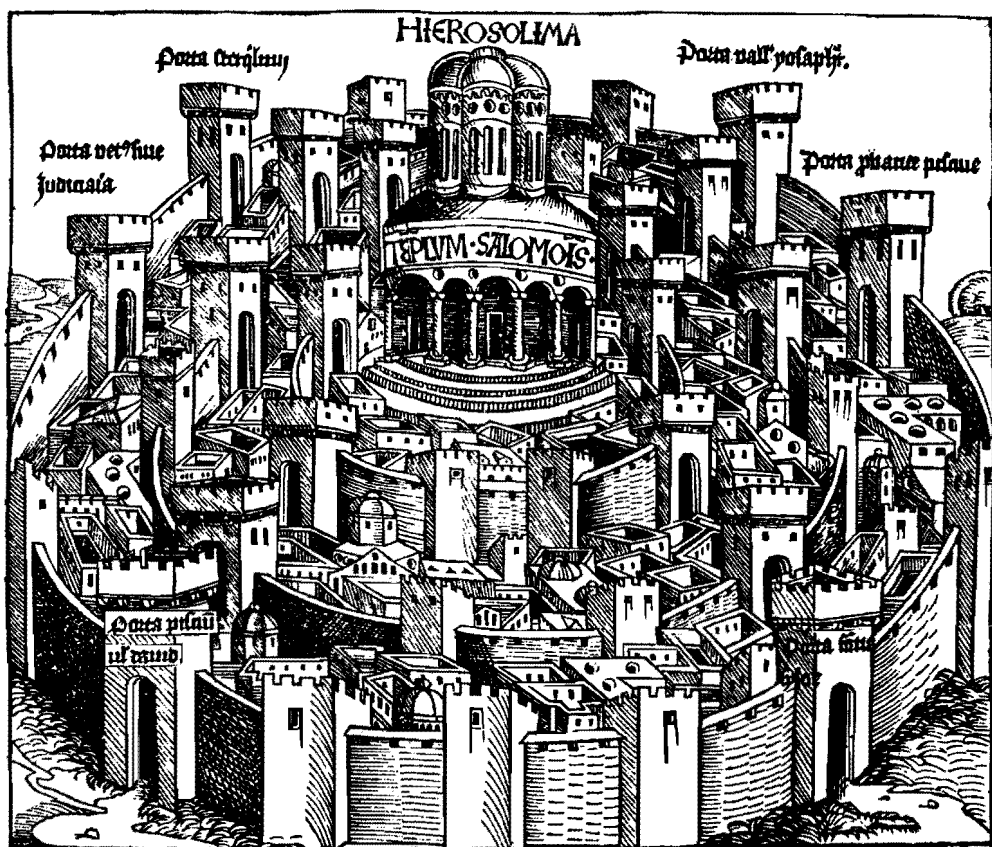


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# 'Paper War' – Words Behind Stones: The Intifada Leaflets

**Shaul Mishal**

The leaflet phenomenon is as old as the Jewish-Arab conflict. During the British Mandate leaflets were part of Palestinian political life. They served as an instrument to express attitudes and to direct behavior. After 1948, and more intensively after 1967, they continued to appear in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and among the Israeli Arabs. Yet, leaflets never played such a key role as during the intifada. The diversity and frequency of the leaflets, and the scope of obedience and response they elicit, testify to their centrality for the population. In the absence of an official and effective local leadership, leaflets have become a substitute leadership.

The leaflets tap the ideological and organizational sources of two powerful political streams in the pre-intifada period: the national and the religious. The national camp is identified with four major factions within the PLO: Fatah, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), and the Palestinian Communist Party (PCP). Affiliated with the religious camp are the Muslim Brothers movement and its branch, al-Mujamma' al-Islami (Islamic Alignment). The activity of the national camp is more pronounced in the West Bank than in the Gaza Strip, while the religious camp

- \* Shaul Mishal is senior lecturer, Department of Political Science, Tel Aviv University. He is the author of *West Bank East Bank: The Palestinians in Jordan 1949–1967* and *The PLO Under Arafat: Between Gun and Olive Branch*, both published by Yale University Press, and, with Reuben Aharoni, *Speaking Stones: The Words Behind the Palestinian Intifada*, Tel Aviv (Hakibbutz Hameuchad and Avivim) 1989 (Hebrew). This essay is based on a lecture read this year at a seminar organized by the Dayan Center, Tel Aviv University.

makes its presence and influence felt for the most part in the Gaza Strip.

