

THE TWO INTIFADAS
AN ANALYSIS OF THE STRATEGIES AND TACTICS OF THE
PALESTINIANS AND THE ISRAELIS

Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy Thesis

Submitted by Jonathan Ron

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**The Two Intifadas- An Analysis of the Strategies and
Tactics of the Palestinians and the Israelis**

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Introduction

The Israel-Palestine conflict had always been a controversial matter even before Israel's independence. Although the intensity of the conflict went up and down through different times in history, it can be clearly said that in 1987 the conflict moved to a new era. This is the era of the INTIFADAS and the PEACE PROCESS.

The definition of the word Intifada in Arabic is 'the involuntary shaking of someone with a fever or shaking off something like a dog trying to shake off a tick'. Once the uprising started, the word was adopted by Arafat himself to describe the new phase in the struggle and the meaning of the word became more familiar as 'shaking off'. Arafat took the term from previous events in Egypt and Lebanon when different groups decided to revolt.¹

It is common to think that the Intifada in 1987 and the Al Aqsa Intifada which started in 2000 are the same and that the Al Aqsa Intifada is a continuation of the first one. The fact that both bear the same name – Intifada - creates a false impression that the Al Aqsa Intifada is merely the second part of the first Intifada. In this paper I will attempt to prove that this is a common mistake and that the two Intifadas are very different in the tactics, strategies and policies on both sides. The results of each Intifada differed significantly as well. The paper will describe each Intifada by analyzing each side's tactics, strategies and policies. This will be followed by an analysis of the differences between the two Intifadas including the varied outcomes of each.

¹ Shif, Ze'ev and Ya'ari Ehud 'Intifada' Tel Aviv, Shoken Publishing House, 1990, Page 21.

Background

The Palestinian struggle against Israel is not a new phenomenon that appeared in the last couple of decades. It started in the beginning of the 20th century with the uprising in 1921 against the Jewish settlements in Palestine and it has been going on until today. The struggle between the Palestinians and the Israelis has taken on many different forms and different types of strategies. During the 1920's and the "Arab uprising" in 1936 there was a mass movement by the local Palestinians who protested, went on strikes and carried out violent attacks against the Jewish settlements and the British army. There was very active popular participation. The response of the Jewish Yeshuv was very defensive. The Yeshuv formed at first the 'Shomer' (the guard) organization that meant to protect the Jewish towns and villages. Later on the organization grew and became the military body of the Jewish Settlements, its name was changed to the 'Hagana' (the defense). The next phase of the struggle was in 1947 after the UN's vote for the creation of the state of Israel. At this stage there was a conventional war where the Arab states surrounding Israel attacked with the help of armed Palestinians groups. There was no room for active popular participation, and the war was managed by the Arab Armies².

Once the war of independence ended many Palestinians, within the new Israeli borders, fled to the surrounding countries. This was due to fear of the Israeli government and the hope that they could return within a short time. When Israel decided that it will not let anyone return into its borders the Infiltration period started. Palestinians started infiltrating Israeli borders for several reasons as politics and terrorism, small groups of Palestinians were trained by different groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood to raid

² "Israel, Country, Asia." The Columbia Encyclopedia. 6th ed. 2004.

Israeli targets in order to spark another war. Other political reasons were revenge against the IDF and local Israeli Arabs for supporting Israel. The surrounding countries also trained groups, such as the Fadayuns in Egypt, to use terror for undermining the new Israeli government. Other reasons were resettlement and repossession of property theft, robbery and intelligence.³

Israel in return built a fenced boarder with mines. When Palestinian raids kept on taking place Israel reacted with counter raids with its neighbors territories against Palestinian camps and military targets. Most known was Unit 101, led by Ariel Sharon, which was founded in 1953 for the purpose of carrying out those insurgencies.⁴

In 1964, the Palestinian struggle moved to a new stage with the foundation of the PLO. The new tactic was terrorism. The PLO and other factions started committing terror acts including an attempt to blow up the main water pipeline of Israel in 1965, the kidnapping of planes, and the most known act: the killing of the Israeli Olympic athletes in the Munich Olympic Games of 1972.

During the 70's the PLO moved to Lebanon and attacked Israel by shooting rockets into Israel and infiltrating the border. As a result, Israel went into Lebanon and guerrilla warfare started between the PLO and the Israeli army. Other examples are the infiltrations of terrorist through the northern boarder that ended in terror attacks against the northern population such as the taking over of a school in Ma'alot in 1974 killing 22 Israeli students and teachers. Israel retaliated in two ways. One way was hunting down and assassinating the terrorists responsible for the terror attack in Munich. The second

³ Morris, Benni, 'Israel's Boarder Wars 1949-1956' Oxford, Klarendon Press, 1997. Page 69-99

⁴ Ibid, Page 212-230

response was operations and raids against Palestinian camps in Jordan, Gaza and Lebanon.

In 1987, a new phase in the Israel/Palestine fight started, the INTIFADA, which meant the popular struggle in Arabic. It was a local uprising that spread all over the occupied territories. This was the first major act done by the local Palestinians in the struggle against Israel since the occupation in 1967. Following the Intifada, the peace process began and lasted up until the year 2000 when the Al Aqsa Intifada started.

The First INTIFADA: A Civil Resistance

Whenever the word Intifada comes up, the first picture that comes to mind is of a child throwing a stone at an Israeli soldier pointing his rifle at him. Although this was common during the seven years of the first Palestinian uprising, later to be known as the first Intifada, it was much broader than just this situation. The Intifada was spread throughout the whole of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and across all the different social classes in the occupied territories.

On December 8th 1987, an army tank transporter hit several Palestinian cars in a road accident just by the Erez Crossing point at the northern part of the Gaza Strip. The truck killed four Palestinian workers coming back from work in Israel, three of them were from the Jebalya refugee camp. Once word of the four dead Palestinians reached the streets of Gaza, the crowd saw it as an intentional action by the Israeli army and demanded revenge⁵. What seemed to be another uprising by the local youth of the Jebalya refugee camp soon spread through the rest of the Gaza Strip and to the West Bank. Although this was the official reason for the starting of the Intifada, the occupied territories were 'a barrel full of explosives' ready to explode on any given day. In December 1986, the Israeli army shot two Birzeit University students. This caused a mass demonstration in the streets of Gaza. The Army responded by going in and arresting the protesters which ended the demonstrations by the end of the month.

In January 1987, the Israeli government decided to deport Muhammad Dakhlan, a twenty year old leader of the Fattah youth movement, *the Shabiba* (Dakhlan later became

⁵ "Chapter 3 Uprising in Gaza." Intifada: The Palestinian Uprising against Israeli Occupation. Eds. Lockman, Zachary and Joel Beinin. Boston, MA: South End Press, 1989. 43-55.

the head of the main security forces in Gaza under the Palestinian authority). This caused more protests during January and February. In August, an Israeli lieutenant was shot in midday in the middle of Gaza, and while the army failed to respond, the Palestinians realized that the army is losing grip over Gaza in general and the refugee camps in particular. The attacks on both sides continued, but it always stayed at the local scale until December 8th⁶. Although no one really foresaw the coming of the Intifada and its magnitude, the signs were actually in front of the Israeli policy makers, but they chose to ignore them. During 1987 there was an increase in cases of public disturbance compared to the previous year. Violent protests, tire burnings, stone throwing, and road blocking became almost a common thing. The difference was that until December 8th it was usually school kids taking part in those protests.⁷

Although the Gaza Strip was much more volatile, the situation in the West Bank wasn't much different. The daily life of the Palestinians was becoming harder and harder under the Israeli occupation. As a result of the frustration of the local Palestinians once riots started in Gaza on December 8th it spread to the West Bank, and on December 9th protests started in some of the refugee camps such as Balata camp.⁸

The first statement by the Unified National Leadership of Uprising (UNLP), made up of local Palestinian leaders, came out on January 8th 1988. This was the official move that made the Intifada something more than another stage in the everyday normal cycle of violence that was going on prior to December 8th⁹.

⁶ Nassar, Jamal R. and Roger Heacock, eds. Intifada: Palestine at the Crossroads. New York: Praeger, 1990.

⁷ Shif, Ze'ev and Ya'ari Ehud 'Intifada' Tel Aviv, Shoken Publishing House, 1990. Page 26

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Lockman, Zachary and Joel Beinin, eds. Intifada: The Palestinian Uprising against Israeli Occupation. Boston, MA: South End Press, 1989.

As will be shown in this chapter, the first Intifada was much more than mere violence between the local Palestinians and the Israeli army. There was a well organized coordination between the different social classes where each and every class had its own part in the resistance against the Israeli authorities.

During the first month of the conflict, Gaza Strip and the West Bank were 'in flames' and the frustration of the last twenty years came out to the streets. The Palestinians used all they could to fight against the confused Israeli military. The main method was to use large crowds out on the main streets throwing stones and petrol bombs. Once the spark of the fight was there the actions of the Palestinians went beyond the stone throwing and the rioting. It became a more strategic fight that involved different aspects in the daily Palestinian life.

At the start it was mainly the working class that was taking part in the fight, but once it became a prolonged event, like those before December 8th, the fight became a united fight of the Palestinians where each and every group had its own part and role in the resistance against Israel.

The Refugee Camps

When Israel took over the occupied territories it also took over the twenty eight refugee camps in the cities (eight in the Gaza Strip and twenty in the West Bank). Israel always saw these refugee camps as the center of the resistance against it and the base for terrorism. This is why it treated those camps with an 'iron fist' in order to contain and deter the local resistance. This policy involved frequent army patrols inside the camps, house demolitions and other hard measures. The 'iron fist' policy backfired on the Israeli

government and created a more resistant population that got more and more fed up with the oppression instead of making them deterred and fear the government¹⁰.

The daily life in the camps provided a fertile ground for the Palestinian resistance that was rooted within those areas. The population in the camps can be divided into three main categories: the nationalist activists, the religious movement and the independents with a small network of collaborators¹¹.

The national activists: This is the most influential group of all in the camp. It is made of the youth, students, laborers and the professionals. The most active political groups are the Fattah, the Popular Front of the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Palestinian Communist Party.

The religious movement: the religious movement is usually affiliated with the 'Muslim Brotherhood' that later came to be known as Hamas. Although Hamas is the biggest and strongest movement, the Islamic Jihad was also very active and the two are the most politically involved and most violent. There are the less politically involved Hes Al Thrir and the Sufis. All the religious movements were based around the mosques and there main agenda was to incorporate Islam and nationalism.

The independents: they are also called the 'non-aligned' or the 'non-political'. This group is made of the elders that usually stood in between the first two groups. It is said that their hearts are with the religious and their minds with the nationalists. This group is important because it took the role of mediating and soothing between the two camps.¹²

¹⁰ Nassar, Jamal R. and Roger Heacock, eds. Intifada: Palestine at the Crossroads. New York: Praeger, 1990.

¹¹ Ibid

¹² ibid

The collaborators: the Israeli authority managed to recruit in many of these camps a network of collaborators. The network was usually made of common criminals, drug users and other people that were easily blackmailed and threatened. Lists of those people were published throughout the camps in different times. Those lists were usually not reliable but caused some mistrust between the Palestinians.¹³

The fact that the Intifada became such a widespread protest was not because of what was going on in the refugee camps. The protests and demonstrations were going on there before the Intifada started, as was mentioned before. It was the fact that the violence spread from the camps to the towns and villages that made it such a strong statement. The violence started in the Jabalya refugee camp in Gaza as a response to the truck accident, but the death of another Palestinian the day after caused it to spread to the Balata camp in the West Bank where four more died by the hand of the Israeli army¹⁴. From there it spread to the rest of the camps all over the occupied territories. The first phase of the uprising, between December and February, was fought by the people in the refugee camps, while the surrounding villages and towns supported them with food gathering and solidarity. By mid-December protests became a daily routine and central committees were created to coordinate between the local committees to create a guarding system. As soon as the uprising broke out, the collaborators were the first to pay the price of their betrayal. The collaborators on the lists that were published by the different groups were beaten up and some even killed by the local protestors¹⁵. From this point the committees

¹³ *ibid*

¹⁴ "Chapter 3 Uprising in Gaza." Intifada: The Palestinian Uprising against Israeli Occupation. Eds. Lockman, Zachary and Joel Beinin. Boston, MA: South End Press, 1989. 43-55.

¹⁵ Nassar, Jamal R. and Roger Heacock, eds. Intifada: Palestine at the Crossroads. New York: Praeger, 1990.

and the crowd managed to get the surrounding neighborhoods and villages to join the struggle.

The Villages in the Intifada

During the twenty year occupation between 1967 and 1987 the Israeli government controlled the West Bank and Gaza in general and the villages in particular through different means. One was through a wide network of collaborators and Palestinians that were the local police force. Another was appointing mayors and heads of villages (Mukhtars) that were not collaborators in the full sense but were in close touch with the Israeli authorities; the Mukhtars were usually the village elders.

Throughout the 80's new committees started to come up in the villages. Those 'Popular Committees' started as communist committees that provided work force wherever needed. Once the Intifada started, these committees became a competing force to the local leadership of the village and the "war" was between the Israeli army and the popular committees over the villages¹⁶.

By December 18th the uprising spread from Gaza to the villages around it and the villages around Hebron. At first, the Popular Committees were involved in collecting food and supplies for the refugee camps in support for their cause. Slowly they developed underground networks that helped the whole infrastructure of the resistance to the Israeli authorities.

The power of the Mukhtars was already declining because of their affiliation with Israel and also because the peasant class was being replaced by the working Class (that

¹⁶ Ibid

will be discussed later on throughout the paper) which didn't see the Mukhtars as the right mayors just because they were the elderly. In order to help them the Israeli authorities set up the village councils made of a group of Palestinians to control the village¹⁷.

The Israeli army tried to have the Mukhtars help them in calming down the uprising in the villages by summoning them on the first week of January 1988. The Mukhtars refused to go against the Palestinian struggle. Once they refused, the army maintained the councils as the head of the village until the popular committees clashed with them and burned down those council houses. The importance of those committees is that it proved to the Palestinians and to the Israeli army that there is a formation of Palestinian organizations and bodies that have control over the people.

Meanwhile the uprising was generating its own strategy which came to be known as the Civil Disobedience. This involved the dissolution of every Israeli institution that was a part of Palestinian life. For example, defying military orders, resigning from the police, not paying taxes, resigning from the councils and more¹⁸.

At the same time the militias in the villages were in charge of the commercial strikes and making sure that it was being followed. Also they were the fighting force against the Israeli military, creating stone barracks and physically fighting them with stones. They became so effective that certain areas were declared "liberated zones" and that the army needed Special Forces to get through them.

¹⁷ Ibid

¹⁸ Lockman, Zachary and Joel Beinin, eds. Intifada: The Palestinian Uprising against Israeli Occupation. Boston, MA: South End Press, 1989.

