneous and likely caught the PA and Arafat off guard. However, investigations after the Second Intifada began revealed evidence that the PA and Arafat had planned an uprising after the failure of the Camp David talks. The intent was to strengthen the PA's hand in future negotiations and undermine the Israeli government by causing outrage among hard-liners.[3]

The first week of the uprising saw forty-two Palestinian deaths and thirteen Israelis killed, four of whom were Arabs. On September 30, a twelve-year-old Palestinian boy was shot in the crossfire in Gaza, and on October 12, two Israeli soldiers who had accidentally driven in Ramallah were lynched and mutilated by a mob. The images of both of these events were broadcast all over the world, enflaming passions further and underscoring the unrestrained hatred that soon characterized the Second Intifada.

In the closing days of his sojourn as prime minister, Ehud Barak met with Yasser Arafat at the Taba Summit on January 21–27, 2001. The delegations agreed in a statement at the conclusion of the summit that they had never been closer to concluding a comprehensive peace deal. Still at issue were the problems of refugee return, exact borders in the West Bank, the status of Jerusalem, and security. The language of the exchanges between Barak and Arafat was characterized throughout the proceeding with statements of "Israel accepts" and "the Palestinian side accepts." Saeb Erekat, Palestinian chief negotiator, lamented that if the parties had had just six more weeks to work with, they would

probably have resolved all remaining issues. However, the Taba Summit bumped up against Israeli elections and a change of leadership in the United States between outgoing President Clinton and incoming President George W. Bush. It was to be, in effect, the last best chance at recovering the Oslo process.

Subsequent analysis revealed that both sides in the conflict had prepared extensively for the collapse of the peace process after Camp David and had made plans for the outbreak of violence. The Israelis, however, fixated on the person of Yasser Arafat and blamed Fatah primarily for the conflict. Intelligence was well aware of the growing threat from Hamas, but public figures across the Israeli political spectrum viewed the problem as emanating from the PLO, the PA in general, and Arafat in particular. When Sharon took over as prime minister, he negated the Taba agreements and announced that none of the provisions discussed were binding on his government. Instead, the Second Intifada would continue, and the violence would worsen.

The Palestinians at first used regular firearms to ambush or snipe at Israelis, but in November 2000, the first suicide car bombing occurred at the hands of the PIJ. Hamas followed suit with a string of suicide bombings, the most deadly of which claimed twenty-one lives (June 2001) and fifteen lives (August 2001). Israeli forces struck back with missiles, tanks, and air strikes, killing some 564 Palestinians in the first year, with 181 Israelis killed. Hamas hard-liners deliberately escalated the violence, and they disavowed the largely symbolic tactic of stone throwing during the First Intifada because they wanted to inflict maximum Israeli deaths, not simply appeal to the international community for sympathy.

The depth of the hatred between the two sides was demonstrated in the January 2001 murder of Israeli teenager Ofir Rahum. The boy had been communicating online with a Palestinian girl, Mona Awana. She coaxed him into agreeing to meet with her and promised that she would sleep with him if he did. The two met, and she drove him to the outskirts of Ramallah, where another car was waiting. She leapt out of the car, whereupon Fatah terrorists jumped out of the other car and shot the boy fifteen times, dumping his body in a secret grave. The Israelis discovered the crime, and their secret Duvdevan Unit (a special operations unit of the IDF that specializes in undercover operations) apprehended Awana. She was convicted but later released as part of a prisoner exchange.

As the conflict continued, radical Palestinians made it clear that their desire to kill Israelis was not bounded by considerations of age. A Palestinian sniper killed a ten-month-old baby in Hebron. Other Palestinians kidnapped, bound, and beat to death two Israeli boys aged thirteen and fourteen, smearing their blood on the walls of the cave where they dumped their bodies.

9/11 and the War on Terror

On September 11, 2001, al-Qaeda operatives seized four airliners in the United States and used them to attack the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. In a few moments, the attacks changed the Western world's outlook on terrorism in general and Muslim terrorism in particular. In the shock that followed the attacks, it was easy for leaders and even some intelligence analysts to formulate a link among al-Qaeda and factions in Palestine, including Hamas, PIJ, Hizbollah, and Fatah. No substantive links actually existed, but the 9/11 attacks generated the American-led War on Terror that sought to enlist the support of the world community, including Arab states, in the fight against terrorists. It did not help the Palestinians' cause that cameras were rolling as Arabs danced in the streets to celebrate the deaths of more than three thousand Americans.

Arafat condemned the 9/11 attacks and sought to restrain celebration of them in the streets because he rightly saw that such actions would alienate any potential American supporters. Hamas likewise tried to distance itself from al-Qaeda, insisting that its fight was in Palestine against Israel alone. Israel, for its part, encouraged the world to conflate the 9/11 attacks with terrorism in Palestine to encourage the international community to view Israel as a civilized bastion within a sea of raging Islamic death cultists.

The Conflict Widens and Deepens

Upon Israel's assassination of Mahmoud Abu Hanoud, a senior Hamas leader in November 2001, Hamas struck back in a series of attacks that killed thirty-seven Israelis—an unprecedented casualty rate for the Jewish state. The United States responded with pressure on Arafat to apprehend the terrorists and stop the violence. The PLO, in

turn, felt helpless and insisted that Israel's relentless attacks on the Palestinians prevented Arafat's security apparatus from operating effectively. In fact, Fatah's leaders had little hope of being able to control the Islamists. Instead, they were in a desperate competition with them for leadership of the Palestinian resistance itself.

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon also alleged that Hamas was enjoying the support of Iran, who had already armed and trained the Lebanese terror group Hizbollah. He urged the international community and the United States in particular to put an end to the malevolent Iranian influence in the Middle East. In this assessment, he was correct; publicizing the fact was a wise move because it had the effect of turning the world's attention toward Iran, but it also brought pressure on Hamas because Iran was a Shiite power. Hamas, as an extension of the Muslim Brotherhood, was a Sunni organization.

After the first year of the intifada, attitudes hardened on both sides. Dovish Israeli leaders found their support base evaporating in the heat of ongoing Hamas attacks. On the Palestinian side, Islamic radicals fanned the flame of popular discontent with Israel's heavy-handed attacks on their communities. In between the two irreconcilable sides stood Yasser Arafat. Charged with governing the Palestinians, suppressing violence, arresting perpetrators, and negotiating with Israel, he was unable to do any of it. A temporary cease-fire that he tried to orchestrate quickly collapsed in the fiery rhetoric from both sides. Israel would not stop its attacks until the perpetrators of terror were arrested and the mobs dispersed. Hamas would not stop suicide bombings and other attacks until Israel withdrew. The impasse weakened Arafat's government.

On January 14, 2002, during a temporary cease-fire, the Israelis assassinated Raed al-Kharmi, a prominent leader of the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade. The action was widely viewed by all Palestinian factions as clear evidence that the Israelis would not negotiate in good faith and could not be trusted. The al-Aqsa Brigade retaliated immediately, killing fourteen Israelis over the ensuing month. It also brought forward a new, deadly innovation: its first female suicide bomber. Twenty-eight-year-old Wafa Idris blew herself up in Jerusalem, killing one Israeli man and wounding 150 more. By the end of 2002, seven hundred Israelis had been killed in the intifada. This comparatively high casualty rate became a major factor in Israeli politics as the Jews looked for a leader

who could protect them. Meanwhile, in the same period, the Palestinians had lost nearly two thousand.

By this time, the Israeli government had successfully painted Arafat as an ineffective and untrustworthy leader in the eyes of American President George W. Bush. Finding himself thus dismissed politically, he was desperate to retain his standing among his own constituents, especially among West Bank Palestinians. His young protégé Marwan Barghouti convinced him (allegedly) that the way to achieve this was to show that Fatah could confront Israel with more strength than the Islamists could. Thus, Barghouti helped move Fatah toward a more violent strategy.