It was after the Yom Kippur War of October 1973 that the PLO undertook intensive political activity in the occupied territories that led to fruitful results. In the years after 1973 the PLO gained popular support and secured powerful positions in municipal bodies, student organizations, trade unions and other civilian institutions. Its institutional inroads were matched by ideological success. The PLO became a source of political inspiration throughout the population, both as the embodiment of national aspirations for Palestinian sovereignty, and as an ideological guide through the labyrinthine politics of the Palestinian and inter-Arab systems. In many political circles the PLO and the Palestinian problem turned into Siamese twins.

The methods of the Muslim Brothers, while less spectacular, were no less effective. Their ultimate objective is the establishment of an Islamic state in all of Palestine through *jihad*, or holy war, against Israel. This, however, is perceived as a long-range goal, for which the foundations must be laid by infusing the faithful with the spirit of traditional Islam. Consequently the Brothers turned their energies to the educational domain and extensive community activity. The mosques became their main arena of indoctrination. In them, the young generation imbibed the Quran, and from them the ideological and doctrinal word went forth. The watershed year for the Brothers' activity was 1978. It was then that al-Mujamma' al-Islami, which had been founded five years earlier, obtained the recognition and cooperation of the Israeli authorities. The organization's aims were to teach the young generation the tenets of Islam, organize sports activities for youth, provide health services, and assist the needy. Following the success of al-Mujamma', other associations gained adherents among young women and students. Within this context one might mention the Islamic Young Women's Society (Jam'iyyat al-Shabbat al-Muslimat), set up in 1981 with the aim of disseminating Islamic principles, and the Islamic Bloc (al-Kutla al-Islamiyya) which operated in the religious university of Gaza.

The decision of the Muslim Brothers and al-Mujamma' al-Islami to focus on quiet, civilian-oriented activity, proved to be a sound one. The two organizations 'became a factor that could move the masses by means of an impressive organizational structure and by casting a very wide net revolving around control of the overwhelming majority of mosques'.<sup>1</sup>

The effects of the ramified activity of both camps, the national

<sup>1</sup> Reuven Paz, 'The Islamic Covenant and its Meaning: A Preliminary Perusal and Translation' (mimeographed, in Hebrew), Dayan Center: Tel Aviv University, September 1988, p. 6.

and the religious, and the deep roots they had struck within the local population, have become glaringly obvious during the intifada. Both camps were involved, whether directly or indirectly, in formulating leaflets and directing events on the ground. The involvement of four bodies that are behind the wording of the leaflets has been especially pronounced: the United National Command (al-Qiyada al-Wataniyya al-Muwahhada; hereafter: UNC); the Islamic Resistance Movement (Harkhat al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya); the left-wing Palestinian factions; and the Islamic Jihad. Each of the four is identified ideologically and/or linked organizationally with either the national or the religious camp. The two most important groups are the United National Command (UNC) and the Islamic Resistance Movement, or Hamas, as it is known.

The UNC is a coalition body comprising supporters of Fatah, the Democratic Front, the Popular Front, and the Communist Party. The close interrelationship between the UNC and the PLO is given explicit expression in the lead-in to the UNC's leaflets. Beginning with Leaflet No. 2, each such communiqué opens with the same declaration: 'No voice can overcome the voice of the uprising, no voice can overcome the voice of the people of Palestine, the people of the PLO'. Every leaflet, beginning with the third, states that it is being issued on behalf of the PLO and the UNC, and is undersigned by both bodies.

The left-wing organizations, although affiliating themselves with the UNC, went on publishing their own separate leaflets. There seem to be two reasons for this. The first is to emphasize their sheer presence in the field: as though to say, 'We issue leaflets, therefore we exist'. The second is to demonstrate ideological and organizational distinctiveness by stressing their differences with Fatah on key issues, particularly the attitude towards Jordan and on a political settlement.

Hamas is an umbrella organization for activists from the Muslim Brothers movement in the Gaza Strip and for al-Mujamma' al-Islami. The Islamic Jihad, whose orientation is also religious, operates separately from Hamas and puts out its own leaflets. Its independent activity is motivated by a profound disagreement with both the Brothers and al-Mujamma' al-Islami on how to promote the idea of an Islamic state in Palestine. The Jihad would launch a holy war on Israel here and now, whereas the Brothers and al-Mujamma' concentrate on the need for educational activity within the community as a prior stage to a Muslim military offensive. The Jihad, its extreme worldview notwithstanding, scrupulously maintains organizational ties with Fatah, though it avoids affiliating itself with the UNC. Its cooperation with Fatah appears to be motivated by tactical considerations - to ease its participation in the uprising activities.