From February 1988 the committees moved to get rid of the collaborators in the villages by beating and even killing some. Schools were shut down by the Israeli government so the committees also took care of creating a substitute for them. Communiqué number 10 of the UNLU called for attacking spies, non payment of taxes, boycotting Israeli products and the resignation of Palestinian police officers. This was done in most of the villages around the territories¹⁹.

As a response, Israel started with the Economic War, which was a total economic measure to quell the uprising such as disconnecting electricity. In many villages people of different backgrounds started to work the lands in order to provide food for their family; for example professors were growing vegetables in their back yard in order to survive. In June 1988 Jordan decided to withdraw any responsibilities over the West Bank, just about the time the PLO unilaterally declared independence; something that made a great impact on the Palestinians because most of the Palestinians products were exported to Jordan. This fact, and the continuation of the Economic War by the Israeli government, enflamed the uprising even more, since it was the lower class that was hurt the most and they were the leading force of the uprising. In some villages, such as Salem, it got to the point that the militia had organized a military march, something that only happened in the cities.

¹⁹ Peretz, Don. Intifada: The Palestinian Uprising. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1990.

The Role of the Working Class

The working class in the West Bank and Gaza grew tremendously between 1967 and 1987 and took over as the main class. Most Palestinians found work within the Israeli borders and in the settlements.

The struggle of the working class could be divided into three stages:

The first stage of the uprising is the **mass action**. During the first chaotic month the workers in the front line of the uprising suffering many casualties, 50% of the total casualties. During this time there was no official call for the workers to do anything special except for joining the fight. With the creation of the UNLU the group that was focused on was the workers. Communiqué 1 and 2 on January 8th and 10th called for all the workers to go on a strike for three days and go out on the streets to protest. Communiqué 3 (January 18th) that followed the three day strike called for all work in the settlements to be stopped and for strikes to take place in Israeli factories and workshops. These strikes and boycotts affected the Israeli economy since it was dependant on Palestinian labor²⁰.

In the meantime, trade unions were formed despite the attempts of the Israeli authorities to close them down. They kept on providing protection for the working class. Together with the Popular Committees they used to assign different workers to different jobs and roles in the uprising according to the workers abilities and location. All other classical Union roles such as healthcare were abandoned at this stage.

The second stage is the **institutionalization**. This part of the uprising is mainly a continuation of the first part where the workers were forming trade unions. In

²⁰ Nassar, Jamal R. and Roger Heacock, eds. Intifada: Palestine at the Crossroads. New York: Praeger, 1990.

Communiqué 19 workers were urged to “complete the formation of unified workers’ committees and participate in existing unions. Local Palestinian factories were asked not to lower wages and the number of workers (communiqué 10)²¹.

Communiqué 22 called for the protection of the workers especially with overtime work. This reflected the belief of the leadership in the institutionalization of the uprising. It is not known how effective these communiqués were, but some sources claim that there was a 20% drop in Palestinians coming to work within Israel²².

The work of the trade unions did not go smoothly; there were many factories that did not comply with communiqués. The main example is a Bottling company in Rammalah where workers created their own union to fight the exploitation of the workers.

Third stage was **Retrenchment and consolidation**. In the fall of 1988 the Jordanian Dinnar’s value, that was used along side the Israeli currency, dropped by 50%. Many Palestinians ended up without enough money to support themselves as a result. The UNLU tried to cope with the situation by issuing communiqués that called for the factories to raise the salaries of the workers. Strikes began in different Palestinian and foreign institutes as a result of the low salaries. In addition the Israeli authority stopped providing money through the social security system. As a result, the UNLU called for a further struggle against any Israeli institutes that were left in the West Bank and to further boycott work in Israel²³.

²¹ Lockman, Zachary and Joel Beinin, eds. Intifada: The Palestinian Uprising against Israeli Occupation. Boston, MA: South End Press, 1989.

²² Ibid

²³ Ibid

To conclude the part of the workers in the uprising it can be said that their part was not big because of the large numbers of Palestinians that did keep on working in Israel. Although, they still had some effect during the major strikes with the fact that the workers were very active in the protests. Also the fight of the workers brought the emergence of new Palestinian institutions that dealt with matters such as trade unions and the rights of workers.

The Urban Merchants and the Uprising

The role of the shopkeepers in the uprising is often overlooked since it is hard in many cases to see how small businessmen can be heroes, especially when there are pictures of kids fighting against soldiers. The merchants actually did have an important role in the consolidation and the support of the uprising.

Within two weeks of the uprising the confrontation moved from being street confrontations to general and commercial strikes in the urban areas. The shopkeepers started to close their shops at 11AM in protest; when the Israeli army came in to force them to open, confrontation started in the streets. This caused a reverse approach by the army later on, where they forced the shopkeepers to close their shops at 2PM. This was also called the 'Shopkeeper's War'²⁴. By spring the shopkeepers won since the army decided to give up on forcing them to open or close the shops at certain hours and the decision was made by the UNLU.

²⁴ Nassar, Jamal R. and Roger Heacock, eds. Intifada: Palestine at the Crossroads. New York: Praeger, 1990.

The first phase of the resistance between January and April shopkeepers mainly boycotted Israeli merchandise and tried to sustain a greater native productivity. Also they followed the legalization of opening hours set by the UNLU. Communiqué 5 glorifies the merchants by calling them "*towers of the Intifada . . . its guardians, the bearers of its message and continuity*"²⁵. Merchant committees were formed in different cities and the next issue on their agenda was the non-payment of taxes.

By August 1988 the clashes on the streets continued but the organizational protests started to collapse because of the failure of the committees to create an alternative educational system that was appropriate and an alternative agricultural system to produce commodities. While commercial strikes, tax boycotting, and resignation of local police were part of the civil resistance, the Palestinians didn't move to an armed struggle because of the fear of total liquidation by the Israeli army. During this time the Israeli authority took strong measures against those who didn't pay their taxes and forceful tax collection eroded the commercial resistance²⁶.

The boycotting of Israeli products also failed since in many cases there was not adequate replacement for these products. As a result shops started to sell Israeli products and the local resistance groups took measures against them and penalized the shopkeepers by raiding the shops and in some cases burning them down. Even though this was the case, it didn't deter the shopkeepers since they had to make a living out of something.

²⁵ Lockman, Zachary and Joel Beinin, eds. Intifada: The Palestinian Uprising against Israeli Occupation. Boston, MA: South End Press, 1989.

²⁶ Nassar, Jamal R. and Roger Heacock, eds. Intifada: Palestine at the Crossroads. New York: Praeger, 1990.

A third crisis in this matter was the competition between the shops and the street peddlers. While the shops had to be closed at certain hours according to the instruction of the UNLU, street peddles that started as food stalls stayed open. Those vendors became street shops that sold the same commodities as the shops while they enjoyed the benefit of being open during strike hours²⁷.

To conclude the shopkeepers' role in the resistance, it can be said that they failed, but the local leadership realized the harsh reality and that they couldn't have really won this struggle. Keeping this in mind, they had a strong influence on the daily life of the streets especially in the beginning of the uprising.

The PLO and its Role in the First Intifada and the UNLU

Whenever there were attempts to have talks between the Israeli authorities and the Palestinians the local Palestinian leadership responded that Israel should talk only to the PLO since it's the only official body that can represent them. The PLO at the beginning of the Intifada was in Tunisia after being pushed away from southern Lebanon during the Israeli invasion. The initiation of the Intifada came as a total surprise to the leadership of the PLO²⁸. The PLO at this point was considered to be very weak and an outcast because of its location in Tunisia. The main bodies that formed the PLO were the Fattah, PFLP, the Democratic Front, and the Palestinian Communist Party. Heading them all was Yasser Arafat who was the founder of the Fattah and who led the PLO since the beginning of it.

²⁷ Ibid

²⁸ Shif, Ze'ev and Ya'ari Ehud 'Intifada' Tel Aviv, Shoken Publishing House, 1990 Page 21-22

Although the start of the uprising on December 8th was not a planned thing the PLO leadership was very quick to respond, and on the 10th Yasser Arafat gave a statement supporting the local Palestinians fighting and condemned the Israeli violence against the innocent Palestinians. He used rhetoric such as “*the children of the stones of our beloved, holy country*”²⁹. Although this response came soon after the start of the Intifada the PLO was still very confused with its role in the struggle. As mentioned before, the fight of the PLO until then was an armed struggle that involved terrorism. Arafat and others in the leadership called for moving to an armed fight against the army and the settlers but this was advised against by the local Palestinians who realized the strength of the new civil resistance without baring arms. They realized that once they will start using arms and weapons the Israeli government will have the perfect excuse to crush down the rebellion with all of its power³⁰.

The PLO saw this outbreak of violence as the most significant event in Palestinian history and tried to support it in a violent way by taking out a terror attack in Dimona. This attack failed and had the reverse effect. It is then that the leadership realized that for the uprising to work the Intifada needed to be a non-violent resistance.

While the PLO was supporting the Palestinian cause from the outside, all four groups (Fattah, PFLP, the National Front and the PCP) had their own people in the West Bank and Gaza who took orders from the leadership abroad. Once the uprising started the four groups formed the UNLU which was the local leadership of the uprising. The PLO was in very close contact with the UNLU and most of the decisions were made with

²⁹ Baumgarten, Helga. "13 "Discontented People" and "Outside Agitators" THE PLO IN THE PALESTINIAN UPRISING." *Intifada: Palestine at the Crossroads*. Eds. Nassar, Jamal R. and Roger Heacock. New York: Praeger, 1990. 207-223.

³⁰ Shif, Ze'ev and Ya'ari Ehud '*Intifada*' Tel Aviv, Shoken Publishing House, 1990 Pages 24-25

approval of the PLO. Israel at the time saw the PLO as a terror group responsible for gruesome acts such as the terror attack in Munich during the Olympic Games and tried to hit it as hard as it can. The assassination of Abu Jihad, the number two person in the PLO, caused the escalation of the uprising since the local Palestinians sought revenge. Although the UNLU saw the PLO as the sole leadership of the Palestinian people there was some friction over power between the local Palestinians and the leadership abroad³¹. In some cases the UNLU actually went against the decisions of the PLO in devising how to go about the continuing of the struggle. Although these disputes were not of major issues and the PLO was still seen as the soul organization representing the Palestinians it did prove that the fight was in the hands of the local Palestinians. This was especially the case in later years when the exiled leadership came back to Gaza and the West Bank.

The Islamic Movements

The Islamic movements started in Egypt with the appearance of the Muslim Brotherhood that believed in returning to the old rule of the fundamental laws of Islam. They were behind the assassination of President Sa'adat in Egypt after the signing of the peace agreement with Israel (even though the main reason for the assassination was not Israel but the fact that Sa'adat was too secular for their beliefs). The Muslim Brotherhood movement moved on to the occupied territories during the late 1960's. Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood in the beginning were welcomed by the Israeli government which

³¹ Baumgarten, Helga. "13 "Discontented People" and "Outside Agitators" THE PLO IN THE PALESTINIAN UPRISING." Intifada: Palestine at the Crossroads. Eds. Nassar, Jamal R. and Roger Heacock. New York: Praeger, 1990. 207-223.

saw them as an alternative to the PLO, which was considered to be a vicious terror group. Another movement that emerged during the mid 80's was the Islamic Jihad movement³².

The Islamic Jihad: while the Muslim Brotherhood's main struggle was to get the occupying forces out of the land of Israel, the Islamic Jihad's ideology is much broader. They believe in the rule of Islam all over the region and not just against the Zionist state much like the ideology behind the Iranian revolution. The tactics of the Islamic Jihad were both the use of terrorism and the use of civil resistance.

The first attack by the movement was in 1984 when a Jewish settler was knifed by a member of the new movement. After that the main act before the uprising was the throwing of a grenade onto a crowd of new army recruits in the center of Jerusalem, killing one and injuring sixty. The number of actual members at the time was relatively small but it had plenty of followers among the local crowd.

In May 1987, six Islamic Jihad activists escaped from an Israeli prison and managed to get back to Gaza. This gave the movement a great boost and made them a symbol of the struggle because of the prisoners' courage and ability to resist the Israelis. At the beginning of the uprising the Islamic Jihad had 300 people but many more believed in their ideas³³.

During the first month of the uprising the movement was very active in organizing rallies and calling for all Palestinians to go out and protest. From January

³² Sprintzak, Ehud. Lecture notes "extreme politics" Interdisciplinary Center Herzelya. 2002.

³³ Shif, Ze'ev and Ya'ari Ehud 'Intifada' Tel Aviv, Shoken Publishing House, 1990. Pages 44-50

1988 to the fall of the same year the Islamic Jihad's activity slowed down although they still released communiqués calling to fight³⁴.

Although the Islamic Jihad has different views from the PLO both movements believed in having a non-violent struggle and that arms shouldn't be used in the fight. While the relations between the two seemed to be on the way to unification the UNLU never accepted the Islamic Jihad as a part of its group, but at certain points there was some cooperation between the two organizations³⁵.

During March 1988 the Israeli army managed to have the movement out of its way by arresting most of its members. This was until the fall of 1988 when it reappeared claiming a breakup from its relations with the PLO and getting back to a more militant fighting. The first act of that time was the throwing of a grenade on an army patrol in Sheikh Radawan Neighborhood (Gaza)³⁶.

The Islamic Resistance Movement (IRM) – HAMAS

Hamas is the descendant of the Muslim Brotherhood. Its ideology is that the state should be ruled according to Islamic law and that any secular government should be fought against. Another issue that Hamas had with the PLO was the decision of the PLO to recognize Israel as a legitimate state; Hamas never agreed to recognizing it and one of its core objectives is the removal of Israel and the establishment of Palestine on the whole territory³⁷. This is why it never had any contacts with the PLO, which they saw as

³⁴ Lockman, Zachary and Joel Beinin, eds. Intifada: The Palestinian Uprising against Israeli Occupation. Boston, MA: South End Press, 1989.

³⁵ Shif, Ze'ev and Ya'ari Ehud 'Intifada' Tel Aviv, Shoken Publishing House, 1990. Page 51

³⁶ Nassar, Jamal R. and Roger Heacock, eds. Intifada: Palestine at the Crossroads. New York: Praeger, 1990.

³⁷ Unknown source 'Special report- the Hammas it's tactics, positions and view' *'Palestine Elmasalma'*,

heretics, and always fought along side them but also against them. *“Can the Muslim remain a stranger to his father, his brother, his neighbor or his friend? Our homeland is one, our struggle is one, our destiny is one and our enemy is common. But . . . the PLO has adopted the idea of a lay state . . . [which] totally contradicts the idea of religion. . . . The Islamic nature of Palestine is a part of our religion. . . . The day the PLO adopts Islam as its rule for life, we will be its soldiers”* (articles 26-27). They believed in an armed fight against Israel from the start³⁸.