The resulting renewed militancy contributed to the rise of the Tanzim—the secretive militant wing of Fatah. Barghouti was considered the leader of the Tanzim, and both he and the organization rose in importance during the Second Intifada. Composed mostly of youth who grew up after the Oslo Accords, the Tanzim recruited suicide bombers and assumed a hard-line approach toward Israel, in part to compete successfully with the Islamists. The Tanzim was also the vehicle that Arafat and Barghouti used to gain leverage over their competition in the military wing of Fatah. Mohammad Dahlan and Jibril Rajoub controlled the PA security forces, and from that power base, they positioned themselves to challenge Arafat or to assume control once he was gone.

The Israelis arrested Barghouti in April 2002 and charged him with murder. He was jailed, but his influence grew within Fatah and the PLO. Behind bars, he was able to continue to influence decision making, and he served as a liaison between Fatah and the Islamists. At one point, he was considered a potential successor to the post of Palestine's president, even while incarcerated. (He remains in prison as of this writing.)

Both Fatah and Hamas continued to wage campaigns of terror featuring suicide bombings. In May 2002, a Hamas bomber killed eleven Israelis near the Israeli prime minister's office. During intense periods, suicide bombings occurred several times daily. Fatah tried to justify its use of the tactic as a temporary measure aimed ultimately at achieving peace, in contrast to Hamas's use of suicide bombing from fanatic, religious motivation. The nuance was lost on Israel and the United States,

both of whom blamed Arafat for duplicity and failed leadership, while designating his al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade a terrorist organization.

Passover Massacre and Operation Defensive Shield

On March 27, 2002, Hamas orchestrated a bloody bombing at a hotel in Netanya that killed thirty Jews, some of them Holocaust survivors, who were celebrating Passover. Hamas declared that its intent was to torpedo the ongoing peace initiative put forth by Saudi Arabia and currently under discussion at an Arab League summit in Beirut. Hamas did not want a land-for-peace deal. It wanted only to destroy Israel. The brazen attack united all of Israel's political spectrum, at least temporarily, behind Ariel Sharon.

More Hamas killings followed, with three settlers shot and killed near Nablus and another suicide bombing killing fifteen in Haifa on March 31. Sharon responded by calling up reserves and launching Operation Defensive Shield—the military invasion of the West Bank. He insisted that the main problem remained Yasser Arafat, whose failure to reach a political compromise with Israel at Camp David revealed his true intentions. Sharon insisted that despite Hamas's spectacular attacks, Arafat and Fatah were the chief enemies.

IDF tanks rolled into the West Bank and quickly surrounded Arafat's compound in Ramallah, besieging him for what would be a two-year sojourn. Throughout the West Bank, Israeli forces crushed PA compounds and infrastructure and seized thousands of suspected terrorists and their leaders. What the Israelis did not anticipate was that as they thus weakened and discredited Arafat, Fatah, the PLO, and the PA, the chief beneficiary was Hamas. Islamist leaders, including founder Sheikh Yassin, insisted that the resistance must continue and that no deal be made with Israel or the United States. As the PA governing apparatus was crushed under the treads of Israeli tanks, Hamas rose to the occasion with its own shadow government throughout the West Bank, providing social services, food, water, medicine, and compensation to the families of jihadists.

During the Second Intifada, Hamas made the fateful decision to enter Palestinian politics and to compete with Fatah for leadership. The move into the democratic process was systematically misinterpreted by Western analysts, who were conditioned by their own culture to equate

democracy with peace. It was hoped that when Hamas resorted to the ballot box, it would gradually give up violence. In reality, though, Hamas leaders were determined from the start to enter politics for the express purpose of continuing the violence. They wanted to seize political control to forestall any chance at peace negotiations.[4]

Meanwhile, Operation Defensive Shield produced bloody battles at Jenin and Nablus, and both sides struggled to spin their own versions of events. Hamas repeatedly claimed that Israelis were butchering Palestinian civilians and employing collective punishment. Israelis responded by insisting that terrorists were putting their own people at risk and frequently hid themselves behind women and children. In the aftermath of the battle at Jenin, Palestinians alleged that Israel had committed a massacre, killing some five hundred civilians. The United Nations (UN) attempted to intervene but was denied entrance by Israel. Later, however, human rights groups' investigators concluded that no massacre had occurred, and the roughly fifty deaths occurred because of the actions of both sides.[5]

As the battle raged, Hamas continued to orchestrate attacks, including suicide bombings, in Israel from the West Bank. Sharon's government finally responded to the attacks by using a strategy that the prime minister had resisted: erecting a barrier between the West Bank and Israel. Sharon wanted to avoid the move because the resulting barrier resembled a de facto border, and he did not want to prejudice future negotiations so as to lose land. Hamas and other Palestinian factions in turn complained that the barrier cut off the people from their farmlands and was nothing more than an Israeli ploy to steal Palestinian land. However, the inescapable fact remained that the fence dramatically cut the number of terrorist attacks into Israel. As the barrier grew, so the course of the Second Intifada changed in favor of Israel. From 2000 through 2005, the Israelis experienced just over a thousand deaths, and the Palestinians over three times that number.

The Roadmap for Peace

The US initiative toward a cease-fire and final peace revolved around the international "Quartet" consisting of the United States, the UN, the European Union, and Russia. The plan was called the Roadmap for Peace, and it stipulated confidence-building actions designed

to deescalate hostilities and demonstrate responsible behavior on all sides. Clearly, the peace initiative was in contravention to everything that Hamas claimed to represent. While the PLO, the PA, and Fatah were amenable to (and indeed had been aiming for) a peace deal that would leave them in charge, Hamas had to think hard about the future and adapt its strategy accordingly.

The PLO and Fatah likewise were under pressure to change. In 2003, the United States demanded that Arafat appoint a prime minister other than himself after discovering that Arafat had been funneling money to suicide bombers. Mahmoud Abbas became prime minister and set about to negotiate with terrorist elements in the PLO to cease attacks on Israeli civilians. The resulting attempts at a cease-fire proved ineffective, and Abbas later resigned, claiming he could not work under Yasser Arafat.

Israel had been relentless in its assassinations of key Hamas leaders. Air strikes killed several senior military figures, and in 2004, the IDF managed to kill both Sheikh Yassin, the wheelchair-bound founder of Hamas, and his hard-line deputy, Dr. Abdel Aziz Rantissi. The organization learned to adapt to decapitation, but the combination of Israeli attacks and the frustration of the barrier's effectiveness on terror operations took its toll. Further, Hamas's suicide bombings had earned it designation as a terror group, which in turn decreased its funding from European sympathizers and others. Israel had also persuaded the PA to freeze Hamas's assets, further constricting needed cash flow. Leaders eventually reconciled themselves to the idea of a cease-fire, in part to gain legitimacy in the international community.

Thus, Hamas proposed and then implemented a unilateral cease-fire in the summer of 2003. It was a preliminary strategic move, and the general approval of the beleaguered Palestinian population in the West Bank proved its wisdom. Hamas leaders thereupon committed to a period of calm with Israel and signaled their willingness to enter a coalition government with the PLO if and when Israel withdrew its forces from Gaza. The IDF continued instead to perform targeted assassinations against Hamas leaders. The following year dragged on with continued cycles of violence from both sides. Hamas, often working in concert with radical elements of Fatah, conducted rocket attacks, suicide bombings, and tunnel infiltrations, targeting both Israeli soldiers and civilians. The IDF responded with continued assaults on suspected hideouts, as well as two major operations. Operation Rainbow

in May 2004 aimed at destroying existing tunnels in southern Gaza near Rafah and deterring future tunnels. Operation Days of Penitence in northern Gaza went after militants firing rockets into Israel.

In late October 2004, Yasser Arafat became ill during a meeting, and his physicians believed at first that he had a flu. His condition worsened in November, and he was transported, with Israeli concurrence, to a Paris hospital. He fell into a coma on November 3 and died eight days later at age 75. Suspicions surfaced almost immediately that the Israelis had poisoned Arafat, and subsequent investigations pointed at several possible causes of death, including polonium poisoning, AIDS, cirrhosis, a blood disorder, and natural causes. With Arafat gone, Mahmoud Abbas took the reins of Fatah, the PLO, and the PA. When he tried to orchestrate a cease-fire with Israel, Hamas defied him by escalating its attacks. Radicals associated with Fatah likewise continued to operate against his orders.