The interrelation of the four bodies, whether on the ideological

or the organizational plane, with the national camp or the religious camp, enables them to maintain an intensive level of activity and ensure a high level of obedience by the population to the directives contained in the leaflets.

### *Diversity, Frequency and Effectiveness*

The scope of activity is indicated in the diversity and frequency of the leaflets. The leaflets issued by the UNC, Hamas, the left and the Islamic Jihad are intended for blanket distribution in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The leaflets of the UNC and Hamas enjoy the widest circulation. UNC leaflets are longer and more detailed than those of Hamas. Indeed, their very styles are different: those of the UNC are more succinctly phrased and their authors have tried to present political arguments couched in clear language. Hamas leaflets, in contrast, draw heavily on religious images and slogans.

With the exception of the UNC, the leaflets of all the groups are home-made. That is, they are drawn up solely by West Bank and Gaza activists. UNC leaflets are drafted in the territories and then sent outside, to the PLO, to receive their final polish. They are then broadcast over the Voice of Palestine from Baghdad and al-Quds radio station that operates out of Damascus. Then they are distributed on the West Bank and Gaza.

Besides the countrywide leaflets, leaflets of a local variety also exist. The initiative for such communiqués generally originates with groups acting at the inspiration of the UNC. Such leaflets are intended to translate the instructions of the general leaflets into more specific guidelines geared to local needs. There are also sectoral leaflets issued by professional or voluntary organizations scattered throughout the territories. Here, too, the imprint of the UNC, or sometimes of the left-wing factions, is pronounced.

Leaflets appear frequently: in the first year of the intifada (December 1987 – December 1988) the UNC issued 31 leaflets and Hamas 33. (It is difficult to say how many leaflets Hamas has produced, since they began numbering them only with No. 21, in May 1988.) The average is therefore two or three leaflets a month issued by each body. This is a higher frequency than that of the left-wing factions and of the Islamic Jihad. Our estimate is that all the left-wing factions together issued about 20 leaflets in the first year of the intifada. This low figure is probably due to the fact that these factions also have a hand in UNC leaflets.

Of all the bodies, the Islamic Jihad has published the fewest leaflets. Since the start of the intifada, we have found only four such documents. The Islamic Jihad itself says that it is not eager to issue leaflets because according to its view the whole Palestinian public is the leadership of the uprising. Nonetheless, if the Islamic Jihad has taken the trouble to issue a few communiqués, it claims

to have had no choice. An unnumbered Islamic Jihad leaflet explains:

Self-interested groups of the heretical left have sought to latch on to our blessed Muslim uprising and claim to be... the determiners and deciders regarding our pure and courageous uprising. These elements took advantage of our silence and the fact that we have refrained from issuing leaflets in order to create the impression among the inhabitants that they are the pioneers and leaders of the struggle. (Undated; Islamic Jihad leaflet No. 1.)

The difference in the scope and frequency of dissemination had an effect on the degree of success the bodies behind the leaflets enjoyed in assuring compliance and obedience of the population. All the leaflets set out to dictate the routine of daily life. However, UNC and Hamas leaflets have the force of governmental decrees. The response and obedience they elicit are correspondingly high. Along with offering encouragement and a stock-taking of the achievements of the intifada, the leaflets provide detailed guidelines on what is permitted and what is prohibited. In comparison with the leaflets of the left and of the Islamic Jihad, the UNC and Hamas address a broad range of issues: work, health, transportation, education, agriculture, commerce; whether there is a full strike or a partial strike; the hours in which shops may be opened; how to maintain studies despite the closure of schools; who may travel on the roads during a strike and who may work. The leaflets call for mutual help, contributions and donations for the needy and for the families of persons killed or imprisoned, a selective boycott of Israeli products; they call on the population not to work in the Israeli agricultural sector and to attack Jewish settlers; and they demand that persons employed by the Israeli Civil Administration resign, particularly policemen, tax collectors, and members of appointed town and village local councils. Hamas leaflets, which are prepared in the Gaza Strip, deal with religious instructions regarding prayer, charity, penitence, and the need for good behavior such as obeying traffic rules in the spirit of 'Muslim politeness'.

The UNC and Hamas leaflets influence the behavior not only of the local population but of the Israeli authorities as well. The leaflets have become 'working papers' that guide the scope and intensity of army activity, the Civil Administration, and other Israeli security bodies.