During the first year they fought in three different ways. The first was participating in the uprising. Communiqués were published by Hamas calling for its supporters to join the protests including those organized by the UNLU. The second was organizing the uprising. This phase started with the fourth communiqué by the Muslim Brotherhood’s armed group also known at this point as Hamas. The communiqué sounded pretty much like those published by the UNLU calling for general strikes, fighting against the Israeli authority, fasting and touching the aspects of everyday life³⁹. The main activity of Hamas centered around the mosques which were an alternative for the closed schools and they promoted its religious leaders such as Ahmad Yassin. In addition to the activity in the mosques, Hamas managed to penetrate some of the universities in Gaza and the West Bank and teach it ideologies. The third stage was managing some of the uprising; around May/June 1988 the tension between Hamas and

Britain, (April-May 1900) taken from the Israeli Ministry of defense Library.

³⁸ Mishal, Shaul, and Avraham Sela. The Palestinian Hamas: Vision, Violence, and Coexistence. New York: Columbia University Press, 2000.

³⁹ Nassar, Jamal R. and Roger Heacock, eds. Intifada: Palestine at the Crossroads. New York: Praeger, 1990.

the UNLU was growing and Hamas started to appear as the alternative for the PLO and the UNLU. In August, Hamas released a forty page document of its ideological stance. As a show of power against the PLO it also published its own schedule of activities that had no relations to the one made by the UNLU. During August and September it started to spread from its main activity area, which was the Gaza Strip, to the West Bank, a well founded PLO controlled area⁴⁰.

During the first year of the uprising Hamas participated in ten limited armed attacks against Israeli forces. Those were shooting at army patrols and the blowing up of explosive devices. In time the militant network of Hamas improved and in the following year they committed thirty two acts, the most courageous ones being the kidnapping and killing of two soldiers within the green line⁴¹.

During those years in response the Israeli army arrested a large number of its leaders including Sheikh Ahmad Yassin. This brought the slowing down of its activity but it was too late, the Hamas movement was already too big to be ignored and could not be crushed by the Israeli Army.

To conclude, the Islamic movement managed to emerge as the biggest winner from the uprising and coming from small religious groups which hardly had any influence on the struggle and the Palestinian people to become a major part of the resistance. The struggle against Israel was not the only one since there was a great struggle over who controlled the streets, the PLO or the Islamic movements. This

⁴⁰ Ibid

⁴¹ Mishal, Shaul, and Avraham Sela. The Palestinian Hamas: Vision, Violence, and Coexistence. New York: Columbia University Press, 2000.

becomes very important in the period that followed where the PLO moves into the peace process and the Islamic movements fight against it.

The Tactics of the First Intifada and the Civil Resistance

The tactics used in this Intifada can be placed into different dimensions; the physical fight, the civil fight and the political fight. The physical fight which appeared in its full strength in the beginning and was the main spark for the Intifada was characterized by large crowds confronting the Israeli army by throwing stones, Molotov cocktails and other means such as tire burning. Improvised road blocks were another mean of fighting the army; every time one was cleared the Palestinians created two others down the road. As the fighting progressed so were the means and the ability to improvise, more and more inventions were introduced such as different ways to blow the tires of the army vehicles with different 'nail mines', creating oil puddles so the cars can't go through etc⁴².

In some cases there were incidents where weapons and explosives were used against different targets but most groups realized that it was causing more damage than good; the Israeli army retaliated fiercely and it caused damage for the Palestinians in the international arena. However, as long as the fight consisted of the strong Israeli military fighting the unarmed population the international opinion was in the Palestinian favor. As a result most terror attacks committed did not use weapons or explosives, but rather stabbings.

⁴² Shif, Ze'ev and Ya'ari Ehud 'Intifada' Tel Aviv, Shoken Publishing House, 1990. Pages 103-104

Looking at the internal fight, the Intifada was a great chance for the different groups to clear out all the 'traitors' within their society. This was not only the attacks on the different collaborators that paid in some cases with their lives but also against all the different criminals and drug dealers that were harming the Palestinian society within. The civil fight, also called the Civil Disobedience, started right after the Intifada started and it was the first time the Palestinian people engaged in this type of fight against Israel. The fight also was taking place within every social class and group. The working class was ordered to stop working in Israel and the settlements. In the beginning it was an effective way to fight the Israeli economy, which was dependant on the cheap labor. This fight did not last because of the lack of ability of the Palestinian organizations to produce an alternative income. The workers limited their fight to the days of the different strikes and they stopped working in the settlements⁴³.

The fight of the merchants was a pendulum against the army. It started with closing the shops at certain hours which brought the army in to force them to open. Later on the army decided to give up so the shops were symbolically closed by the orders of the different communiqués issued by the different groups.

Other types of civil fighting were the resigning of all local Palestinian police enforcement officers that were working with the Israeli administration. Another method was the burning down of the Israeli issued identification card and the attempts to disconnect any affiliation with the authorities.

Breaking the curfews was another way of fighting the military orders. In many cases where curfews were ordered by the military the local Palestinians came out in order to pull the army into the towns and bring them to clash with the crowd.

⁴³ Ibid. Pages 247-248

Flag-raising was a symbolic fight which was very common during this time. The Palestinian flag was not allowed to be raised anywhere in the occupied territories. Palestinians all over the territories used to raise the flag and whenever the army came in and ordered the locals to take it off the flag was soon raised in a different location. This became a cat and mouse game that the army was spending too much time and resources on⁴⁴.

The political dimension is first of all the formation of the different local committees that opposed the system imposed on the different villages by the military of the mukhtars and the appointed councils. Another political dimension was the formation of the political parties such as the UNLU, the growth of Hamas and other parties. Most of those parties suffered major blows when their leaders were arrested or deported in different occasions. Although these were a setback for the struggle none of the parties backed down from the fight. For every person arrested two other activists joined the organizations⁴⁵.

The most important political event throughout the first Intifada was the declaration of independence by the PLO. On November 15th Arafat read the formal document declaring independence in front of the exiled Palestinian committee in Algeria. Although this was not accepted by any state as a legitimate declaration, it was a way for the PLO to fight not just against Israel but also to cut itself off from the Jordanian kingdom that annexed the West Bank during the 50's⁴⁶.

⁴⁴ Ibid, Pages 100-102

⁴⁵ Baumgarten, Helga. "13 "Discontented People" and "Outside Agitators" THE PLO IN THE PALESTINIAN UPRISING." Intifada: Palestine at the Crossroads. Eds. Nassar, Jamal R. and Roger Heacock. New York: Praeger, 1990. 207-223.

⁴⁶ Shif, Ze'ev and Ya'ari Ehud 'Intifada' Tel Aviv, Shoken Publishing House, 1990. Pages 279-299

The Israeli tactics

The military tactics

The Intifada took Israel by surprise just as much as it did for the PLO. Although the writing was on the wall before anyone in the administration or in the military was aware of what was to come. The defense minister at the time, Yitzhak Rabin, was in the United States closing a deal for buying new F-16 fighter jets. When news of the uprising was given to him he claimed that it was just another protest that will die down in a few hours and he did not even consider coming back to Israel for it⁴⁷. The military was holding the same position as the government and expected the protests to die down within hours or days at the most. The number of troops stationed in the Occupied Territories was relatively small compared to the reality that they were about to face; around 55 reserve soldiers and officers were in charge of maintaining order in the Jebalya refugee camp, the biggest camp in Gaza, along with a small number of border guard patrols assigned to the area. Once the news of the traffic accident spread around the camp thousands of Palestinians stormed the reserve outpost and the reserve soldiers managed to push them away until the protest died out, for the day. The morning after the same company was in charge of clearing out the different road blocks and to disperse the protesters using two armored vehicles (M-114) and a patrol car. Once vehicles got into the narrow allies the raging crowd started throwing stones and Molotov cocktails from all sides and the roof tops. The patrols were unable to shoot back because of the unclear rules of engagement as they tried to shake the protestors off of their vehicles. During the ride one of the vehicles

⁴⁷ Rabin only came back to Israel on December 21st, Two weeks after the Intifada started.

lost its machine gun only to be salvaged after shooting warning shots to get the people away from it. In other parts of the camp, patrols (four soldiers in a jeep) were sent for the same job. Once the mob closed down on them and tried to grab their weapons they shot a few rounds in order to make them back off. Most generals were unaware of what was going on and actually condemned the officers for not doing their jobs properly⁴⁸.

The military that was used to fighting different types of enemies was in complete disorder in the beginning. The first general that realized how severe the situation was the commander of the southern division General Yitzhak Mordechai. He immediately ordered the reinforcement of the reserve force in Gaza. Although this was important, still no one knew what the orders were and what the policy was concerning the Occupied Territories.

The military's first reaction was always to announce a curfew in order to stop people from being in the streets, but in this case the curfew did not work since the crowd did not listen to the army and was looking to confront it. The other actions of the army were to arrest all of those who seemed to be taking part in the protests and especially those provoking it. Prison camps grew larger and larger as days went by while more and more people were being arrested.

The military was trying to put down every protest that was going on with different means. Usually it meant the use of tear gas. Although this method is useful the IDF was not trained and ready for this mission. In many cases only after shooting the tear gas the Israeli soldiers realized that the wind was blowing in their direction. In other cases the Palestinian crowd would just leave the area only to appear from a different ally. Since the army was not ready for this type of confrontation their gear usually was not suitable as

⁴⁸ Shif, Ze'ev and Ya'ari Ehud 'Intifada' Tel Aviv, Shoken Publishing House, 1990. Pages 9-20

well. There was a short supply of rubber bullets and those who did not have them were left with the tough decision of either using real bullets or not shooting at all. This decision was even more difficult when the soldiers were facing women and children. Probably the harshest form of punishment for the Palestinians was the “sealing off” the houses of certain terrorists and in some cases tearing down the houses. Before the outbreak of the Intifada a Defense Minister Order was need for tearing down a house. Soon after it started, all that was needed was a general’s signature. The same was true for cutting down olive trees, (the olive tree is protected by Israeli law)⁴⁹. Another harsh punishment was deportation. In many cases deportation and tearing houses down was problematic for the soldiers taking part in it.

Arrests were issued by the military governor for whoever was causing any disturbance. This included either issuing or printing communiqués or by just inflaming the crowd in the streets.

During the first month, the military practically lost control over many parts of the Occupied Territories, especially in the rural areas. Within a month the army reorganized itself in order to be more effective; thousands of troops were sent to the territories instead of training. In addition, the reserve period was changed from 35 days a year to 60 days. In order to fight against the general strikes of the shopkeepers the military went in and forced the shopkeepers to open the shops. Usually this did not help since the shopkeepers were taking part in the protests, and when they were not they were scared of the crowd punishing them for obeying the military. Within 4 months the military realized that it was wasting its time with this policy and usually the Palestinians were waiting for the shops

⁴⁹ Ibid

to close down so they could confront the military coming to open them up. The policy was dropped.

Along with the personal punishments the military resolved to using different types of collective punishments, such as curfews, or power shutdown for the whole village. In some cases villages were put under siege so no one could come in or out. These might have been harsh but they did not break the people⁵⁰.

Once Yitzhak Rabin came back from the United States his primary mission was to take care of the Intifada. He ordered the military to crush the rebellion with an 'iron fist'. Since shooting into an unarmed crowd was not an option a 'carte blanche' was given to the army for beating up the Palestinians⁵¹. At this point the soldiers became as brutal as one can be. Palestinians were beaten up unnecessarily in every confrontation and in many cases just for being at the wrong place at the wrong time. At the beginning there were no rules on who to hit and where. After things started getting out of hand the army wrote some regulations for when violence is necessary. "1. *The use of force is permitted against violent protestors at the time of the violent act. Once they are detained all violence should stop.* 2. *Someone who breaks a curfew should be beaten and returned home.*"⁵² According to this example a Palestinian can be beaten up even if he is not fighting and threatening the soldiers. This type of vague regulation was given by the different headquarters around the territories.

A new job the military was facing was the safeguarding of the settlers. In the Gaza Strip the number of settlements is small and the routes leading to them were usually

⁵⁰ Beitler, Ruth Margolis, 'The Path to Mass Rebellion' Lanham, Lexington Books, 2004. Page 104

⁵¹ Ibid, Page 105

⁵² Shif, Ze'ev and Ya'ari Ehud 'Intifada' Tel Aviv, Shoken Publishing House, 1990. page 147

outside the Palestinian cities, but in the West Bank many of the settlements were close by Palestinian towns and some of the holy sites such as Joseph's tomb in Nablus and the cave of the patriarchs in Hebron. This meant that the military had to deal both with the extreme nationalist Jews trying to provoke the Palestinians and the Palestinians on the other side.

Since the typical military weapons, such as tanks, fighter jets artillery and even live ammunition, was not suitable against an unarmed crowd the Israeli military had to come up with original ways to fight the protests. Some were more useful than others and others original but useless. For example the '*Hatzatzit*' (the gravel thrower), was a water cannon that shoots gravel instead of water, which it was found to be ineffective.⁵³ One of the most innovative tactics that wasn't invented for the Intifada but was certainly improved upon was the use of the '*Mista'aravim*' (Masquerades). The masquerade unit is a unit of soldiers dressed up like the locals with the mission of blending in order to gather information or to deal with the protests from within. This type of warfare existed before the foundation of Israel by the HAGANA. During the 70's a unit called RIMON was trained for these types of missions; they arrested and assassinated different targets. Once the Intifada started two new units were established: SHIMSHON for Gaza and DUVDEVAN for the West Bank⁵⁴. The two units conducted arrests and lead to the capture of many wanted Palestinians. Another aspect of their mission was to cause confusion and mistrust within the Palestinian population. It is claimed that they had

⁵³ Beitler, Ruth Margolis, 'The Path to Mass Rebellion' Lanham, Lexington Books, 2004. Page 111.

⁵⁴ Givati, Moshe (Colonel, reserve), 'The Masqueraders' *monthly review* number 10 (March 1993)

different set firing orders and that they were 'easy on the trigger' yet the military always denied it⁵⁵.

Intelligence. Both the military and the Shin Bet (Israeli intelligent bureau) were well connected and had very good intelligence systems in the Territories. This is due to the fact that both were usually stationed within the cities and through different methods such as interrogations and collaborators managed to get precise information about different events and plans of the protests. Although this intelligence did not foresee the Intifada coming, as time went on the Shin Bet managed to spread and get more contacts. This proved to be very important in the fight against terrorism and in preventing major events⁵⁶.

The role of the government

Out of all the actors taking part in the Intifada the Israeli government was probably the most surprised by the magnitude of the fight. The government was led by Yitzhak Shamir, head of the Likud party and known to be a hard liner. The coalition was built of the two largest parties in Israel: the Likud party and the Labor party lead by Shimon Peres. During the initial part of the Intifada the government thought it was a minor protest and it would quiet down like in previous cases⁵⁷.

⁵⁵ Cohen, Stuart A, 'Mista'aravim- 'Masqueraders' in the Isareli Defense Forces, 1991-1992: the Military Unit and the Public Debate' *The BESA Center for Strategic Studies, Ba- Ilan University, Security and Policy Studies* No. 16.