In early January 2005, Palestinian elections made Abbas the president of the PA. He, like Arafat before him, had to walk a fine line between peace efforts and alienating Palestinian radicals who wanted to continue the fight. The Israeli government increased the pressure on him by refusing to meet with him until he showed concrete progress in suppressing terror in the West Bank and Gaza. Abbas moved to do just that, deploying police in northern Gaza, which dramatically decreased the volume of rocket attacks. Consequently, Sharon met with Abbas at Sharm al-Sheikh and negotiated a cease-fire. However, the best Abbas could do was to ask for cooperation from Hamas and the PIJ, and even when they agreed to abide by cease-fires, the rank and file often continued to attack.

By this time, Ariel Sharon had already decided he would lead his country in a strategic withdrawal from Gaza. His reasoning appeared to be an economy-of-force measure. Israel's only reason for being in the Gaza Strip was to protect a few thousand settlers, but the cost of operations there was disproportionate. In 2005, Sharon led the Knesset into accepting his viewpoint, and the IDF withdrew from Gaza and from four settlements on the West Bank. The move would also garner diplomatic points from the world community. Sharon announced his decision in June 2004, but the pullout was not completed until August 2005.

The Second Intifada never had a definitive end. Historians have generally pointed to Arafat's death and the subsequent negotiated

cease-fire between Sharon and Abbas as the concluding events of the uprising. However, terror attacks and reprisals continued, if at a reduced rate. The fractured leadership within both the PLO and the Palestinian resistance as a whole would soon lead to an internal conflict between Fatah and Hamas.

LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, AND COMMAND AND CONTROL

The main trend in the leadership of the Palestinian resistance during the Second Intifada was the replacement of moderates in Fatah and the PLO with radical Islamists in Hamas and PIJ. Polls taken during the conflict showed that a substantial majority of Palestinians in the occupied territories favored confrontation with Israel and the restoration of Islamic values.

Fatah Political Leaders

During the Second Intifada, Fatah's political wing had to contend for control of the party and for the affections of the people against the party's military wing.

Yasser Arafat remained besieged in his compound in Ramallah for most of the Second Intifada. In October 2004, he became ill during a staff meeting, and his condition deteriorated quickly. He was taken to France, where he died in a Paris hospital on November 11. The cause of death became a subject for conspiracy theories and further medical studies, ranging from AIDS to poisoning to natural causes.

Marwan Barghouti was a senior Fatah leader and a popular rabble-rouser during the intifada. He was Fatah's secretary general in the West Bank and a major leader of the uprising. At one time a supporter of the peace process, he became disenchanted by 2000 and turned to violence. He was reportedly a founder of the Tanzim. He was arrested in 2002, tried for murder in an Israeli court, and imprisoned. He continued to be politically active from prison and was popular among Palestinians.

Mahmoud Abbas (also known as Abu Mazen) was born in Safed (British Mandate) in 1935. He was educated in Damascus and Moscow and joined Fatah in 1961. From the late 1970s, he positioned himself as a moderate and an advocate for the peace process with Israel. In 2003,

he emerged as a leader the United States and Israel could negotiate with in place of Arafat, who acquiesced in appointing Abbas as prime minister. Abbas resigned shortly thereafter because Arafat would not grant him control of the PA's security apparatus. On January 9, 2005, he was elected as the president of the PA and called for an end to the Second Intifada and a return to peaceful resistance. Although, he still had to contend with Hamas and PIJ, neither of which would endorse his moderate position.

Fatah Military Leaders

During the Second Intifada, the leaders of Fatah's military wing sought to position themselves for leadership should Arafat die or fall from grace.

Mohammad Dahlan (also known as Abu Fadi) was born in a refugee camp in 1961 and became a member of Fatah in his youth. During the Oslo peace process, he recruited and headed up a security force in Gaza, becoming one of the most powerful Fatah leaders. He was later accused of torturing Hamas operatives and embezzlement. During the Second Intifada, he opposed Arafat's leadership and was affiliated with Mahmoud Abbas.

Jibril Rajoub (also known as Abu Rami) was born in 1953 in Dura, near Hebron. He joined Fatah after being contacted during a brief stint in prison in 1968. He recruited and led cells in the vicinity of Hebron as his first task for the party. In 1970, Rajoub was arrested for throwing a grenade at an Israeli bus and sentenced to life in prison. He was released in 1985 as part of a prisoner exchange but was rearrested and imprisoned several more times until he was deported. He returned to the West Bank in 1994 and operated as a close ally of Arafat. He was the head of the PA's preventive security force in the West Bank until Arafat promoted him to national security adviser.

Other PLO Leaders

Ahmad Jibril was born in 1983 near Jaffa and moved to Syria with his family. He served in the Syrian army briefly before being expelled on suspicion of being a communist. He founded the Palestinian Liberation Front in 1959 and later joined George Habash to found the

Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). In 1968, he split from Habash and Nayef Hawatmah to found the PFLP General Command (PFLP-GC). During the Second Intifada, he continued to lead the PFLP-GC. In May 2001, a ship he arranged for was intercepted by the IDF and found to be carrying arms and munitions. Throughout the Palestinian conflict, he espoused a doctrine of military preparedness and relentless attack.

Hamas Leaders

Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, the founder of Hamas, continued to lead and inspire the organization until he was killed. He became a quadriplegic after an accident at age twelve. He was a strong advocate of violence toward Israel and claimed to have directed suicide attacks—a move that earned Hamas its designation as a terrorist organization. He was imprisoned in 1989 but released in 1997 after the attempted assassination of Khaled Meshaal. He then resumed his leadership of Hamas, continuing to oppose the peace process and planning further attacks—including suicide bombings—against Israel. An Israeli helicopter gunship targeted Yassin as he emerged from prayers in March 2004, killing him, his bodyguards, and bystanders.

Abdel Aziz al-Rantissi was born near Jaffa in 1947, but his family was forced to move to the Gaza Strip. When he was nine years old, Israeli soldiers killed his uncle—a factor contributing to his lifelong opposition of Israel. He was educated as a physician in Cairo and practiced medicine in Gaza. While in Egypt, he became devoted to the Muslim Brotherhood and cofounded Hamas with Sheikh Yassin during the First Intifada. Throughout the 1990s, he was expelled by Israel, and he was later arrested and imprisoned by the PA because of his opposition to Arafat and the peace process. After returning to Gaza, he worked with Yassin to further organize Hamas and oppose peace efforts. He led Hamas for a month after Yassin's assassination before he himself was assassinated in April 2004.

Khaled Meshaal was born in the West Bank in 1956, but his family moved to Kuwait, where he was educated and later taught. Meshaal was one of the early leaders in the Islamist movement in Palestine and, in 1984, began working with Hamas full time. He was head of Hamas's political bureau under Yassin beginning in 1996. The following year,

he was nearly assassinated by Mossad agents in Jordan, and the fiasco resulted in Yassin's release from prison. In 1999, he was arrested in Jordan and expelled from the country. He moved first to Qatar and later to Damascus, which became his base of operations. Meshaal assumed the leadership of Hamas upon Rantissi's death.

ARMED COMPONENT

Tanzim

Created in 1995 by Yasser Arafat and other Fatah leaders, the Tanzim was the armed faction of the party originally intended to act as a counterweight to Islamist armed components. It was organized at the community level and pulled some Palestinian support away from Hamas and PIJ and toward Fatah and the PA. The Tanzim was largely composed of younger Palestinians, including females, and many of its members eventually joined the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade.

Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade

The al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade emerged at the start of the Second Intifada, or al-Aqsa Intifadah, in September 2000. It drew its membership from a number of small cells that were affiliated with Fatah and generally loyal to Arafat until his death in 2004. The brigade aimed to drive the Israeli military and settlers from the West Bank and establish a Palestinian state loyal to the secular nationalist Fatah ideology. It initially conducted small-arms attacks against Israeli military personnel and settlers as the uprising spread in 2000, but by 2002, it turned to suicide bombings against Israeli civilians inside Israel. In January 2002, the group sent the first female suicide bomber inside Israel. As of March 2002, the United States designated the group a foreign terrorist organization.