⁵⁶ Ze'evi, Yoav, 'Increase the Intelligence Activity in the Territories' *Bamakhane*, Israel (April 1993)

⁵⁷ Beitler, Ruth Margolis, 'The Path to Mass Rebellion' Lanham, Lexington Books, 2004. Page 100.

Once everyone realized that this was nothing like previous protests it was a little too late. The military lost control over some of the parts of the Territories. As a result many politicians accused the chief of staff and other generals of not doing their jobs properly and that they were implementing their own political agenda into the fight by being too soft on the Palestinians. Some ministers suggested extreme measures and voted for hitting the Palestinians as hard as the military could. The Justice Minister Modai said in one of the cabinet meeting: ‘...if there is no choice, tear down street after street⁵⁸.’ The policy makers demanded that the military use more force than it was using up to that point, in return most generals replied that it would be unlawful to go further than what they were doing. Genera Amram Mitzna answered in the same cabinet meeting with the Modai: “It seems to me that some of the ministers don’t understand the meaning of the things said (in the meeting). Israel is a state of law and the IDF must follow these laws⁵⁹.” The head of intelligence Amnon Lipkin Shahak claimed that “there is no chance of a peace process without talking with the Palestinians.⁶⁰” The government throughout the years always claimed that it would not negotiate with the Palestinians since the Occupied Territories were taken from Jordan and Egypt, and that if there should be any negotiations it would be with them and certainly not with the PLO that was considered to be a terror group and Arafat was probably the number one enemy of Israel.

Once the PLO declared its independence and Jordan pulled out from any claims for the West Bank, Israel had no choice but to recognize the Palestinian people as the people they should negotiate with. Once this was realized the political fight was through

⁵⁸ Shif, Ze’ev and Ya’ari Ehud ‘Intifada’ Tel Aviv, Shoken Publishing House, 1990. Page 130

⁵⁹ Ibid 131

⁶⁰ Ibid 131

the United States which was Israel's best ally. Israel tried to gain an advantage in the negotiation through getting more and more support from the US by using the Jewish lobby and trying to get the US to support it in any decision.

Rabin who was the Defense Minister took the Intifada as a personal matter and ordered the military to beat up any Palestinian who is out of order and to use unarmed violence in order to crush the Palestinian spirit and to deter them from doing it again. In addition, Rabin signed off deportation orders for different Palestinian leadership personnel, trying to eliminate any opposition from growing⁶¹.

Another tactic that was used by the government to punish the Palestinians was the economic sanctions that were imposed. The government decided that all taxes should be collected from the Palestinians and whoever does not pay his taxes is not allowed to work in Israel. In other cases the government, with the help of the military and police, went to collect the taxes from different businesses and private people. This was a means of bringing the Palestinians, who didn't have any money from the beginning, to their knees and comply with the Israeli laws and by that make them stop fighting against it.

The last tactic which was part of the grand strategy of the government since 1973 was the settlements⁶². The settlements started in 1973 under the Labor Party's authority but since 1977 when the Likud party assumed power the number of settlements grew tremendously. Once the Intifada started, the government had no choice but to order the military to protect all settlements. This meant that the government gave permission for the military to plan and construct new roads and other logistic plans that meant taking over more land from the Palestinians. In addition, the government saw the settlements as

⁶¹ Beitler, Ruth Margolis, 'The Path to Mass Rebellion' Lanham, Lexington Books, 2004. Pages 105-106

⁶² Ibid. p107

major strategic value and permitted the settlers to expand the settlements all over the Occupied Territories.

Because of the value that was given to the settlers by the government they acquired tremendous political power. The settlers in the territories felt that that they could do whatever they wanted even if it was against the law. Sometimes settlers cut down olive trees owned by the Palestinians, in other cases settlers beat up the local population for no reason. The military, which was in charge of protecting them, was trying to prevent the settlers from coming in touch with the Palestinians but that was impossible. As a result a small group of 'Messianic ultra nationalist Jews' became a dominant influence on government policies and decisions. Once the Intifada started the settlers realized that this was an opportunity to influence the government to decide on drastic actions such as transfer and other unrealistic solutions. They accused the military of not protecting them and that the military was being too soft on the Palestinians. In addition to that they tried to provoke both the military and the Palestinians at any time they could. Settlers would go into the Hebron market and cause problems by bringing the military in so they would clash with the Palestinians⁶³.

Conclusion

The first Intifada is probably one of the most significant events in Palestinian history. First, it was the first time the uprising was not a short term incident where there were clashes between the Palestinians and the Israeli army. Second, and probably more important, is the fact that it was not just one class in one area that was involved. As seen

⁶³ Shif, Ze'ev and Ya'ari Ehud 'Intifada' Tel Aviv, Shoken Publishing House, 1990. Page 134

in this chapter each and every class had its own role in the uprising. One of the reasons Israel went into the Madrid talks was the success of the uprising. Also the fact that it was not just the poor people's fight made it a national uprising where everybody felt that they had to take part in the greater cause. The different classes were engaged in different forms of resistance, the merchants took part in the strikes, the students and workers engaged in protests and the local leadership was in charge of orchestrating by releasing different communiqué and raising money to support the protests.

Another factor that made the uprising so important was the establishment of the new institutes. Although the PLO was always considered the representative of the Palestinian people, the uprising brought on a new local leadership that was in touch with the local crowd and was in touch with the reality in the Occupied Territories. For the first time in the Palestinians' history most of the political organizations unified together to form a unified headquarters in which its sole purpose was to take care of the interests of the local Palestinians, this was even at the expense of the leader's freedom. On the other hand it also brought the rise of the popularity of the Islamic movements.

The Islamic Jihad was the main instigator for the uprising on December 7th and along side Hamas, a relatively new party, fought against Israel in a more extreme way while at the same time trying to fight against different bad influences within the Palestinian society. This had a major influence on future events throughout the 2nd Intifada and on the election results these days.

On the political side, the Palestinians achieved a great victory since they finally gained recognition from the international community. The PLO for the first time became the sole representative of the Palestinians even though Arafat was in exile. In addition,

the Palestinian managed to get the Jordanians to pull out from any claims to the Occupied Territories. The United States administration started negotiating with the PLO giving Arafat legitimacy despite Israel's protests⁶⁴.

The Intifada had a very different outcome on the Israeli side. First, the Intifada was a tremendous surprise both to the military and to the government. No one thought that this could happen since the Palestinians were never really seen as an entity. Because of this surprise, there were no clear orders on how to act against the unarmed crowd. The IDF which fought and won in six different wars against larger armies suddenly was facing a whole different war: one that does not involve tanks, artillery or even guns. The confusion was great, the generals had no answer on how to act and the soldiers facing the Palestinians on a daily base were even more confused and did not know how to react. The new situation where soldiers were beating up the Palestinians and the military was using different inhumane actions caused the IDF to lose one of its core principles in which soldiers are educated from day one of a set of values that believe in the humane actions and the use of force only in extreme situations. Because of the need for more troops, suddenly the Palestinian problem became a national problem that everyone was involved in. This was true not just for the enlisted men but also for many reserve soldiers who were exposed to the harsh reality of the Occupied Territories. And the debate whether Israel's policies are the right ones became the main issue within Israeli society. In addition, the Intifada became a costly conflict to military. Until then a small force cost

⁶⁴ Shif, Ze'ev and Ya'ari Ehud 'Intifada' Tel Aviv, Shoken Publishing House, 1990. Pages 301-329

very little but since the Intifada started more troops, and more equipment and ammunition made the Intifada the main expense of the military budget⁶⁵.

The government did not have any clear policy on how the Palestinian problem should be resolved before the Intifada started, and their policy was even vaguer once it started. Both the government and the military were very responsive in the actions once the Intifada started. Although the military tried to take the initiative, it always had to deal with new challenges. It worked mainly on trial and error, like the opening up of the shops during the strikes. In some cases it was successful such as the masquerades unit that became very professional and was feared around the Territories⁶⁶.

The government had a clear policy when it came to the political front, which was not to negotiate with the PLO. This proved to be a mistake and after US pressure Israel finally caved and did agree to sit and talk with Arafat.

Since the Intifada was not a planned uprising, and it started as spontaneous protests that caught the PLO by surprise, there was no strategy at the beginning of it. Protests were occurring in different refugee camps and later on spread throughout the Occupied Territories. With time the different organizations became in charge of orchestrating the fight with the formation of the UNLU that was following the PLO's orders⁶⁷. The PLO's policies were stated in the Arab League statement of the 3 no's (No peace, No negotiations and No recognition). Because of this policy the PLO's main

⁶⁵ Ibid p128-168

⁶⁶ Cohen, Stuart A, 'Mista'aravim- 'Masqueraders' in the Isareli Defense Forces, 1991-1992: the Military Unit and the Public Debate' *The BESA Center for Strategic Studies, Ba- Ilan University, Security and Policy Studies* No. 16.

⁶⁷ Baumgarten, Helga. "13 "Discontented People" and "Outside Agitators" THE PLO IN THE PALESTINIAN UPRISING." Intifada: Palestine at the Crossroads. Eds. Nassar, Jamal R. and Roger Heacock. New York: Praeger, 1990. 207-223.

strategy was the use of terror acts. Once the Intifada started the PLO was pushing to start an armed fight but soon realized that its strategy needed to be changed and that an unarmed fight would garner greater results. The same was with the policy of the 3 no's; the PLO leadership realized that it had no choice but to publicly state that they were willing to recognize Israel as a legitimate state and therefore they were willing to negotiate with it; a consent that was given on the Israeli side as well. This was the main dispute point with Hamas and Islamic Jihad⁶⁸.

To conclude, the first Intifada was a breaking point in the Israeli and Palestinian conflict where the fight moved to a different level in which the only solution was to start negotiation between the two sides.

⁶⁸ Unknown source 'Special report- the Hamas it's tactics, positions and view' '*Palestine Elmasalma*', Britain, (April-May 1900) taken from the Israeli Ministry of defense Library.

Between the Two INTIFADAS

During the early 90's the Palestinian population was losing strength since it did not have the backbone to sustain such a long confrontation. More and more armed terror acts were committed and the Palestinian population lost some of its energy to fight. The event that saved the Palestinian fight and brought both sides to the negotiation table was the 1st Gulf war. The first Intifada basically ended with the talks in Madrid in 1991, and was certainly over with the signing of the Oslo accords recognizing the PLO by Israel, the beginning of the peace process in 1993 and the beginning of the autonomy in Gaza and Jericho. The resistance against Israel did not end. First, the Islamic movements never agreed with the PLO on the matter of the peace agreement, including the denial of the right for Israel's existence, and believed in the continuation of the fight against Israel. Second, there were certain incidents where fighting broke out between the Palestinians and the Israeli forces.

Hamas' and Islamic Jihad's Struggle

By the end of 1990 Hamas was in a crisis after most of its leadership was arrested. It was then decided that a new armed division should be formed in order to fight the Israeli enemy, and as a result the 'Izadin El Kasam brigades were founded in 1991 after the name of the nationalist Izadin El Kasam who was killed by British troops during the mandate period.

During this time the brigades mainly dealt with punishing and killing local collaborators in Gaza. In 1992 they moved on to terror acts against Israeli targets. The first was the killing of an Israeli settler in 1992 and after that they killed an Israeli police

officer Nissim Toledano. In November 1992 there was the first car bombing attempt in a Jewish area. The attempt failed but it was a first step in the new road of terrorism. As a result of these acts the new Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin signed an order to deport 412 Hamas and Islamic Jihad activists to Lebanon. This caused more terror acts by Hamas. Another step in the road of terrorism by the Hamas was in April 1993 when a car bomb blew up in the Jordan valley; this was the first suicide attack by Hamas⁶⁹.

The joint declaration between the PLO and Israel brought Hamas and the Islamic Jihad to be at the front line of the fight against Israel since the PLO was now officially at the peace process with Israel and could not fight against it. The Islamic movements saw this as an opportunity to win over the Palestinian streets in their favor, and create a strong opposition to the secular PLO, with different attacks against the Israeli army and civilians.

During 1994 several more car bombs exploded in Israeli territories which pushed Baruch Goldstein, a Jewish extreme settler, to commit the massacre in the cave of patriarchs that ended with 40 dead Palestinians. As a result Hamas decide to push up its efforts in the war against Israel and sent suicide bombers. This was the beginning of a series of bombers without car bombs that just blended into the crowd. The mind behind those attacks was Yikhia Ayash also known as “the Engineer”. During this time the Palestinian authority did not really try to stop those movements from acting and it actually found it convenient that they were doing the fighting for them with out the PA getting its hands dirty. In 1995 Israel assassinated Ayash; as a result Hamas swore to get revenge and sent several suicide bombers that brought the number of Israeli deaths to more than a hundred in the period between the signing of the joint declaration with the

⁶⁹ Sprintzak. Ehud. Lecture notes “extreme politics” Interdisciplinary Center Herzelya. 2002.

PLO and that time. The series of suicide bombing came right before the election between Shimon Peres and Benjamin Netanyahu. Hamas, which was not in favor of the peace process, wanted to stop Peres from getting elected, and Those acts they actually tipped the election towards Netanyahu who was behind Peres in the polls. This was a major victory for the Hamas since they managed to affect the result of the election in their favor⁷⁰.

Major Confrontation Between Israel and the Palestinian Authority

The day after Yom Kippur in 1996, the eastern entrance of the cave going under the Temple Mount was opened by the order of the Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu. This was in order to attract more tourists and as a show of power in Jerusalem. The opening of the cave that went under Muslim Holy sites was something the Palestinians did not accept and it caused 5 days of vigorous fights between the PA and the IDF. Unlike the first Intifada which started as a spontaneous eruption, this time it was a well organized show of power by the Palestinian Authority⁷¹. Buses from all over the West Bank were transporting protestors to the main sights of confrontations. Another major difference between this incident and the previous ones was that this time arms were very much involved and Palestinian police officers were shooting at the Israeli forces from within the crowd, in some cases officers from the joint patrols shot at their fellow Israeli co-

⁷⁰ Mishal, Shaul, and Avraham Sela. The Palestinian Hamas: Vision, Violence, and Coexistence. New York: Columbia University Press, 2000.

⁷¹ Michael, (Major) 'Did Arafat Return to an Armed Strategy' *Ma'arachot*, Israel.,(December 2001).

workers. The death toll for the Israeli side was 16 deaths in 5 days, an unprecedented number in this struggle⁷².

The result of this and other incidents between the IDF and the Palestinian Authority was that IDF General Staff realized that the PA was not to be fully trusted and that the possibility of a greater conflict was likely to come. The IDF started preparing for the future conflict by conducting series of drills and exercises with scenarios such as recapturing all the Palestinian territories and fighting in the refugee camps⁷³. At the time these scenarios seemed farfetched and unlikely to most people in Israel, but soon enough reality was about to change. Another Israeli response to the violent incidents in September 1996 was that for the first time tanks were placed in the West Bank and Gaza. By the time the relations started to deteriorate the IDF was ready for any task that it had to deal with⁷⁴.

⁷² Harel Amos. Isacharoff Avi. "The Seventh War" Tel Aviv, Miskal, Yediot Aharont Books and Hemed Books, 2004. Page 54-55

⁷³ At the same time Arafat decided to arm the Tanzim, Headed by Baraguti, in order to be ready for future confrontations.

⁷⁴ Amidror, Jacob, 'Israel's Strategy for Combating Palestinian Terror' *Joint Force Quarterly*, (Autumn 2002)

The Al Aqsa INTIFADA: the Escalation on Both Sides

*“The decision of moving to an armed struggle prevented us from our strongest power-
the mass population... this was our biggest mistake” Sari Nuseibah*

The Palestinian Tactics

On Thursday morning at 7:45 Ariel Sharon a member of the opposition in the Parliament came to visit the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. The visit that lasted less than 45 minutes was peaceful but caused devastating results. The Palestinians saw this as an attempt to aggravate them and it did. Around fourteen hundred Palestinians were waiting on the mountain and right after Sharon left the confrontation started with the Israeli police. Several dozens of Palestinians were injured and it was thought that this was the end of it but people like Marwan Barghuti, the head of the armed group of Fattah (the Tanzim), saw this as an opportunity to start up a new uprising as the talks at CAMP David between PM Barak and Arafat failed to bring any results a month earlier. Although this was the trigger, it was later concluded by the Mitchell report that Sharon’s visit was just an excuse for the beginning of the uprising⁷⁵. What started as civil uprising like the first Intifada with the addition of armed confrontations spun out of control and became a low intensity war between the Palestinian Authority, the different armed groups such as Fattah and the Islamic groups against the Israeli army.

⁷⁵ Harel Amos. Isacharoff Avi. “The Seventh War” Tel Aviv, Miskal, Yediot Aharont Books and Hemed Books, 2004. Page 126-127

The Outbreak of the Uprising

As a result, the Palestinians went out to the streets after the Friday prayers to confront the Israeli army and police forces. Although those protests were organized by the Palestinian Authority and the Fattah movement, its leaders did not want it to escalate to a war against the army since they were afraid of losing the international support for their cause. As the uprising continued there was still some sort of restraint on both sides even though the use of arms became a common thing. A major incident was the taping of the death of a young kid, Muhammad A Dura and his dad that were caught in the cross fire between both sides⁷⁶. This incident became a symbol of the Palestinian struggle and ignited the crowd even more. Many Palestinian leaders claimed that it was at this point that they lost control over the situation and that the struggle moved from a civil one to a full armed fight. In the PA it was thought that a few days of fighting would help them in the negotiations but once they realized that people started to carry arms openly in the streets the situation was out of their hands⁷⁷. According to Dr. Boaz Ganor the claim that the PA lost control of the situation is not accurate since the PA did not show any 'real' effort of trying to stop the violence at any time.⁷⁸

Even though the streets were getting out of control there was still a little hope of cooperation between Israel and the PA. This ended a couple of days later when a Palestinian crowd stormed Joseph's tomb in the middle of Nablus where a young Israeli

⁷⁶ A year later the IDF Published a report concluding that according to their investigations it was impossible for the IDF soldiers to hit both Muhammad and his father and that they were probably killed from Palestinian fire. The report came out a too late since by that time Muhammad was already a symbol and a martyr.

⁷⁷ Harel Amos. Isacharoff Avi. "The Seventh War" Tel Aviv, Miskal, Yediot Aharont Books and Hemed Books, 2004.

⁷⁸ Ganor, Boaz. Interviewed by author, 1 January 2006. Inter Disciplinary Center Herzelya, Israel

soldier was injured and bled to death for 5 hours while Israel tried to get the PA to get him out of there⁷⁹. Meanwhile, people like Barghuti realized that the way to get more political power is to inflame the situation even more. When asked to stop the fighting Barghuti's men replied: "*are you not ashamed of asking this of us, we are still burying our dead. We must let the Israelis understand that we will not tolerate it anymore*".⁸⁰ During the first few weeks the uprising had some of the characteristics of the first Intifada; the Palestinians were going on strikes, closing the schools down and going on a rampage destroying local cars. Since all of those areas were under the control of the PA it was soon realized that this was not really hurting Israel and the only one being hurt from it were the Palestinians themselves. The PA released a statement to stop all the looting and to move to a more organized fight against Israel which meant the arm struggle against the army. The fact that all looting and violence against the local population stopped proves that the PA still had some control of what was going on and it did have the power to channel the violence in ways that fit their interests better.

Another example of how the struggle was fought in its first weeks moving towards a low intensity war with loss of control was 'the lynching' that was done on two army reserve truck drivers that accidentally drove into Ramallah on their way to their base from home in their private car. Instead of the Palestinian Police taking them back to the coordination office and letting them go back to Israel they took them to the local police station where the crowd moved in and beat them to death and dragged their bodies

⁷⁹ During this time there were great debated whether the military should break in or depend on the Palestinians for rescuing the wounded soldier. As a result Madkhat Yussuf a Druz soldier died causing a great disspointment and disbelief in the IDF by many Israeli soldiers and Druz in particular that the IDF leaves its men behind to die.

⁸⁰ Harel Amos. Isacharoff Avi. "The Seventh War" Tel Aviv, Miskal, Yediot Aharont Books and Hemed Books, 2004. page 33-34

around the streets. This was done only minutes away from the PA headquarters and the PA still couldn't or wouldn't try to do anything about it.

October 27th marked the change in the fighting from Israel's point of view where on another protest just outside Nablus the armed Fattah activists were walking behind the first line of protestors and started shooting at the Israeli forces. This was the end of the local civil resistance and the unarmed civilians were just used but this was soon to end as well. In November the first terror attack took place within the green line and Israeli territories⁸¹.

At the end of October 2000, the Fattah movement, which is a part of the PLO and is a major movement in the PA, released a communiqué taking responsibility for the shooting of the Israeli security guard in East Jerusalem. The communiqué claimed that the 'Al Aqsa Brigades' were responsible for it and that they were taking a full armed struggle against Israel. This is another step into the low intensity war because until then the Fattah movement was in charge of organizing the rallies and protests but they stayed away from terror attacks, which are not part of a civil fight. The brigades started shooting at Israeli neighborhoods from Palestinian houses without asking the locals whether they were willing to let them do so; they just barged in and did what they wanted to⁸².

While Marwan Barghuti was heading the Tanzim and the Al Aqsa Brigades were becoming the symbol of the armed struggle against Israel, other Palestinian key personnel were not sharing the same views as him. Gibril Rajub (head of the West Bank counter

⁸¹ Amidror, Jacob, 'Israel's Strategy for Combating Palestinian Terror'. *Joint Force Quarterly*, (Autumn 2002)

⁸² Harel Amos. Isacharoff Avi. "The Seventh War" Tel Aviv, Miskal, Yediot Aharont Books and Hemed Books, 2004.

intelligence and one of the strongest people in the area) and his colleague Muhammad Dakhlan (his equivalent in Gaza) were opposed to the move towards terrorism and they gave an order to their people not to participate in the fighting. This is another example of an ununified stand in approach toward the way this struggle should be carried on and there was a split within the PA. Again this shows some sort of control by the Palestinian Authority⁸³.

A couple of weeks after the beginning of the uprising the Hamas movement leaders realized that if they wanted to maintain the movement's political power and have some control on the streets it had to start acting and to do it in such measures that will be as extravagant as its competition, the Tanzim. In November 2000 the first car bombs were sent from Jenin to the city of Hadera in Israel (they blew up without the drivers). And on January 2001 the first suicide bomber blew up in the city of Natanya killing three Israeli civilians. This was the first in a series of suicide bombers inside Israel with the understanding, for this period, between Hamas who was in charge of committing terror acts within Israel and the Fattah's different armed groups sticking to acts within the Occupied Territories.

Hamas' activity was becoming more and more successful and the number of Israeli casualties grew from one suicide bomber to another with the killing of more than 20 young Israelis at a nightclub in Tel Aviv. This success was observed by the Fattah movement as they started losing the support of the streets. At this point there were calls for carrying out attacks within Israel but people like Barghuti were opposed to it and with the lack of orders this was obeyed until the beginning of June when a bomb was planted

⁸³ Ibid

in a soldiers pick up point. This was the first Fattah act within Israel even though they claim it was an act made by an individual⁸⁴.

The suicide bombing became one of the most useful instruments and the number of suicide acts grew in time. By July 2004, 133 acts of suicide bombings took place, a tremendous number for less than four years of fighting⁸⁵.

A couple of months into the fighting the streets of the Occupied Territories were becoming chaotic. Armed groups started to control the streets. Those groups started to collect “taxes” from the locals in order to support their causes even if they were not always for the fight itself. Those who did not want to pay were threatened and sometimes violent measures were taken against them by those groups. Rapes and killings were becoming common things and the local Palestinians were in some cases forced to let those groups come into their houses in order to shoot at the Israeli cities. Such was the case in the village of Beit Hanun outside Jerusalem where they shot at the Gilo neighborhood of Jerusalem.

During the winter of 2001 a new weakness was found by the Palestinian armed groups. This was the different routes within the Occupied Territories. The local armed groups, especially the Tanzim and the Al Aqsa brigades, started to ambush settlers and military cars driving on these routes. This was proven to be a good tactic since the Israeli army could not protect all 1200 km of roads within the Occupied Territories, and the shooting became an everyday event that brought the toll of Israeli deaths to a higher

⁸⁴ Sprintzak. Ehud. Lecture notes “extreme politics” Interdisciplinary Center Herzelya. 2002.

⁸⁵ ICT Website. <http://www.ict.org.il>

level. This method was so effective that people were scared to drive on the roads and they would only go with military protection.

The biggest escalation came after Israel assassinated the leader of the Tanzim in the town of Tul Carem Ra'ed Carmy in the beginning of 2002. As a result the Fattah movement swore to get its revenge. From their point of view it meant that "the gloves are off". Soon after, deadly suicide attacks within Israel were carried out by all movement⁸⁶. This led to what is called 'Deadly March' where 133 Israeli civilians were killed and the highlight was the suicide bombing at the Park Hotel during Passover where 29 people died and 150 were injured while praying. Israel's retaliation was to take over the whole of the West Bank and take control over all of the cities that were under the PA's responsibility in an operation called "Defense Shield". This meant full urban warfare. The army went in with all of its power with infantry and tank forces. The Palestinians were not about to give up so easily and they booby trapped the allies and ambushes were prepared. During one day of fighting in Jenin 15 Israeli soldiers died after being ambushed in its refugee camp. This was considered by many Palestinians as a victory because of the high number of IDF casualties. In Ramallah they hid in Arafat's headquarters and in Beith Lehem they hid in the main church. This was the biggest escalation since the beginning of the 2nd Intifada; the fight was not a random thing and the forces fought house to house while local civilians were the victims of the local armed groups hiding among them⁸⁷.

⁸⁶ Druker, Raviv and Selah, Ofer, 'Boomerang' Jerusalem, Keter, 2005 pages 151-175

⁸⁷ Harel Amos. Isacharoff Avi. "The Seventh War" Tel Aviv, Miskal, Yediot Aharont Books and Hemed Books, 2004.

Defense Shield operation caused many arrests among the armed groups which slowed down the terror attacks within Israel but the fighting between the forces carried on. Along with that and the building of the fence around the West Bank Israel managed to contain to a certain extent the terrorism. As a result new tactics were being used. The armed groups started to attack the forces operating within the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Israeli roadblocks were attacked either by snipers or head on attacks that took them by surprise. Outposts were raided with the intent of the raiders to give up their soul and die doing it. In Gaza, tunnels were dug under those outposts and then filled with hundreds of kilograms of explosives and then blew up the entire outpost. Explosives were put along the roads to be detonated when army convoys drove by. Because of the lack of ability to come into Israel the armed groups moved to guerrilla warfare against the army⁸⁸.

Another type of tactics that is used to this day is the use of mortars against Israeli settlements in Gaza. This method is not so effective in terms of casualties but it is very effective in the psychological aspect. The settlements are being bombed on a weekly basis; something that brings fear to the people. Soon after the introduction of mortars came a new weapon which is the Qassam rockets. Those are short distance rockets that carry a small amount of explosive but they can be fired from within Gaza and reach towns within Israel's borders. The fact that now the Palestinians had the ability to attack Israel from within its own territories meant "a whole new ball game". Israelis still facing that

⁸⁸ Eshel, David, 'The Al Aqsa Intifada: tactics and strategies' *Jane's Intelligence Review*, Vol. 13 No.5 (May 2001)

problem since the firing of these rockets can be done from a back yard of a house and a couple of minutes after the launch the terrorists are gone from the site⁸⁹.

With the death of Yasser Arafat and the new Palestinian Government there is some sort of cooperation between Israel and the PA. This means that the PA is in some cases trying to fight to Islamic movement that is firing the rockets⁹⁰. This causes a bigger split between the different groups within the streets of the Occupied Territories.

The Israeli fighting tactics

Israel is on the Defensive

The starting date and the scale of the fighting in the first few days caught the IDF a little bit by surprise but in general the military was very well prepared for the upcoming conflict. This is due to the prior conflicts that occurred in September 1996 and May 2000. The IDF executed drills and exercises that predicted Palestinian uprising that included an armed conflict⁹¹.

During the first few days of the fighting the military was facing similar type of protests as it did in the first Intifada of mass crowds throwing stones and petrol bombs. The difference was that in some cases there were shooting incidents that put the level of fighting on a different level like the one that was seen during September of 1996.

⁸⁹ Figel, Yoni, 'Qassam Rockets- Hamas Next Strategic Weapon In the West Bank' Institute for Counter Terrorism.(ICT), <http://www.ict.org.il> , (July 2005)

⁹⁰ Lorber, Azriel, 'The growing Threat of the Kassam Rockets on Israel' *Nativ*, Ariel Center for Policy Studies, (January 2004)

⁹¹ Eshel, David, 'The Al Aqsa Intifada: tactics and strategies' *Jane's Intelligence Review*, Vol. 13 No.5 (May 2001)

During the first few days the IDF responded by trying to control the protests with the use of tear gas, rubber bullets and other low damage inflicting means. In certain places such as the Netzarim intersection where the protesting became more violent and almost overwhelmed the Israeli forces the troops got permission to use sniper support which helped keep the Palestinians away from the outpost. After a few days of fighting both the government and the military realized that the conflict might be longer than previous ones. Therefore all exercises and drills were stopped and more troops were transferred to the Occupied Territories⁹².

During those days the military staff kept holding back its full power and capabilities. This is because most generals and ministers thought that there is still a way of turning the clock back and returning to negotiations. No one wanted to cross the lines of no return. An example of the restraint policy is when helicopters were introduced to the fighting in the first few days they shot their missiles at empty PA offices. This was because the military was giving a notice so the Palestinians could evacuate the building. This was becoming a ritual; every time a terror act was committed the Palestinians started evacuating their offices⁹³.