The al-Aqsa Brigade operated in Gaza, the West Bank, and inside Israel. It has members in refugee camps in southern Lebanon and overseas but has not demonstrated the capability or intent to conduct transnational terrorist attacks. The brigade's cells included several splinter factions with differing political loyalties, particularly after Arafat died. Some of the brigade's cells complied with the unilateral Palestinian cease-fire in 2005, but some did not—an indication of the lack of centralized control.[6]

Administrative

Hamas's operations depended on a complex but effective support network that involved numerous state and nonstate linkages. Saudi Arabia initially supported Hamas because both represented conservative Sunni Islam. However, Hamas also benefited from Iranian support that was in turn channeled through Hafez al-Assad's Syria, through Hizbollah in Lebanon, and thence by ship and land routes into Palestine.

Motivation

The Second Intifada saw the widespread use of suicide bombers by both the secularists (Fatah) and the Islamists (Hamas and PIJ). A subsequent study showed that the motivations of the Palestinian bombers were complex and varied. Most were motivated by a desire for revenge against Israel's harsh occupation. Some were motivated by religious inspiration. Still others expressed a fervent desire to sacrifice themselves in the cause of national liberation.[7]

LEGITIMACY

During the Second Intifada, Fatah and Hamas, along with smaller secular and Islamist groups, fought to achieve legitimacy in the eyes of the Palestinian people. Fatah, in control of the PLO and the PA, positioned itself as the legitimate, elected government of Palestine, as well as an organization with a long, respected history of resistance toward Israel. Hamas insisted that, as an extension of the Muslim Brotherhood and of Islam itself, in addition to its total opposition to peace negotiations with the hated Zionist entity, it was the legitimate representative of the people. To compete successfully against each other, both organizations resorted to violence—against each other, but more importantly against Israel. The dynamic first seen after the 1948 war still pertained: militant groups gained favor with the people when they staged spectacular and effective attacks. While such actions indeed garnered support (as evidenced in polling data), each of the groups gained adherents from within their own spheres—secular and Islamists. That is, when Hamas suicide bombers struck Israel, they won over people from other Islamist groups, not from Fatah, and vice versa. Thus, the Second

Intifada tended to freeze the legitimacy contest in place with secularists (Fatah and the PLO) against Islamists (Hamas and PIJ).[8]

ISRAELI GOVERNMENT COUNTERMEASURES[9]

The State of Israel responded to the outbreak of violence during the Second Intifada with increasingly harsh countermeasures. By the end of the uprising, it had constructed a huge barrier around Palestinian communities in the West Bank, and it had executed a campaign of targeted assassinations. The results were a dramatic reduction in successful terror strikes and eventually the achievement of a ceasefire. However, its actions also had cascading effects of further polarizing Fatah and Hamas, leaving the latter in firm control of the Gaza Strip. The countermeasures also left a legacy of resentment, along with the continued presence of the barrier—all developments that did not augur well for a lasting peaceful settlement.[10]

Military

Since 2000 and the onset of the Second Intifada, Israel openly pursued a policy of "targeted killing"—in other words, the assassination of key terrorist leaders. The government uses Mossad assassins, helicopter gunships, fighter aircraft, tanks, booby traps, and car bombs. Operations that kill intended targets also kill and injure noncombatants. However, the policy of targeted killing found legal justification and was technically distinguished from assassination (which is illegal under international law), in that the policy targeted enemy combatants rather than political figures. Further, the policy of carrying out attacks was not secretive but public policy in Israel. The legal definition of assassination also includes, however, killing "by treacherous means." From this perspective, Israel's actions were more problematic because methods used to kill terrorists frequently employed deception and ambushes. To lend some sort of restraint on the process, the government required the IDF to meet three conditions: (1) it must have tried to work through the PA to arrest the individual; (2) it must demonstrate that it had little or no chance at arresting the individual; and (3) the killing must be shown to be aimed at preventing future attacks on Israel. The resulting process typically involved intelligence agencies nominating targets and

providing background on the individual and detailing the danger he or she posed. The IDF and its lawyers would then review the proposal and forward it to the chief of staff for approval. The IDF would then seek final permission from the government and, if granted, would conduct the killing.[11]

Using this method, the IDF conducted several targeted killings that aimed at disrupting terror attacks. It killed Ali Abu Mustafa, head of the PFLP; Raed al-Karmi, a leader of the Tanzim; and Salah Shehadeh, a Hamas official. More famously, it eliminated both Sheikh Yassin and Dr. Rantissi of Hamas.

Police

Israeli border police (Magav) is a branch of the Israeli national police. In addition to securing Israel's borders, it also engages in counterterrorism operations and cooperates with the IDF in that role. Many members of the force are minorities, including Arabs, Druzes, and others. The force's primary areas of operation include Jerusalem and the West Bank. It has about six thousand members. The force includes four special operations branches:

- **Yamam** is a counterterrorism and hostage rescue unit that has been used in killing and capturing key enemy leaders.
- **Yamas** is an undercover force that Israel officially denies. It works directly with Shabak.
- **Samag** is a tactical unit used for rapid deployment against crime and terror.
- **Matilan** is the branch used for intelligence gathering and infiltration interception.

The Wall

To stop terrorists—and especially suicide bombers—from staging attacks from the West Bank, Israeli authorities erected a system of barriers—wire fences, walls, checkpoints, and ditches between the Palestinian and Israeli portions of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Despite worldwide protests, the barrier system worked to dramatically reduce the number of suicide bombings and other attacks.

The Palestinians complained that the barriers separated them from their farmland and places of employment and that the Israelis were harassing them at checkpoints. Their nonviolent demonstrations and complaints found a global audience and facilitated an effective form of protesting the occupation.[12]

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CHAPTER 17.
FACTIONS, CIVIL WAR, AND OPERATION CAST LEAD, 2006–2010

You will be victorious on the face of this planet. You are the masters of the world on the face of this planet. Yes, the Koran says that you will be victorious, but only if you are believers. Allah willing, you will be victorious while America and Israel will be annihilated, Allah willing.

—Ahmad Bahr, April 13, 2007

The electoral victory of Hamas in 2006 took the world by surprise and changed the nature of the Palestinian resistance. In a sense, it continued the trend of insurgents morphing into legitimate rulers, but the ongoing antagonism between Fatah and Hamas, as well as the deepening conflict with Israel, isolated the Islamists while simultaneously strengthening their grip on the course of the revolution.

TIMELINE

January 2006	Hamas wins a majority in parliament; the Quartet [the United States, the European Union, the United Nations (UN), and Russia] insists that the Palestinian government commit to nonviolence, recognition of Israel, and former agreements.
March 2006	Hamas member Ismail Haniyeh is sworn in as prime minister of the Palestinian Authority (PA).
May 2006	Hamas police in Gaza clash with Fatah loyalists.
June 2006	A Hamas-led tunnel raid kills two and abducts Corporal Gilad Shalit; Israel launches Operation Summer Rains and arrests Hamas legislators and leaders.
July 2006	Hizbollah instigates war in southern Lebanon; Israel invades, but its mediocre performance leads to a cease-fire in August.
July 5, 2006	Hamas launches its first extended-range Qassam rocket, striking Ashkelon.
September 2006–February 2007	Hamas and Fatah battle for control of Gaza and the West Bank, killing many Palestinians; the two sides sign the Mecca Agreement to share power and form a unity government.
June 2007	Renewed fighting between Hamas and Fatah leaves the former in control in Gaza and the latter in control in the West Bank.
November 2007	The United States sponsors a peace conference between Israel and President Abbas in Annapolis.
February 2008	In response to renewed rocket fire, Israel launches Operation Hot Winter.

December 2008	After the expiration of a cease-fire, Hamas fires rockets into Israel; the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) launch Operation Cast Lead.
January 2009	Israel and Hamas announce separate unilateral cease-fires.
May 2010	Turkish activists attempt to break the Israeli blockade but are intercepted; nine Turks are killed.
Fall 2010	Amid continuing direct negotiations between the PA and Israel, Palestinian terrorists continue to target both civilians and military personnel in terror attacks.