Most of the fighting was defensive. This meant that the IDF did not go into 'A' territories that were under Palestinian supervision. This was after Prime Minister Ehud Barak specifically ordered the military to stay out. Even under the most extreme pressure, when a soldier was wounded while defending an outpost, Joseph's Tomb, in the middle of Nablus, the military was prevented from going in. The soldier bled for 5 hours while military officers were negotiating with Palestinian officials to rescue the soldier. The

⁹² Harel Amos. Isacharoff Avi. "The Seventh War" Tel Aviv, Miskal, Yediot Aharont Books and Hemed Books, 2004. pages 28-29

⁹³ Ibid. p. 35-36

soldier, Madhat Yussuf, died that evening at the outpost. This brought great criticism against the government and the IDF for leaving the wounded behind. Two days later the outpost at Joseph's Tomb was cleared and the IDF retreated to the outskirts of Nablus. Because of the failure of the Palestinians to help rescue the soldier the military decided that it cannot trust them and that from now it will not rely on outside sources for help.

Because the military was on the defensive, it lowered the bar of its rules of engagement (ROE), Soldiers felt that they could open fire at any incident where they felt a little threat, and this caused a rise in the number of Palestinian casualties. By the second week of the fighting tanks and helicopters were taking part in the daily fighting against the protestors. Another measure that was taken was the demolition of different building that posed a threat to the Israeli forces. The only Palestinian naval ship was sunk as well by the Israeli navy.

A point of escalation on the Israeli side was the 'lynching' of the 2 reserve truck drivers in Ramallah. The pictures of the two bodies being thrown out of the window, the Palestinian waving his hands to the crowd while covered with blood and the call that was made to one of the soldier's wife saying 'I just killed your husband' left a deep impression on the Israeli society. Prime Minister Barak ordered the General Security Service (GSS) to hunt down each and everyone responsible for the lynching. This was the beginning of the hunting of terrorists by Israel⁹⁴. By October 2000 the violence on both sides reached an unprecedented level.

⁹⁴ Ibid. p.38-39

Israel is Becoming Offensive

On February 2001 Ariel Sharon, leader of the Likud party, won the election and became Prime Minister. By this time the IDF was already using different means such as helicopters, tanks, assassinations and mass killing of Palestinians in general. On November 9 the first assassination since Yikhi Ayash's assassination in 1996 took place; this was done by a helicopter shooting at a moving convoy. By the end of the year, 10 other Palestinians were assassinated in different ways such as sniper shots, special operations and other type of ambushes⁹⁵.

Sharon called for the military to become more offensive and to push forward and confront the Palestinians. The military begun with the 'exposure policy', which was the demolition of every building that was in the way or posed a threat to the Israeli forces. Buildings and trees along routes and nearby outposts were taken down by orders of the battalion commanders. More and more collective punishments such as closing of cross points to Israel and the limiting of movement around the Occupied Territories were imposed. Sharon also allowed the IDF to operate within 'A' territories and pushed for more assassinations and arrests.

At the beginning of the 2nd Intifada the international community criticized Israel for the high number of casualties on the Palestinian side. The United States tried to reassure Israel to use less force and to get back to the negotiation table. All of this was about to change on September 11. After the 9/11 terror attacks President Bush stated that the US supports Israel in its fight against terror. On January 3rd Israel seized a cargo ship, the Karin A, full of weapons on its way to Palestinian territories from Iran. The

⁹⁵ Ibid. p.93-97

documents tied Arafat directly to the smuggling attempt. This proved that Arafat was behind the fighting. From that point President Bush and the rest of the international community saw Arafat as a non-relevant personality in the peace process. The US stopped sending funds to the PA and President Bush refused to meet with Arafat from that point on.⁹⁶

Operation 'Defense Shield'

March 2002 became the deadliest month on the Israeli side with the death of 133 Israelis by the hands of Palestinian terror attacks. The highlight of these attacks was the suicide bombing that took place at the Park Hotel in Netanya on Passover night killing 29 people and injuring more than 170⁹⁷. At this point Ariel Sharon announced that Arafat is considered an enemy of the state and that there will be no more negotiating with him anymore, therefore making him irrelevant. In addition Sharon decides to take another step in the fight on terror. This is to be the greatest escalation throughout the 2nd Intifada. Sharon signs an emergency order recruiting more reserve soldiers creating a 30,000 soldier force that is ready to recapture the West Bank from the Palestinians. On March 28th operation 'Defense Shield' started with the IDF marching in all Palestinian cities in the West Bank. In most of the cities the fighting went smoothly and the military encountered some resistance but managed to take control with no major casualties. This was due to the readiness of the military both from the prior training and the different raids that took place a few weeks before the operation. The IDF used new tactics in order to

⁹⁶Druker, Raviv and Selah, Ofer, 'Boomerang' Jerusalem, Keter, 2005 Pages 137-150

⁹⁷ ICT Website. <http://www.ict.org.il>

lessen the number of casualties such as breaking through the wall instead of being exposed in the streets of the refugee camps⁹⁸.

In some of the cities things did not go as smoothly as expected. In Jenin a reserve force that was unprepared for this type of fighting encountered an ambush that resulted in 13 soldiers dead. The military as a result decided to get in with its full power destroying everything in its way. There were claims that a massacre was being committed but after an international investigation it was ruled that this was not to be true. In Ramallah wanted terrorists managed to escape and find rescue in Arafat's HQ in the Mukata. The IDF surrounded the building and there were debates whether the military should storm the place or not. It was decided against it since there was fear of harming Arafat and making him a martyr. The Mukata was put under siege while there were negotiations for the imprisonment of the terrorists responsible for the murder of the Minister of Tourism Rekhavam Ze'evi. The terrorists ended up imprisoned under international supervision. In Beith Lehem similarly wanted terrorists found refuge at the Church of Nativity. After a long siege they were deported from Israel⁹⁹.

As a result of 'defensive shield' Arafat found himself stuck in the Mukata not being able to leave until he was moved to a French hospital before he died on November 11, 2004.

One of the greatest achievements of the military was the capturing of the head of the Tanzim, Marwan Barghuti. In Gaza it was decided that the IDF would not take over the different cities since Gaza is denser and the fighting would have been much fiercer

⁹⁸ Harel Amos. Isacharoff Avi. "The Seventh War" Tel Aviv, Miskal, Yediot Aharont Books and Hemed Books, 2004.

⁹⁹ Ibid. p. 235-271

ending up with too many casualties on both sides. Instead the military raided different targets arresting key figures within the different terror organizations.

Although the operation was considered a great success it did have some faults. In addition to some leadership deficiencies the military in many cases used excessive force damaging unnecessary Palestinian property and in some cases there was even looting by IDF soldiers. This gave the military a bad name and ruined its integrity.

After three weeks of fighting the government declared the end of the first phase of the operation and the IDF left some of the Palestinian cities such as Qalqilya and Tul-Carem. In other places the military settled in different sites within the cities and kept on operating from there. By the end of April most of the reserve soldiers that were called for the operation were released and Sharon claimed that the operation was over. This does not mean that the military stopped with any other operations such as arrests and assassinations.¹⁰⁰

On July 22nd another escalation on Israel's behalf was the use of a one ton bomb to kill Sallah Shkhade, a Hamas leader. This bomb was dropped by an F-16 plane and it killed along with Shkhade another 17 civilians. This was considered an extreme use of force by Israel and the government was criticized both from the international community and from the domestic one.

After operation Defense Shield was over the military entered a new stage of a protracted low intensity conflict. This meant that small operations to arrest different terrorists were taking place. Other type of tactics were checkpoints and patrols in and around the different cities. The IDF became settled and along with that was becoming more vulnerable to guerrilla warfare. On the night of November 15th 12 soldiers were

¹⁰⁰ Ibid 235-271

killed in an ambush in Hebron. Not long before in the Ofra checkpoint 10 soldiers were killed by a single sniper¹⁰¹. In other incidents different outposts were infiltrated both in the West Bank and Gaza.

Throughout 2003 the fighting on both sides continued, with the IDF using the same tactics as in the previous years. On March 22 Israel decided to go after the political leaders of Hamas and killed Sheikh Ahmad Yassin the leader of Hamas. Less than a month later Yassin's second in command, Rantissi, was also assassinated.

In preparation for the disengagement the IDF executed different operations against the terror groups in order to make sure that there would be no repeat of the withdrawal from Lebanon where the Hezbollah claimed they defeated Israel and pushed them out. Israel was trying to hit hard on the terror groups and especially hitting Hamas in order to make it easier for people like Dakhlan to take control over Gaza once Israel leaves Gaza. The largest operation was in Rafah on the 12th of May 2004.¹⁰²

The Role of Intelligence

Once the peace process started the GSS lost most of its ability to follow and get information from the Occupied Territories. This was due to the fact that until then the GSS was operating inside the cities and was able to keep a close eye on what was going on everywhere, whether through informants or with the help of agents. Once the GSS was not able to operate inside the cities it was harder for the organization to recruit informants and follow up on any leads that they had.

¹⁰¹ ICT Website. <http://www.ict.org.il>

¹⁰² Druker, Raviv and Selah, Ofer, 'Boomerang' Jerusalem, Keter, 2005 pages 349-369

The second Intifada came as a surprise for the GSS since they were dealing mainly in counter terrorism activity and too much in analysis of the current situation within the Occupied Territories. As mentioned the GSS had some problems at first but it didn't take long for the organization to adapt itself for the new situation. Avi Dikhter, head of the GSS, pushed for the assassination policy almost from the get go of the Intifada. Once Sharon came into power Dikhter felt even more comfortable to push for this policy.

On December 2003 Dikhter claimed at the Herzelya conference that he didn't supply the Israeli citizens the protection they deserve. An analysis of the figures shows that Dikhter was being too hard on himself because the ability of the GSS and the military in preventing terror acts grew stronger and stronger. Since March 2003 the success rate of preventing suicide bombers was 90%. Before that only one attempt was prevented out of 17 cases. This is due to several reasons¹⁰³.

First, the cooperation between the military and the GSS became an essential part of the work scheme. Each battalion had a direct phone connection to the GSS agent in charge of its area. This caused a greater flow of information and set aside the competitiveness between the organizations¹⁰⁴.

Second, a lot of the information came through interrogations. This was unlike the first Intifada where most of the Palestinians that were a part of terror groups used to play mind games against their interrogators. During this Intifada most of those arrested

¹⁰³ Harel Amos. Isacharoff Avi. "The Seventh War" Tel Aviv, Miskal, Yediot Aharont Books and Hemed Books, 2004. Page 160-165

¹⁰⁴ Ibid p.162

cooperated with the authorities right away trying to leave a mark of their activity in the history books.¹⁰⁵

Third, new technological methods such as different surveillances apparatus were used. These included the use of remote controlled airplanes that could feed live updates from different places, other forms of cameras mounted on high towers and different radio surveillance.¹⁰⁶

With these abilities the GSS has been able to learn about most future terror attacks and in most cases apprehend the terrorists in time.

Change in policy

As soon as the IDF forces left the Palestinian cities terror attacks reoccurred in Israel. During May and June 87 Israelis were killed in the fighting and terror attacks¹⁰⁷. As a result operation “determine path’ was executed. This was meant that the IDF retook some positions within the Palestinian cities and continued to conduct arrests and maintain positions.

At the same time the terror attacks during these two months were a catalyst for a decision that something should be done in order to keep suicide bombers outside of Israel. It was then decided that some sort of barrier should be built in order to keep the free flow of Palestinians into Israeli territories from the West Bank. By this time the Gaza Strip was surrounded by a fence that was closely watched by the military and prevented any infiltrations. The government announced on June 23rd 2002 that it gave the order for

¹⁰⁵ Ibid p 164

¹⁰⁶ Nir, Shmuel, ‘Intelligence in a Low Intensity Conflict between Asymmetric rivals’ *Ma’arachot*, (December 2001)

¹⁰⁷ ICT Website. <http://www.ict.org.il>

building the first section of the fence between Saalem Checkpoint (north of Jenin) and the Israeli settlement Elkana¹⁰⁸.

According to the Ministry of defense the fence has 5 main objectives:

- Prevention of terrorist infiltration to Israeli territory.
- Prevention of arms smuggling into Israeli territories.
- Prevention and obstruction of shooting from Palestinian territories into Israeli territories.
- Prevention of different platforms that might be used in the hands of terrorists (cars for example), crossing to and from Palestinian territories.
- Prevention of criminal activity and illegal aliens coming in.¹⁰⁹

The fence was not a new idea, previous prime ministers talked about it before. Prime Minister Rabin came up with the idea after a double suicide attack took place in a place not far from Tul Carem. Rabin's plan did not realized because of the lack of funds and bureaucratic obstacles. The same occurred during Barak's term, the fence was not on the priority list of the government¹¹⁰.

The path of the fence that was decided included most of the settlements and kept them on the Israeli side. This meant that the path of it crossed different Palestinian territories in some cases cutting villages in two or in other cases leaving some Palestinians on one side and their lands on the other. This caused great suffering for the

¹⁰⁸ Harel Amos. Isacharoff Avi. "The Seventh War" Tel Aviv, Miskal, Yediot Aharont Books and Hemed Books, 2004. page 276

¹⁰⁹ 'The Security Barrier- Background and it's security aspects' *Israeli Ministry of Defense*, http://www.intelligence.org.il/sp/c_t/sec/sec_fc.htm

¹¹⁰ Harel Amos. Isacharoff Avi. "The Seventh War" Tel Aviv, Miskal, Yediot Aharont Books and Hemed Books, 2004.

Palestinian people. Different cases were brought by the Palestinians and other Peace organizations before the Israeli Supreme Court, which decided in many of them that the military should find a better path for the fence in order to prevent this suffering.¹¹¹

At the same time Israel was criticized both from the international community and from some of the Israeli population. On the domestic side at the beginning, right after four deadly months, there was great support for building the fence. It was only after the path of it was built that many Israelis realized the wrong doing of it. Protests along the fence started occurring on different occasions and there was great criticism from the left wing parties. On the international community side an advisory opinion by the ICJ was released that the building of the fence is against international humanitarian law on the grounds of the fact the Occupied Territories are 'Occupied' by Israel and therefore Israel does not have the right to claim new borders. The Israeli Supreme Court dismissed these allegations on the basis that the ICJ did not have all the information and was a political body. In addition the Ministry of Defense claimed that the fence does not represent the final border between Israel and Palestine¹¹². The United State was also criticizing Israel but after the assurance of Sharon for more consideration and once the disengagement plan started the US decided to ease off the pressure in order for the plan to go through. Although the construction of the fence was not completed by the time of this paper a large percentage of it is in place. The effectiveness of the fence is debatable; the Ministry of Defense claims that there was a drop of 90% in terror attacks since the fence was

¹¹¹ 'The Security Barrier- Background and it's security aspects' *Israeli Ministry of Defense*, http://www.intelligence.org.il/sp/c_t/sec/sec_fc.htm

¹¹² Israeli Supreme Court Decision 'Ma'arabe Vs. Prime Minister of Israel' Israel, (June 2005)

completed in most areas¹¹³. This is due to the difficulty of crossing into Israel. The counter argument to that is that there might be other factors for the drop in terror attacks such as the death of Arafat and the new hope for negotiations.