ORIGINS AND COURSE OF THE RESISTANCE

After its surprising success in municipal elections in 2005, Hamas decided to participate in the presidential elections for the PA in 2006. The group achieved an unforeseen victory, winning 76 of 132 seats, nearly twice Fatah's 43 seats. The Hamas victory perplexed both the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the world because it was the first time in the history of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict that democratic processes had unseated the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people. Further, Hamas had gained the reputation and designation of a terrorist group, but one that had now used legal, democratic means to achieve governmental authority.[1]

As a consequence of its elevation, Hamas felt compelled to put forward a diplomatic position with regard to Israel. Khaled Meshaal thereupon offered Israel a ten-year truce in exchange for Israel withdrawing from all the occupied territories and recognizing the right of return for all Palestinian refugees—an offer to which Israel did not bother to respond. Meshaal further stipulated that after the cease-fire, Hamas would continue to fight for liberation of Palestine and, under its governance, it would not attempt to stop other groups from attacking Israel.

The Quartet powers—the United States, the European Union, the UN, and Russia—scrambled to carve out a position on Hamas. Not surprisingly, they announced that they would recognize the election results only if Hamas renounced violence and agreed to adhere to all previous international agreements regarding the conflict. Hamas, of course, could not accept the conditions because they flew in the face of

all that Hamas represented. The Quartet powers responded by freezing international aid to the Palestinians.[2]

In March 2006, Hamas formed a coalition government in an attempt to rule the West Bank and Gaza while simultaneously continuing its aggression against Israel. Fatah, assisted by Israeli intelligence, determined to oppose Hamas through demonstrations and violence. Fatah soldiers refused to accept orders from the Hamas-led government, and Fatah targeted Hamas leaders for assassination. Hamas responded in kind.

In June 2006, Hamas ended its cease-fire with Israel, pointing to a shelling incident in Gaza that killed eight Palestinians. Later that month, Hamas's military wing, the Qassam Brigades, along with others, raided Israel, killing two soldiers and seizing Gilad Shalit, an Israeli soldier. Israel responded with Operation Summer Rains, with a purpose to recover Shalit. In this, it failed, but Israel arrested numerous Hamas leaders, including cabinet members and legislators, effectively disrupting the Hamas government.

Over the following year, Hamas and Fatah struggled to come to terms with each other. Saudi Arabia sponsored a meeting in Mecca that called for a joint government, but in the summer of 2007, fighting between the two factions broke out anew. Hamas used the opportunity to sweep Fatah operatives out of the Gaza Strip and took control of the area. Mahmoud Abbas responded by dissolving the Hamas government and establishing his control of the West Bank. The moves left the Palestinians bifurcated into two quasi states: a Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip and a Fatah-controlled West Bank. Some six hundred Palestinians died in battle or from torture and murder in the conflict.

In November 2007, US President George W. Bush attempted to restart a peace process under the rubric of the Roadmap for Peace. President Mahmoud Abbas and Prime Minister Ehud Olmert attended. The one-day meeting was the first time both sides endorsed a two-state solution to the conflict. The initiative brought together two leaders who had the inclination and political strength to attempt a peace plan, but the effort was undermined by the Islamists' continued determination to torpedo any such moves.

Insurgencies that achieve political power inevitably face the difficult challenge of governance—a transition that often conflicts directly with the group's fundamental ideology. With Hamas in at least de facto

political control of Gaza, its officials had to deal with the international community and its persistent demands for peace negotiations. However, in February 2008, Hamas, the Popular Resistance Committees, and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) cooperated in a rocket attack on Ashkelon using the new extended-range 122-millimeter Grad missiles—vehicle-mounted weapons produced in Iran based on the Chinese variant of the original Russian design. The six missiles did only minor damage on the city, but the psychological impact of the new capability to strike deeper into Israel was significant on both sides.

The IDF launched Operation Hot Winter in response. The operation was designed to destroy Hamas's rockets and command infrastructure in Gaza, but the Islamists were able to maintain rocket fire throughout the conflict. The Israeli air force bombed suspected warehouses, and IDF ground forces launched raids to search and seize illegal arms. Hot Winter ended with an IDF withdrawal and inconclusive results.

Hamas and Israel attempted to negotiate a temporary truce in the aftermath of the attack, but there was widespread skepticism on both sides that it would work. In November 2008, an Israeli operation aimed at destroying infiltration tunnels resulted in the deaths of six Hamas operatives. Hamas responded by resuming rocket attacks on Israel, and the truce was over. Israeli leaders were determined to suppress the aggression coming from Gaza, and in this effort, they fell back on their historical stance of assigning blame to the official governing body there, as they had in Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria. This tactic invariably had the effect of increasing the pressure on the offending government to rein in groups operating from its territory—a task it was unable to perform. Hamas remained incapable of controlling the various terrorist groups residing in and operating from Gaza. Thus, it was technically unable to exercise sovereign control over the territory. Israel thereupon launched attacks in an attempt to destroy the groups firing rockets.

Operation Cast Lead

Operation Cast Lead began on December 27, 2008. In his official statement, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert tried to separate the people of Gaza from the Hamas leadership by referring to Hamas and PIJ as "your enemies as they are our enemies."[3] The attacks began with air strikes, and ground forces invaded on January 3. The IDF targeted

headquarters, police stations, weapons and munitions caches, and suspected rocket team locations. On January 5, the IDF entered the city of Gaza itself. Throughout the battle, Hamas continued to fire rockets, and for the first time, those attacks reached Beersheba and Ashdod. The Israeli operation lasted until January 17, 2009, when it unilaterally declared a cease-fire. Hamas followed twelve hours later by declaring a cease-fire as well. Estimates of Palestinian deaths range between 1,100 and 1,400, and thirteen Israelis died.

Figure 17-1. A building destroyed in Rafah during Operation Cast Lead.

The international community condemned both sides of war crimes, but Israel attracted the most criticism, including from the UN Human Rights Council. Although the volume of rocket attacks into Israel diminished somewhat, Operation Cast Lead fell short of achieving its stated objectives. In the larger context of the conflict between Hamas and Israel, however, the operation served as a form of deterrence aimed at bringing Hamas to negotiation. Israel demonstrated its willingness to invade Gaza by air and ground, inflict disproportionate casualties, and then withstand international condemnation without retreating from its position.

Postwar Policy

Khaled Meshaal announced in the summer of 2009 that Hamas was ready to work with the Obama administration, and he outlined the organization's objective: a sovereign Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital, along with recognition of the Palestinian right of return. All sides recognized that the proposals were well outside the bounds that Israel would accept or even discuss. They mirrored Israel's demands that Hamas renounce terror and disarm—a prospect that Hamas would not consider. Thus, leaders on both sides resigned themselves to continued conflict, and there continued to be periodic terror attacks, followed inevitably by Israeli counterstrikes.

The Obama administration continued the policy of attempting to facilitate negotiations between the PA and Israel. However, because the PA could not rein in the Islamic terrorists, it could not negotiate effectively. From the Israeli point of view, the adversary was bifurcated into a PLO-led PA that was incompetent, untrustworthy, and corrupt and fanatic jihadists who refused even to negotiate in good faith.

Figure 17-2. Operation Cast Lead.

LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, AND COMMAND AND CONTROL

Hamas

Ismail Haniyeh, Hamas's first elected prime minister, was born in a refugee camp in Gaza. He was educated in UN schools and graduated from the Islamic University of Gaza with a degree in Arab literature.

He joined Hamas as a student and was imprisoned several times by Israeli authorities until finally released in 1992. He was deported to Lebanon but returned to the University of Gaza and served as the dean there. A close associate of Yassin's, he served in positions of trust within Hamas and was elected to the legislative council in 2006. He was sworn in as prime minister after the faction's electoral success. He continued to defy Mahmoud Abbas and Fatah, and he rejected their attempts to make peace with Israel. He also declined to renounce terrorism despite international pressure. As a consequence of the infighting between Hamas and Fatah, Mahmoud Abbas dismissed him as prime minister in 2007, a move that Haniyeh did not recognize as legitimate. Haniyeh is allegedly a millionaire who made his fortune collecting percentages on goods running through the tunnels from Egypt to Gaza.

Khaled Meshaal was a founding member of Hamas and acted as a spokesman for the faction after its legislative victory in 2006. Widely recognized internationally, he met with Jimmy Carter, Ayatollah Khamenei, and many foreign journalists, adapting his interpretation of Hamas's objectives and intentions in accordance with each audience. While voicing support for Mahmoud Abbas's efforts toward a Palestinian state, he nevertheless continued to insist that Hamas aimed at the liberation of all of Palestine and that it would never disarm to stop resisting.

Mohammed Nazzal was a leader of the Hamas political wing. Raised in the West Bank, he was educated in Kuwait and Pakistan and achieved a degree in chemistry. He joined Hamas in 1989 and served on its ruling political bureau, often operating in Jordan.

Fatah

Mahmoud Abbas was elected president of the PA in 2005. With Hamas's legislative victory in 2006, Abbas had to struggle for legitimacy and control of the Palestinian resistance. He was instrumental in the Hamas–Fatah split, and thereafter, he took the lead in negotiating with Israel and the West. His goal was twofold: (1) to reestablish Fatah and the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and (2) to achieve statehood. He was unsuccessful in both endeavors, but he continued to command a political constituency among the West Bank population.

IDEOLOGY

The key test of Hamas's ideology came with its electoral victory in 2006. Through the years of developing its insurgency against both Israel and the PLO, the group argued for a return to Islamic principles and the liberation of all of Palestine from the Zionists. It insisted that it would never negotiate with or make peace with Israel. After its legislative victory and the subsequent split from the PA, however, its leaders have conducted desultory and indirect negotiations with Israel. Still, they insisted that a temporary truce was as far as they would go, and they ultimately strove for the destruction of the State of Israel and its replacement with an Islamic state in all of Palestine.

As for tactics, Hamas continued to refuse to renounce terrorism, insisting that it was both legitimate and the only viable military alternative available to them. PIJ preferred terror attacks against the Israeli military and government, but Hamas also considered civilians legitimate targets because, the group reasoned, all Israelis serve to prop up the state. The group's insistence on the use of terror precludes any real diplomatic breakthrough with Western powers, which in turn hamstrings its ability to negotiate to achieve its objectives.

Hamas defied predictions when it triumphed in the democratic experiment of 2006. It demonstrated to the world that democracy is not synonymous with human rights or peaceful intentions. Indeed, its ideological hard-line was likely a component of its popularity with voters in war-torn Palestine.

LEGITIMACY

The contest for legitimacy between Fatah and Hamas came into sharp focus with the election of 2006. Before that, the PLO and Fatah could boast a long history of winning and defending the right to be the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Yassin and his disciples in Hamas, however, insisted that the PLO was secular and a puppet of both Israel and the West—not to mention persistently corrupt—and was therefore not the rightful government. The struggle for legitimacy remained unresolved. On the one side was the "establishment" power of the PLO with its favorable acceptance among international powers and even a grudging acceptance in Israel. On the other

was a powerful revolutionary movement that deprecated the PLO for all of its inherent weaknesses. The fundamental disunity of the Palestinian resistance therefore left unanswered the question of who had the right to rule.

ENDNOTES

[1] Beverley Milton-Edwards and Stephen Farrell, *Hamas* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2010), 230–259.

[2] Ibid., 262.

[3] Ehud Olmert, "Israeli PM Olmert Statement on Launching Operation," *The Jewish Virtual Library*, accessed July 15, 2015, http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Peace/olmert122708.html.

CHAPTER 18.
CONCLUSION

The conflict between the Palestinians and Israel continued in the ensuing years, and as of this writing, there is little hope for peace or unity among the Palestinian factions. Hamas's emergence onto the stage after the 2006 election was a deathblow to the legitimacy of Fatah and the PLO, and it demonstrated an irreparable rift among the Palestinians. The Islamists and the PLO continued to espouse different and incompatible ideas for an end state. The PLO had a long, frustrating history of failure that eroded its ideological zeal and replaced it with a pragmatic, compromising approach to achieving its political aims. The Islamists instead drew strength from their religious ideology and apocalyptic prescription for resolving the problem of Israel. Within Hamas and the other Islamist organizations, factions emerged (as had happened within the PLO), some of which leaned toward accommodation and moderation, but they failed to gain enough traction to achieve decisive advantage.

Hamas confronted the obligation to govern Gaza with continued defiance. Some in Israel and the international community hoped that in stepping up to rule, the organization's inflexible ideology would give way to practical compromise, but such was not the case. The PLO's gradual evolution was aided by the collapse of the Soviet Union and fairly decisive military defeat at the hands of the Israelis. However, Hamas continued to enjoy sponsorship and meaningful support from abroad—chiefly from Iran—and Israel was unable to achieve a clear military dominance against either Hamas or Hizbollah. Hence, there was little incentive for a calming of jihadist impulses.

Throughout its long struggle, the Palestinian resistance—against the Ottomans, the British Mandate, and Israel—failed to achieve anything approaching unity of effort, let alone unity of command. Perpetually at cross-purposes, embracing at times radically different ideologies, and in deadly conflict for legitimacy in the eyes of the Palestinians, the resistance leaders were never able to overcome the centrifugal forces driving them apart. Instead, the resistance remained a hydra, its many heads attacking each other as often as its common enemy.

In part, the failure of the Palestinian resistance emanated from the leaders' attachments to ideologies that distracted from the objective of liberation. On the political left, socialists and communists attempted to emulate leftist insurgencies of the past. Those revolutions—in Russia, China, Cuba, Angola, Vietnam, and elsewhere—however, were aimed primarily at changing the nature of governance in their respective

states. The Palestinian resistance, on the other hand, aimed—at least in theory—to remove the Zionist invaders and restore the land to its proper owners—the indigenous Palestinian Arabs. Thus, the resistance was, or should have been, focused on the destruction of the Zionist political authority and the removal or subjugation of the immigrant population. Instead, the effort bifurcated and included the distracting business of class warfare along ideological lines. In part, this was a source of strength because it helped the PLO garner international support. However, with the collapse of Soviet communism and the triumph of the West in the Cold War, the leftist ideology of factions within the PLO lost traction.

Likewise, the Islamist factions had two objectives, which they viewed as compatible: liberation of Palestine and Islamicization of the population. When the former became unachievable, the Islamists proved unable to graduate to diplomatic compromise. Instead, they hardened their religious ideology and retreated to apocalyptic expectations as an alternative to pragmatism. There were exceptions to this paradigm, but they failed to garner enough political support to succeed. In the aftermath of 9/11, Western powers had little interest in differentiating between al-Qaeda's brand of jihad and that of Hamas. Like the leftists before them, the Islamists had attached themselves to a losing ideology.

It was the failure to achieve unity that most accounted for the inability of the Palestinian resistance to succeed. The determination of the Zionists—along with their ability to overcome their own centrifugal forces—thus prevailed and led to Israel's strong position both regionally and in the international community. The enduring lesson for any resistance movement is the critical importance of unifying the elements and factions that emerge when people rise up to rebel.

TECHNICAL APPENDIX

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

All ARIS Tier 1 ¬Insurgency Case Studies are presented using the same framework. While not a strict template, it is a method used by the team to ensure a common treatment of the cases, which will aid readers in comparing one case with another.

All of the sources used in preparation of these case studies are unclassified and for the most part are secondary, rather than primary sources. Where we could, we used primary sources to describe the objectives of the revolution and to give a sense of the perspective of the revolutionary or another participant or observer. This limitation to unclassified sources allows a much wider distribution of the case studies while hindering the inclusion of revealing or perhaps more accurate information. We selected sources that provide the most reliable and accurate research we could obtain, endeavoring to use sources we believe to be authoritative and unbiased.

These case studies are intended to be strictly neutral in terms of bias toward the revolution or those to whom the revolution was or is directed. We sought to balance any interpretive bias in our sources and in the presentation of information so that the case may be studied without any indication by the author of moral, ethical, or other judgment.