The decision on the fence was the first part of a new policy that Prime Minister Sharon was trying to implement. This policy is a policy of unilateral acts with or without the blessing of the Palestinian Authority. The building of the fence was a signal to the Palestinians that Israel is creating some sort of separation between the two populations without any negotiations. The second change in policy was yet to come.

During the year of 2003 more of the Israeli population realized that Israel's presence in Gaza is causing more damage than its productivity. At the same time two initiatives were signed by Israelis and Palestinians in order to get the peace process started again: one was the Geneva Agreement signed by Dr Yossi Beilin and Yasser Abed Rabu and the second was an agreement signed by Ami Ayalon (former head of the GSS) and Sari Nusseibeh. These agreements and other initiatives all talked about different alternatives to the current situations. Sharon could not ignore the public opinion that was pushing to get out of Gaza especially with the number of casualties that was increasing all the time¹¹⁴.

On December 18th 2003 during his speech at the annual Herzliya Conference Sharon 'dropped a bomb' by announcing that Israel will have to pay an expensive price in the near future in order to maintain its security. After that Sharon provided more details about his future plans for withdrawing from Gaza and some parts of Samaria.

¹¹³ 'The Security Barrier- Background and its security aspects' *Israeli Ministry of Defense*, http://www.intelligence.org.il/sp/c_t/sec/sec_fc.htm

¹¹⁴ Druker, Raviv and Shelah, Ofer, 'Boomerang' Jerusalem, Keter, 2005

Everyone including the Likud party was surprised by this announcement. Sharon was always seen as one of the forefathers of the settlement movement and as the one who was always ready to provide the settlers with what they wanted. What people failed to see was that Sharon did not believe in the settlement because of their ideology of 'the whole state of Israel on the whole land of Israel'. He did not see the settlements as a divine mission that should be fulfilled by the settlers. Sharon saw them as a pure security strategy, He believed that by settling in the Occupied Territories more security will be provided for the state of Israel.

Sharon was also never considered someone who would concede to terrorism or any other concessions to the Palestinians. He was always seen as the fierce officer from the notorious 101 Unit and one of the people responsible for the Sabra and Shatila massacre. The reason for Sharon's decision to go ahead with the disengagement was not because he felt any appreciation for the Palestinians or because the terror attacks were pressuring him to do so. The main reasons for his decision were the understanding that Israel cannot go on controlling 3.5 million Palestinians while remaining a Jewish state. Even though the Palestinians were not Israeli citizens the fact that almost half of the people under Israeli control were not Jewish or even Israeli posed a great threat in Sharon's eyes. Another reason is that Sharon saw the disengagement not as a gift to the Palestinians but rather as a punishment. The fact that Israel decides to withdraw without any negotiations means that Israel still is the one making the moves without the need for any Palestinian approval. The last reason for Sharon's decision is the settlements. The settlements in Gaza Strip were all isolated and surrounded by Palestinian cities, this meant that a great amount of military forces needed for their protection. The same was

the case for 3 other settlements in the north of Samaria. Sharon decided that the cost was too high both in money terms and the number of casualties¹¹⁵. This was due to the fact that more and more terror attacks were occurring on the different roads in the Occupied Territories against settlers and military vehicles. The military was not capable of defending 1500 km of roads. Sharon also mentioned in some of his arguments that he was willing to pay this price in order to save other settlements when it would come to the complete withdrawal from the West Bank.

Sharon did not want the disengagement to be a repeat of the withdrawal from Lebanon, which was seen as a great victory for the Hezbollah. Many claim that this withdrawal inspired the Palestinians to start the second Intifada. In order to prevent this situation Sharon tried to make sure that Israel leaves Gaza while it has the upper hand and that the Palestinians know that Israel is not disengaging because of terror. In order to make this impression several operations took place in Gaza with the objective of clearing most of the tunnel smuggling areas and assassinating most of the Hamas leadership including Sheikh Yassin and his 2nd in command Rantissi.¹¹⁶

Although the construction of the Separation Barrier is not considered a border, it does represent, along with the disengagement policy, a new approach by the Israeli government towards the conflict. This approach is an attempt of separation between the two populations with the objective of the less contact as possible.

¹¹⁵ Druker, Raviv and Shelah, Ofer, 'Boomerang' Jerusalem, Keter, 2005 pages 272-279

¹¹⁶ Harel Amos. Isacharoff Avi. 'The Seventh War' Tel Aviv, Miskal, Yediot Aharont Books and Hemed Books, 2004.

Conclusion

The Al Aqsa Intifada started as a popular revolt organized by the Palestinian Authority. The uprising started with the crowd going onto the streets using the old tactics of throwing stones and Molotov cocktails. This was seen as an opportunity by some of the Palestinian leaders to promote the peace process that was struck after the Camp David talks by inflaming the situation with the use of firearms. The main reasons for that was the loss of support to the Islamic movements and the frustration from the failed talks. Soon after the fighting began the situation span out of control even though there was no real attempt to restore order, and the armed struggle became the main method of fighting against the Israeli Authority. By this time the struggle lost popular characteristics since most people didn't carry arms and once shooting started on both sides, stones became irrelevant. Fighting occurred at a longer distance between the clashing sides.

Along side with the clashes on the street, terrorism also became a tactic for fighting against the Israel. Although terrorism was used before and during the peace process it was mainly done by the Islamic groups that were opposed to it. During the second Intifada terror became a tactic of the Palestinian Authority as well. The streets became chaotic and controlled by different armed groups that sometimes used their power for their own interests. Although the public support never dropped and the inflamed situation was very appealing to the crowd most could not participate and were struggling to survive, especially since Israel closed the entrance to all Palestinian workers.

The Israeli military that is used to being on the defensive when it comes to the conflicts was prepared for this confrontation on the strategic side. Drills and exercises

were taking place. Although the IDF was prepared on the strategic aspect it was not prepared on the tactical aspect. In addition to this there was great confusion concerning the policies at this point. On the tactical aspect, many units in the Occupied Territories were not sure about the rules of engagement and did not know how to react to the new situation of hostile fire from an unarmed crowd. The IDF was also very confused about the policies during the first part of the conflict. In many cases the military generals did not want to act because they didn't know how far they can go without jeopardizing future talks with the Palestinian Authority. The main example for this is the fact that Barak did not let IDF forces get into 'A' territories. This resulted in an Israeli soldier bleeding to death for 5 hours at Joseph's Tomb in Nablus. On the intelligence side the GSS and the military suffered from the fact that they did not have access to the Palestinian cities making them incapable to stop and prevent terror attacks. The Separation Barrier, although it was talked about before, was not in place to help fight terror within Israel.

Because of the military's strategic preparedness it had the ability to stand against all of the attacks by the Palestinians until the government and the policy makers came to the conclusion that there was a complete breakdown of the peace talks and that a more offensive approach should take place. The government after the breakdown of the negotiations in Taba between Barak and Arafat decided that there was no partner on the Palestinian side. Along with the talk breakdown and the election of Sharon as prime minister the government decided on a hard line policy to fight off any attacks by the Palestinians and in many cases preempt those attacks with arrests and assassinations. Once Israel became more offensive and decided to take the initiative into its own hands it became more successful in the fight against terrorism. The main turning point was

operation Defensive Shield, which gave the IDF back some control over the West Bank. Although Defensive Shield operation was the peak of valance on Israel's behalf the strategy of the operation was a limited one, both the military generals and the government realized that the forces were not there to stay for a long period of time making it a very successful operation. Beyond that point Israel had no difficulties in operating within Palestinian territories. As a result the intelligence capabilities of the military and the GSS grew tremendously and gave Israel the advantage in the fight against terror.

The last part of the fight saw a dramatic change within the policies of Israel in terms of how to go about this conflict. Instead of attacking the Palestinians head on the government decided to initiate unilateral acts that would separate the two populations. This showed that Israel still controlled the situation and also that Israel was doing what seemed best for its own interests¹¹⁷. This meant making some hard decisions such as evacuating settlements and withdrawing troops from Gaza. One decision was the creation of the separation barrier which is a passive and defensive measure. As can be seen the Israeli government is moving towards becoming more on the defensive in its strategy while maintaining some offensive tactics when needed (arrests and assassinations).

One of the most important things for Israel's ability to withstand the second Intifada, which affected the civilian population more than any other conflict before, was the fact that there was a great consensus among everyone that the fight was not the Israelis' fault. The majority of the population that supported the Oslo accords was very disappointed once the Camp David peace talks broke down. People realized that Arafat was not ready for peace and in the eyes of the Israeli people Arafat and the Palestinian

¹¹⁷ Druker, Raviv and Shelah, Ofer, 'Boomerang' Jerusalem, Keter, 2005

Authority were the reason for the bloodshed; the second Intifada was forced on Israel and it was now fighting to defend itself¹¹⁸. Because of this breakdown during the beginning of the fighting, most of the population did not care much for the Palestinian casualties because of the thought that they ‘deserved it for starting the fight again’. As the Intifada dragged on and became more than just a short conflict, more voices against the government policies began to appear such as the ‘Refusniks movement’. The Refusniks are soldiers who refuse to serve in the military because of government policies. Nevertheless, the majority of the population still supports the Israeli cause and the government. The proof of this are the results in the elections where Ariel Sharon was voted in with unprecedented support.

¹¹⁸ Ganor, Boaz. Interviewed by author, 1 January 2006. Inter Disciplinary Center Herzelya, Israel

An Analysis of the Strategies and Tactics in the Two INTIFADAS

While both Intifadas are secessionist-type insurgencies, the two Intifadas are very different characteristically, the way that they were fought, and by the different popular support it received. Both uprisings were, and still are, trying to change the political status of the Palestinian people and create a Palestinian state. But they are completely different types of uprising.

The first Intifada was characterized by very active popular support. All the different classes took some part in the resistance against the Israeli authorities. For example, the shopkeepers boycotted Israeli products and closed their shops at certain hours, the youth went on the streets and fought, and the villages did their best to support the refugee camps. Although in some cases the resistance was not effective but they did try and give in as much as they could. In the second Intifada this was not the case. The popular support started as an active one when the Palestinians went on the streets to confront the Israeli army. But very soon after when firearms were introduced to the fight the crowd pulled back since the effectiveness of stones was irrelevant. The armed groups took over the fighting and all that was left for the rest of the Palestinians was to become passive supporters. Another reason for the support to become passive in the second Intifada was the fact that everyday life in the towns and cities was under Palestinian authority and therefore closing down the education system, the shops and all the means

used in the first Intifada only hurt the Palestinians themselves. This is why the insurgency was concentrated on using a more military and urban-type strategy¹¹⁹.

The causes for the differences between the two Intifadas can be explained by different factors. First, during the first Intifada the Palestinian leadership was in exile and the local leadership that grew up in Israel was very different from the PLO leadership that grew up on the values of an armed fight and terrorism. The local leadership that was suppressed for so many years wanted to get the attention of the international community and bring an end to the impossible situation that occurred until 1987, and in many ways, even though it is debatable, they managed to do it by bringing Israel to the table in the Madrid Summit. This could only have been possible with a long protest that had the popular support, which could make it go for so long. Also during the first Intifada the amount of firearms that the Palestinians had was very limited and it was very easy, therefore, for the Israeli army to find out where those arms were and collect them. On the other hand, the second Intifada was lead by the old leadership of the PLO with Yasser Arafat whose political power was getting weaker and therefore he sought popularity by inflaming the streets and moving into terrorism, a method he was using a couple of decades before and proved to be useful to him at the time. The amount of arms in the Occupied Territories at the beginning of the second Intifada was far greater than at the time of the first one. As a part of the Oslo agreements the PA received numerous amounts of guns and other firearms. Also, once Israel relinquished its authority over the cities and towns in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip it lost its tight grip on the weapon smuggling into the Palestinian Autonomy. In Gaza, smuggling tunnels were dug under the Israeli

¹¹⁹ Oneill Bard E. "Insurgency & Terrorism- inside modern revolutionary warfare". Maxwell McMillan Publishing, 1990.

border between Gaza and Egypt. The introduction of large amounts of weapons, and the subsequent attacks on Israeli soldiers and settlers, was one of the major factors that caused Israel to get involved in the Gaza Strip instead of letting the Palestinian police take care of the protestors.

Another very important factor that must be taken into consideration when analyzing the reasons for the difference between the two types of tactics is the rising power of the fundamental Islamic movements. During the first Intifada the Islamic movement did exist but they were still a small group that did not affect local politics; it was actually thought at those times that they were relatively meaningless movements that were not worth bothering with, and Israel actually thought they might be a good alternative to the PLO leadership which was considered to be a terror group¹²⁰. By the time of the second Intifada all of those thoughts were proven to be very wrong. The movements gained more and more support from the Palestinian people that were disappointed with the corrupt Palestinian Authority and by those who wanted to return to more fundamental beliefs. On the other hand the Islamic movements became more and more radical; they opposed Israel more than the PA and did not accept the existence of it. With the competition between the PA and the Islamic movements it became obvious that the group that would conduct more terror attacks and have better the fighting record would win the crowd. This is why the Fattah movement was so anxious to commit terror acts within Israel, the fact that they were losing support to the Hamas. The more terror created, the less the fight became an active popular fight¹²¹.

¹²⁰ Sprintzak, Ehud. Lecture notes "extreme politics" Interdisciplinary Center Herzelya. 2002.

¹²¹ Ibid

Once the peace talks started after the first Intifada the Palestinians were facing a vacuum because the fighting stopped and the Palestinian took over. The problem was that there was no attempt to resolve the culture of violence that existed within the population. In addition the Palestinian Authority realized that violence worked in their favor. For example Benjamin Netanyahu was not willing to discuss any withdrawal from Hebron. Once the Palestinians started fighting in September of 1996 Netanyahu gave up on some parts of Hebron. Another example was the retreat from Lebanon following the fighting with Hezbollah. Finally, the fact that once the second Intifada started and violence broke out, Barak went to the Taba talks and he was willing to give even more than in Camp David. All of these gave Arafat the feeling that as long as there was violence they could get more concessions from the Israelis¹²².