While we used a multi-methodological approach in our analysis, the analytical method that underpins these case studies can most accurately be described as "contextual social/political analysis." Research in the social sciences is often done conducted one of two opposing perspectives. The first is a positivist perspective, which looks for universal laws to describe actions in the human domain and considers context to be background noise. The second is a postmodernist or constructivist perspective, which denies the existence of general laws and attributes of social and political structures and processes, and as a consequence focuses almost entirely on local factors. Contextual analysis is "something in between," in which context is used to facilitate the discovery of regularities in social and political processes and thereby promote systematic knowledge.[1] In practice, contextual social/political analysis balances these two perspectives, combining a comparative understanding of the actors, events, activities, relationships, and interactions associated with the case of interest with an appreciation for the significant role context played in how and why events transpired.

"Context" includes factors, settings, or circumstances that in some way may act on or interact with actors, organizations, or other entities within the country being studied, often enabling or constraining actions. It is a construct or interpretation of the properties of a system, organization, or situation that are necessary to provide meaning beyond what is objectively observable.[2]

Although we have applied this methodology throughout these case studies, the section entitled *Context and Catalysts of the Insurgency* focuses heavily on contextual aspects. Examples of elements of context often used in this type of analysis include culture, history, place (location), population (demography), and technology. Within these studies, we present the primary discussion of context as follows.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Social scientists often cite features of the physical environment as a risk factor for conflict—whether it is slope elevation, mountainous terrain, or rural countryside. Rough terrain[3] is a typical, topographical feature correlated with rebel activity, as it provides safe havens and resources for insurgents. Palestinian resistance groups likewise have sought sanctuary in rough terrain—from the deserts of the Negev to the Judean highlands to the Anti-Lebanon mountains. Less clear are the reasons behind the correlation that researchers have found between rough terrain and conflict. Most theories for this relationship center on insurgent viability and a state's capacity to govern. In short, rough terrain is correlated with conflict, but that does not mean it causes conflict or that rough terrain is necessary for a conflict to emerge.[4, 5]

Other geographic features, such as location and distance, have an impact on conflict patterns and processes. Generally, regions farther from the capital are at higher risk for conflict, as are those closer to international borders. Another important consideration when analyzing the impact of geography on conflict patterns and processes is the expanse of the conflict. While it is common to speak of entire countries embroiled in conflict, actual conflicts generally occur only in a small percentage of a state's territory, typically 15 percent. Despite that low figure, however, internal conflicts can sometimes encompass nearly half of the territory of the host country.[6]

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Revolutions or insurgencies do not emerge from formless ether but, rather, take their shape from accumulated layers of historical experience. Not only are actors in insurgent movements important participants in history, but they are also its end users. That is, insurgent movements are not only shaped by historical experience, but they also actively seek to understand and manipulate the key components of those experiences—whether historical events, persons, or narratives—to accomplish their objectives. Thus, sustained, organized political violence cannot be adequately explained without analyzing the historical context in which it developed. Some of the themes analyzed in this section are the legacies, whether organizational, political, or social, of conflict over time; the formation of group and organizational identity and its attendant narrative; the development of societal and political institutions; and the changing relationships, and perceptions thereof, that balance national, local, and/or group interests.[7]

Charles Tilly, a pioneering sociologist studying political conflict, made important observations about the relationship between social movements and historical context. Several of these are described below:

- Social movements incorporate locally available cultural materials such as language, social categories, and widely shared beliefs; they therefore vary as a function of historically determined local cultural accumulations.
- Path dependency prevails in social movements as in other political processes, such that events occurring at one stage in a sequence constrain the range of events that is possible at later stages.
- Once social movements have occurred and acquired names, both the name and competing representations of social movements became available as signals, models, threats, and/or aspirations for later actors.[8]

While Tilly's observations address social movements, usually understood as nonviolent political movements, he and his collaborators argued that contentious political activity belonged on a continuum, not in separate categories.[9] Violent and nonviolent groups belonged to the same genus but used different "repertoires of contention." Thus, the same methodologies used to explain nonviolent political activity

could also be useful in explaining violent political activity. Our extensive research on nearly thirty insurgencies supports this theory. The insurgencies, but also the individual participants themselves, often began their careers by engaging in nonviolent political activity, transitioning to violence sometimes only after many years. To connect the observations described above more explicitly with revolutionary and insurgent activities, we examine each of these general observations of social movements and apply them to the specific activities associated with an insurgency or revolution. Revolutions and insurgencies typically begin as local or regional movements, and, as such, they include all of the aspects of local cultural material, which, as previously mentioned, contributes to the ontology of a social movement.

Insurgent activities frequently cross borders and have an influence on the societies and movements in adjacent regions. Actions taken by an insurgent organization at one point in time can eliminate or enable possible future options for furthering the insurgency. Groups associated with revolutions and insurgencies usually seek recognition for their actions, so it is important for them to have names and symbols (emblems, flags, etc.) that can be easily associated with them and their causes. These representations then become the public branding of the organization and are used by supporters and detractors alike to further the narrative or counternarrative of a movement. Given these factors, the historical context within which any insurgency, revolution, or other internal conflict takes place is a critical element in analyzing these events.

SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS

How do socioeconomic conditions affect insurgencies? One important socioeconomic variable to consider is per-capita gross domestic product (GDP), and the high correlation of this variable with political stability is among one of the most robust findings in the analysis of conflict dynamics. In general, some of the relevant socioeconomic factors that impact political violence include poverty, relative deprivation, opportunity costs, and ethnic nationalism.

With respect to poverty, some political scientists argue that countries with lower levels of economic development are more likely to witness political violence.[10] Poverty describes the poor material wealth of

individuals or societies, but it also tells researchers that the country is likely suffering from a host of other ills. Rather than just a simple measure of wealth, a country's low GDP per capita is also a proxy measure for poor state capacity. States with poor capacity feature a central government with a limited ability to project power across their territory to enforce laws, policies, and regulations.[11] Often, the governments in these states have weak institutions, poor governance, and widespread corruption, all factors that enable insurgents to more easily recruit and operate. For instance, in the Gaza Strip, pervasive poverty provides a ready recruitment pool for Hamas and other groups, while the dysfunctional and corrupt Palestinian Authority proved unable to police dissidents or prevent violence. However, poverty by itself is not enough to predict an insurgency. It is best understood as a risk factor for political conflict.[12]

Researchers also look at additional factors that are closely related to poverty, such as the presence of a large, landless population. The Arab defeats in 1948 and 1967 created large and growing populations of refugees, which in turn became breeding grounds for discontent and insurgency. Sporadic media attention to the wretched conditions in the camps likewise gives insurgent groups international sympathy and occasionally financial support. Poverty can also introduce "selective incentives" to participate in insurgencies. These incentives are the advantages that accrue to participants, whether economic gain or enhanced social status and political power, gained by participating in a successful rebellion.[13] Other research has also indicated that countries with extensive patron–client networks, large agricultural sectors, and highly uneven patterns of land ownership are also at risk for political conflict.

Another branch of research related to poverty looks at how a government's efforts to modernize society and the economy can lead to increased tensions.[14] More specifically, this perspective argues that the modernization process is inherently conflictual because, in practice, it is often uneven, as greater emphasis is usually placed on economic and social uplift of downtrodden groups without developing a political framework for adequately incorporating them in the political process. Elite members of the *ancien régime* may see their fortunes decline relative to newly empowered classes, yet the latter remain disenchanted as the former may still control the levers of political power. This dynamic was present in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Palestine

as successful Zionist enterprises, sometimes externally funded, bought up land and grew businesses in urban centers. Because Zionist entrepreneurs favored Jewish labor or consigned Arab laborers to low-wage jobs, this general modernization of Palestine's economy widened the socioeconomic gap between Jews and Arabs.

Another proposed socioeconomic factor theorized to contribute to conflict is relative political, social, and economic grievances. In *Why Men Rebel,* Ted Gurr argued that political violence can be explained by relative deprivation, which occurs when individuals or groups feel deprived of resources or opportunities in comparison with others in society.[15] If political allegiance is based on ethnicity and one ethnic minority group experiences deprivation relative to the ethnic majority group (as happened with dispossessed Arab farmers and urban poor in the early twentieth century), then the minority may give up hope for satisfying its aspirations within a unitary state and seek to detach itself from the nation.

Social scientists also link poor economic development to reduced opportunity costs for potential rebels. People mired in poverty have few opportunities for economic gain. For these individuals, joining an insurgency is not a sacrifice of resources in other, more lucrative fields. Instead, joining an insurgency may offer economic benefits, making recruitment easier for insurgent groups.[16] Lowered opportunity costs are magnified in areas with "lootable" resources such as drugs or diamonds that can be used to finance an insurgency and enrich its participants.

The analysis of the socioeconomic factors underlying political conflict also includes examining the dynamics between different ethnic groups in a state. After the Cold War, the incidence of wars motivated by identity grievances proliferated. Social scientists refer to these conflicts as ethnic wars. Ethnic wars may also be influenced by additional factors, such as relative deprivation and political exclusion, but the fulcrum of these conflicts is identity. The clash of ethnic identities and fears of cultural extinction can be the animus motivating these conflicts. Political scientist Benedict Anderson defined a nation as "an imagined political community" in which "members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion."[17] Anderson's seminal concept highlights how groups, whether nations

or ethnicities, together construct a common identity through shared linguistic, regional, or religious attributes, among others.

These dynamics are also present in ethnic groups. As the conflict between Zionists and Palestinian Arabs grew, and particularly after the disaster of 1967, the Arabs began to cultivate a shared sense of nationality centered in Palestine and separate from a wider pan-Arab identity. The surrounding Arab powers—especially Egypt, Jordan, and Syria—had proven themselves unable and seemingly unwilling to solve the problem of Zionism. This failure left Palestinians—both the people and the PLO—with a sense of being on their own among their Arab neighbors. With this sense of isolation, the concept of Palestinian nationalism grew.

The social science research on ethnic identity and political conflict can be divided into three primary perspectives. Despite a burgeoning research program, social scientists do not agree on how ethnic identity impacts the dynamics of insurgency. Early research identified the extent of ethnic heterogeneity as a motivating factor for conflict. Ethnic heterogeneity refers to the diversity of different ethnic groups in a country. It was thought that the more ethnic groups resided in a country, the more likely it was to experience political conflict.[18] Another school of thought argued that other risk factors, such as low levels of economic development and weak institutions, were more important contributors to political conflict than the ethnic makeup of a country.[19] The third and final perspective developed more nuanced arguments. These scholars argued that ethnic groups that were excluded from political power were most likely to rebel. A widely used data set, the Minorities at Risk database, tracks disenfranchised ethnic groups all over the world.[20] In the same vein, other research has added to arguments based on political exclusion. This research looks at how the distribution of power in the political system among competing groups affects conflict. Ethnic groups are more likely to rebel when the center of power in the country is segmented among competing groups and when a smaller ethnic majority rules over and excludes a larger ethnic majority.[21]

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

When considering government and politics in the contextual analysis of insurgency, it is helpful to begin by focusing on the impact of

ideas and institutions on the decisions and actions of stakeholders in the conflict. An analysis of the impact of ideas requires understanding the political discourses within state and society and the dynamics between the state and challengers to its authority. When looking at how institutions influence decisions and actions, researchers consider the type of government and the capacity of the state to govern. Together, these factors help explain how insurgent groups are able to mobilize and operate in a state.

Civil society groups independent of the government contribute to the political context in which insurgencies emerge. Indeed, such groups may be among the main actors within a rebellion. More specifically, we have discussed insurgency or revolution as a specific instance of a social movement. Social movements have been defined as "networks of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups, or associations, engaged in a political or cultural conflict, on the basis of a shared collective identity."[22] Government and politics remain the primary means through which ideas are enacted within society. Social movements (such as insurgencies) are another. The key difference between social movements and other means within society is that social movements (1) exhibit strong lines of conflict with political or social opponents, (2) involve dense interorganizational networks, and (3) are made up of individuals whose sense of collective identity exists beyond any specific campaign or engagement.[23]

Social scientists often look at how different regime types shape patterns of political violence in a country. Regime types are broad categories, such as democratic and autocratic, used to describe the political structure of a government. Currently, social scientists favor these institutional factors over the socioeconomic factors, previously discussed, for their efficacy in explaining political violence in a country. Simply put, "most states have potential insurgents with grievances and resources, but almost always possess far greater military power than do insurgents." With these advantages, competent regimes are usually capable of defeating armed challenges to their authority. Weak and divided regimes, however, are less capable of defending their authority.[24]

As a result, social scientists often look at a state's regime type as a significant factor for explaining the emergence of political conflict. Many of the initial studies on this topic used a simple categorization of regimes as either democratic or autocratic, but researchers have also adopted a three-way categorization that includes democracy and

autocracy as categories, as well as a middle category of "anocracy," which characterizes a government that has both democratic and autocratic elements. Although the findings have recently been challenged, anocracies are thought to be at higher risk for insurgencies than fully democratic or autocratic regimes.[25]

Most researchers agree that developed, mature democratic states are the least vulnerable to political conflict. Secure democracies provide pressure valves for the release of societal discontent through well-trod legal-institutional channels. In the United States, for instance, citizens are able to vote leaders out of office, contribute to groups lobbying for their interests, or engage in civil resistance to voice their discontent. If radicalized resistance movements were to opt to use violent or illegal means to achieve their political objectives in the United States, they would have difficulty raising support. For the average citizen, the costs are simply too high and the expected payoff too low.

In highly repressive regimes, the situation is nearly a mirror opposite of the situation facing open democratic societies. Highly repressive regimes provide no legal channels for political opposition or dissent. In these authoritarian states, it is difficult for political dissenters to form an organized political opposition to the regime. These regimes usually have highly refined secret police and other intelligence-gathering capabilities. Before the Syrian civil war and the Arab Spring, for instance, the Assad regime kept dissent in check through its secret police, the Mukhabarat. The police had an extensive intelligence apparatus supplemented by ordinary civilians encouraged to inform on family, friends, and colleagues. As a result, most Syrians were highly suspicious of voicing dissent against the Assad regime.[26] In such regimes, any attempts at opposition are usually met with arbitrary arrests, interrogations, and detentions. Political opposition is usually stillborn, crushed by the overwhelming force of the state's security apparatus. For the average citizen in these repressive regimes, such as North Korea, the costs of resistance are simply too high.

However, in today's world, many states fall somewhere in between these two extremes. Social scientists call these states, which combine democratic and authoritarian features, hybrid regimes, or anocracies. These states might, for instance, have nominally democratic elections but might rig or otherwise corrupt election results. As a result, the ruling party or political leaders never face serious challenges to their authority. In the case of Israel, there is a highly developed parliamentary

democracy that gives opportunity for a wide spectrum of political expression for citizens. However, Arabs in the occupied territories have no such opportunity. Instead, they are subject to monitoring and arrest if they resist the Israeli government.

Researchers find that political conflict is more likely to arise in these anocracies than in truly democratic or repressive states.[27] This finding is referred to as the "inverted U-curve" because the concentration of political conflict on the authoritarian–democratic scale falls in the middle. These states typically allow just enough political and civil liberties that political opposition is able to form. The inherent contradictions in these states, which claim to be democratic but engage in activities that do not support these claims, also fuel societal grievances. When the political opposition mounts a challenge to the state, security forces often violently suppress it, leading some resistance movements to adopt violence as a strategy to achieve their political objectives.[28]

ENDNOTES

1 Charles Tilly and Robert E. Gordon, "It Depends," in *The Oxford Handbook of Contextual Political Analysis*, eds. Robert E. Gordon and Charles Tilly (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 6, 9.

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4 The relationship between terrain and conflict can be described as follows: "rebels who seek refuge in the mountains are better able to withstand a militarily superior opposition . . . that rebel groups will take advantage of such terrain, whenever available. We do not believe that terrain in and of itself is a cause of conflict, nor does the rough terrain proposition anticipate such a relationship."

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Figure 2-2. Topography of Palestine. Derived from map by Sadalmelik (Ownwork) [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3AIsrael_Topography.png.

Figure 2-3. Galilee. "Sanda Kaufman's Image Collection: Galilee," Cleveland State Univesrity of Ohio professor webpage, [Public domain], http://cua6.urban.csuohio.edu/~sanda/pic/travel/israel/galil/galilee.jpg.

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Figure 2-5. Map of the West Bank. Derived from *The World Factbook*, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/we.html.

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