A major difference between the two Intifadas concerns the relationship between the strategy and policy of the Palestinians. During the first Intifada, despite its appearance as a spontaneous uprising, the Palestinians realized there was something to gain. Therefore they created a policy of getting their voices heard. Their main goal was to reach the international community and bring the Palestinian problem to the top of the agenda and get the neighboring Arab states to assist them¹²³. The strategy they used matched their policy perfectly: the use of non-violent actions against the military and appearing in the media as the weak side. When the Peace talks broke down at Camp David, Arafat did not really have any policy except for trying to get more out of Israel. Arafat used violence as his primary strategy to achieve this policy which, unlike the first

¹²² Ganor, Boaz. Interviewed by author, 1 January 2006. Inter Disciplinary Center Herzelya, Israel

¹²³ Eshel, David, 'The Al Aqsa Intifada: tactics and strategies' *Jane's Intelligence Review*, Vol. 13 No.5 (May 2001)

Intifada, did not really work. Once the Palestinians started using more firearms and terror the international community and the Israeli population that supported the peace talks lost any sympathy for the Palestinian people.

For Israel, both Intifadas had a major impact on both the population and on the military. During both Intifadas the military encountered an asymmetric fight against an enemy that was weaker in terms of military means. Although this was the case in both conflicts the characteristics of the fighting was very different and ended with different results.

The first Intifada came as a surprise to the government and the military. Until then there was a sense of denial when it came to discussing the Palestinian problem. Although the ‘writing was on the wall’ most of the people chose to ignore it¹²⁴. Once the Intifada started the military did not know how to react. The IDF that was used to fighting ‘full scale’ wars was not ready for this new type of engagement where it had to face a civilian population. Since this was all new for the military it took a long time for it to adapt to the new tactics. Different tactics were tried such as the shopkeepers’ wars and other means to break down the protests. Before the 2nd Intifada the military went through a couple of fighting incidents with the Palestinians, which made its generals realize that the military needed to get ready for future clashes. This prepared the IDF for the second Intifada. Unlike the first one, and while there were some problems with some tactical points the military’s strategy was well defined and it was ready to respond to any Palestinian action. Because of this readiness the adaptation process of the military for any changes within

¹²⁴ Shif, Ze’ev and Ya’ari Ehud ‘Intifada’ Tel Aviv, Shoken Publishing House, 1990.

the fighting and the government policy were quick and very efficient¹²⁵. Both Intifadas started with the Israeli military being on the defensive trying to suppress any Palestinian violence with any means it had at its disposal. Since the first Intifada did not involve firearms on the Palestinian side, the military used mainly tear gas, rubber bullets and other means that were less harmful than live ammunition. Once the Palestinians started using weapons during the second Intifada, they played into the Israeli military's hand by making it react by shooting back and creating a situation where it was acceptable to use live ammunition. The result was that the IDF introduced military power such as tanks, helicopters and artillery while during the first Intifada the military only used foot soldiers. In addition the rules of engagement became very different during the second Intifada. During the first Intifada the military had very strict rules on opening fire on the unarmed crowd, which led to tactics of using more violence in terms of beating up the Palestinian population. The rules of engagement in the second Intifada were much less defined and soldiers were able to open fire whenever they felt threatened which resulted in tremendous amount of ammunition being fired during the first few months of the fighting.

Because of the different status of the Palestinian territories in the two conflicts the military had to use different types of fighting. During the first Intifada, the military was stationed within the Palestinian cities and villages which made it easy for the IDF to carry out its missions with few difficulties in reaching any part of the Palestinian areas.

Because of the Oslo accords the IDF had to pull out of all the cities and give up any responsibilities in the area. Once the fighting broke out again, the military was not able to

¹²⁵ Amidror, Jacob, 'Israel's Strategy for Combating Palestinian Terror' *Joint Force Quarterly*, (Autumn 2002)

walk back into the Palestinian territories because this meant an escalation in the fighting that the government, at the beginning of the fighting, did not want. The military had to improve its special operation units and use them to raid different objectives in order to arrest wanted terrorists. In addition, the IDF had to resolve to use long range means such as tanks and helicopter missiles. When the government changed its policies, the military faced something that it never faced before and that was the retaking of the Palestinian cities. This meant using urban warfare that was last used in Lebanon in 1982 and in the six day war in 1967.

Intelligence gathering by the military and GSS was also affected by the fact that Israeli had less presence within the Palestinian territories. During the first uprising the GSS was facing small organizations that were hard to break through interrogations and it depended on the use of collaborators. During the second Intifada, because the Israelis had less touch with collaborators within the local population, the GSS used more electronic interceptions in order to obtain information¹²⁶.

The growing capabilities of Israeli intelligence led to Israel taking more initiatives which led to more assassinations. Although there are claims that Israel did use the masquerades for assassination missions, it was never proven and Israel's response is that their primary mission in the first Intifada was arresting the wanted terrorists. Intelligence is not the only reason for Israel's adoption of this policy. Once terror became the main policy of the Palestinians and the number of Israeli civilian casualties grew its policy changed in order to remove those in charge of the terror attacks. This proved to be an effective means for the short term since it paralyzed the terror groups. But once Israel

¹²⁶ Nir, Shmuel, 'Intelligence in a Low Intensity Conflict between Asymmetric rivals' *Ma'arachot*, (December 2001)

realized that the threats for revenge did not materialize, assassinations became an effective method for raising public opinion and getting those responsible punished. A major difference between the two Intifadas on Israel's behalf was the fact that during the first uprising there was nobody on the Palestinian behalf that could negotiate with Israel since Israel didn't agree to talk to the PLO and the Palestinians claimed that the PLO was their only spokesperson. This meant that Israel operated without any consideration for any of the Palestinian bodies. During the beginning of the second uprising, Israel tried to keep its forces tame because there was a thought that there might be a way back to the negotiation table and Israel didn't want to cross any point of no return. This kept the military from going into 'A' territories for a long time (until March 2002) and made it fight from outside the cities. During the second Intifada the rate of violence went up and down due to some talks between Israel and Palestinian figures such as Dakhlan and Rajub that helped in some cases to lower the rate of violence for a short time.

Both Intifadas had a great influence on Israeli politics and public opinion but in a very different way. Before the Intifada started in 1987 most of the population in Israel did not have an opinion on the matter of the Palestinian problem. Except for the settlers and the peace movement no one really cared about the Palestinians and even when there were some clashes it seemed like a minor problem that was far away from the Israeli population. Once more, reserve forces were called to serve in the West Bank and the media started reporting about it, the Intifada became the number one discussion topic in every Israeli house. By 1992 after 5 years of the Intifada the Israeli population was tired of the fighting and the political balance shifted towards the left which resulted in Yitzhak

Rabin being elected. The Oslo Accords gave most Israelis hope of a 'new Middle East' where the two populations could live in peace and cooperation. When violence broke in 2000 there was a great disappointment on the behalf of the Israelis. Many of those who supported the peace process woke up to a new reality where the people they were working with turned against them in a violent way. The support for the peace process was crushed and most of the Israeli population shifted towards the more hardliner political parties such as the Likud. The Labor party which was headed by Barak lost the election to Sharon and was left devastated. The more violent the fighting became the more unified the Israeli population became. There was a great consensus among Israelis that Israel gave the Palestinians as much as it could and Arafat refused therefore this conflict was the fault of the Palestinians and that Israel was justified in its fight using whatever means it had. Sharon was seen as the most qualified person to run Israel because of his military history and the fact that he was considered a person that put Israel's security as his first priority even if it included being a hardliner. The incident at Sabra and Shatila that many claim he was responsible for was forgotten. When the second Intifada intensified it was clear to most of the Israeli population that there was no real partner on the Palestinian side, and the Israelis became tired of the fighting and the casualties. By the third year of the Intifada when most people were calling for Israel to withdraw from some parts of the Occupied Territories, the left wing of the political map started recovering. Although the ideal solution was the withdrawal along with negotiations, most of the population did not really care about the Palestinian side and this is what Sharon was pushing for with his Disengagement Plan. Basically the Intifadas shifted the Israeli population from being indifferent to the left in the first Intifada to becoming right hardliners during the second

Intifada, ending at the point of being in the middle and wanting to unilaterally separate from the Palestinians.

The last important difference between the two Intifadas was policy strategy match. During the first Intifada the Israeli government's policy was that it would not negotiate with any terror group including the PLO, the sole representative according to the Palestinians. Therefore, Israel's policy was to fight the Palestinians protestors. The problem was that there was no real strategy on how to fight an unarmed civilian population. The military did not know how to suppress the protestors without using excessive force while the orders by the government were vague.

During the second Intifada the government's policies change a couple of times from trying to leave an opening for negotiations to the policy of acting unilaterally. Although the shift of policies made it difficult on the military's operations, the military adapted quickly and efficiently to the governments plans.

Conclusion

As seen throughout this paper there is a great difference between the first Intifada and the Al Aqsa Intifada. Although both bear the same name, there is very little resemblance between the two. The tactics on the Palestinian side changed from being a civil non- violent struggle that used the mass population to an armed struggle that involved shooting and terror.

The first Intifada was characterized by an uprising that grew from the bottom of the pyramid and rose up to the top of it involving the majority of the society. The second Intifada on the other hand was the opposite. It was the leadership that provoked the

protests creating the reality of a struggle for the population. Because of these reasons the outcome of the two was completely different. Once the second Intifada became an armed struggle most of the Palestinian population could not partake in it.

On the Israeli side the two Intifadas were also very different. In the first Intifada the military was facing an impossible reality of having to face an unarmed crowd in mass protests, while during the second Intifada the situation was much clearer since it was an armed fight that the IDF could use any means it found suitable.

Looking at the results of the two Intifadas it can be said that there are no real winners and losers since there is an ongoing sequence of events and the long term affect of the Intifadas is not yet fully revealed.

What can be said is that as a result of the first Intifada Israel had no choice but to face the reality of being an occupying country and that there is a need for a solution to the Palestinian problem. Also noteworthy is the achievement of the Palestinians in the first Intifada in forming a nationalist movement that fought for the Palestinian people within the occupied territories, taking care of local interests and forming local governing bodies. Last and most important is the starting of the peace process that led to the Oslo Accords and the formation of the Palestinian Authority. Although some Palestinians may say that the Oslo Accords and their failure are the reason for the second Intifada, the majority of the population saw this as a victory for the Palestinians.

On the other hand, the Israelis did not gain much from the first Intifada. Its main achievement was the PLO's statement accepting Israel as a legitimate state and stopping the armed fight against it. Israel did lose plenty of the international support it had until then because of the pictures and stories that came out of the Intifada. In addition to that

the domestic public opinion became even more split between the left and the right wings of the government resulting in the assassination of Prime Minister Rabin by an extreme right wing supporter.

During the Al Aqsa Intifada the Palestinians turned the struggle from an unarmed conflict to an armed one. This resulted in the loss of the ability to use the majority of the population. Instead, most Palestinians just tried to survive the harsh reality imposed on them by both sides of the struggle. Arafat's decision to use terror as a strategy caused great damage to the Palestinians since the international community, and especially the United States, decided that he was not seeking peace anymore and leaving the Palestinian people isolated. Another result of the second Intifada was that most of the Palestinian Authority's bodies were completely destroyed leaving a vacuum that would eventually be filled by the radical Islamic movements.

The results of the second Intifada, it would seem, were in favor of Israel. First, an unprecedented consensus among the Israeli population was formed. The majority of Israel's population felt that the fight was forced on Israel by the Palestinians and that Israel was willing to give up the most it could and still was turned down by Arafat. This consensus kept Israel's spirit through the roughest times of the Intifada when more than 100 civilians were killed in a month. The international community decreased its pressure on Israel because of the 9/11 events and Arafat's ties to terror. And Israel finally got recognition that it was carrying an armed fight against terror groups and not against civilians.

In the operational aspect Israel became more and more successful in preventing terror attacks from occurring and managed to eliminate most of the leadership of the

radical movements. Although this was the case the assassination policy did not manage to stop those movements from continuing to operate.

Another result of the current Intifada was that Israel found the method of acting unilaterally legitimate. Once Israel felt it had no partner for peace, it was able to act on its own interests without taking Palestinian opinion into considerations. This ended with the building of the separation wall and the disengagement plan that caused the withdrawal from the Gaza Strip.

It can be said that the Palestinians had the upper hand after the first Intifada since they reached their goal of being accepted as an entity that deserves a state. And during the second Intifada they did not really achieve any political gains from the fighting. Israel, on the other hand can claim victory during the second Intifada because its population held strong through this period and the military became increasingly efficient in fighting any sorts of disturbances and terror. By saying this, one must keep in mind that Israel also did lose in certain aspects. Although the assassinations were effective against the terror groups in the short term, in some cases they caused more fighting and usually new leadership arose. The fact that Israel decided on carrying on the disengagement plan, after demolishing most of the Palestinian governing bodies, left a vacuum within the Palestinian territories that would be filled by the fundamentalist Islamic groups, which could be more harmful in the future. A final result was the psychological effect on a whole generation within Israel. Most of the younger population that served in the Israeli military has been serving in the Occupied Territories carrying missions that brought them in daily contact with the Palestinian population which may cause psychological effects in the long run.

To conclude, the Intifadas were very different both in the nature of their fighting and in their results. There are no real winners in this struggle, only losers. The fact that the Palestinians on one hand moved to armed struggle caused them more harm than good because it caused a greater escalation in the fighting. Although Israel's methods in the second Intifada may prove successful in the short run it will not bring an end to the Palestinian conflict.

Epilogue

On August 22nd 2005 the last Israeli soldier left the Gaza Strip and locked Kissufim Gate behind him. This was the end of the 38 year long era in which Israel controlled the Gaza Strip and built settlements upon it. The disengagement plan was carried out by Sharon's government, setting a precedent for removing settlements from Gaza and the north of the West Bank. All responsibilities were given to Mahmood Abbas and the Palestinian Authority.

Approximately three months before the election, while leading in the poll with his new party Kadima, Sharon suffered a major stroke and he remains in hospital to this date. In his place Ehud Olmert takes the lead and heads an election campaign that follows Sharon's policies and calls for the Hitkansut plan, or the reorganization of Israeli policies and the unilateral withdrawal of most of the West Bank. On March 28th Kadima won 30 seats out of 120 and became the largest party therefore receiving the approval of the Israeli population for Olmert's plan.

Around the same time elections were held within the Occupied Territories. The Fattah movement, which was in power until then was divided and stained with corruption while Hamas became an alternative. As a result the Fattah suffered an embarrassing defeat by Hamas therefore losing the majority leaving the responsibility of forming the Palestinian government to the Islamic radicals. Even though Hamas attained power it is not willing to recognize Israel as a State and it is still considered a terror group. The consequences of these elections include stopping all funds by the international community including the United States and Europe.

The conflict moved to a new phase of a war of attrition between the terror groups in Gaza firing Qassam rockets from Gaza to Israeli territories. As a response Israel has used all the means it has which include artillery, airpower, tanks and even navy boats to fight off the Qassam units. In the West Bank, the Israeli military continues to carry out arrests against wanted terrorists.

All talks between Israel and the Palestinian authority are on hold because of Hamas' policies towards Israel. This in addition with Israel's unilateral acts only increases the entrenchment of both sides.

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