### *The 'Pamphlet Leadership' of the Intifada*

In the absence of an official and effective leadership, the writers of the leaflets became the 'pamphlet leadership' of the intifada. If a leadership is measured by its ability to articulate values, define

goals, and assure obedience and compliance of the public, the authors of the UNC and Hamas leaflets meet these criteria.

The pamphlet leadership of the intifada differs in two central aspects from the previous leadership: firstly, in the period prior to the intifada the leadership was affiliated with dominant political personalities. They held official positions, serving as mayors or heads of local councils, members of chambers of commerce, leaders of trade unions, or they wielded influence as journalists or lawyers. In contrast, the pamphlet leadership are not professional politicians, nor do they constitute a permanent body. Arrests and deportations have thinned their ranks. If the pamphlet leadership has continued to demonstrate operational clout, this is due largely to the charisma with which it has been able to imbue its role, and less to its personal composition. Leaders come and go but the institution prevails.

Secondly, the leadership in the pre-intifada period maintained a simultaneous affiliation with Jordan and the PLO. In contrast, the pamphlet leadership of the intifada is saliently Palestinian in orientation. The new leadership does not draw its political inspiration from a single source: manifestly, the national-Palestinian worldview espoused by the PLO differs from the worldview of the religious camp. Yet both camps define themselves as Palestinian movements, impelled primarily by the constituent elements of Palestinian identity and a Palestinian state, and both camps are instrumental in defining the goals of the intifada and shaping its activities.

### *The Palestinian state*

An analysis of the leaflets shows that the different groups active in the intifada have two common overriding goals: to establish a Palestinian state and undermine Israel's ruling mechanisms in the occupied territories by means of a civil revolt that will lead to Israel's removal from these areas.

Substantial differences exist between Hamas and the UNC regarding the nature of the Palestinian state, and, concomitantly, the attitude to be adopted *vis-à-vis* the issue of a political settlement with Israel. These differences stem from the ideological sources of inspiration that each movement draws on. Hamas, with its religious ideology, aspires to establish an Islamic state in all of Palestine. According to the Hamas charter of August 1988 the soil of Palestine is a Muslim (religious) trust and Hamas is a 'distinctive Palestinian movement working to raise the banner of Allah on every bit of soil in Palestine'.<sup>2</sup> Hamas is a link in the chain of the *jihād* against Israel. To forgo parts of Palestine is tantamount to forgoing part of Islam.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> R. Paz, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

Hamas's adherence to the principle of 'not one inch' and its stress on the Palestinians' claim to all of Palestine find frequent expression in its leaflets. Leaflet No. 28 (August 18, 1988), entitled 'Islamic Palestine from the Sea to the River', asserts:

The Muslims have a total and not a partial claim to Palestine for generations in the past, present and future... No generation of Palestinians has the right to relinquish the land which is saturated with the blood of the victims. Therefore we must continue the uprising and confront the plunderers wherever they may be until the final liberation of every grain of soil of *al-Isra' wal-Mi'raj* – Palestine, all Palestine, with God's help.

Leaflet No. 22 (June 2, 1988) declares: 'Our war is a holy war for Allah unto victory or death'.

In Hamas's eyes, the Muslims' right to all of Palestine leaves no opening for a dialogue or a political settlement with Israel. The following quotations exemplify this approach:

- Let every hand be cut off that signs [a relinquishment of] a grain of the soil of Palestine to the enemies of God who have usurped the blessed soil (March 13, 1988).
- The uprising is a means of opposition to Camp David... to an international conference and to all initiatives of surrender (June 2, 1988).
- Land for peace, an international umbrella – this is a mirage, deception, hoodwinking (March 4, 1988).
- Every negotiation with the enemy is a retreat from the Palestinian problem and a forgoing of the principle [of the liberation of all Palestine], and accords the plundering murderers recognition of a right that is not theirs to a land in which they were not born (Leaflet No. 28, August 18, 1988).
- The Arab rulers are making efforts to obtain a false peace... and are appeasing Israel so it will agree to a 'just' peace... We hope you will fight at least once [in order to prove] that you are possessed of Arab boldness of spirit or Islamic prowess (leaflet of January 1988).

And, in a rhetorical appeal to Israel: 'Get your hands off our people, our cities, our camps and our villages. Our struggle with you is a contest of faith, existence and life.' (Undated leaflet.)

<sup>3</sup> In the Quran the term *jihad* is directed solely against idolators who deny God. A holy war is not declared against Jews or Christians. Similarly, they are not forced to convert to Islam, but are taxed instead. Muhammad fought the Jewish tribes in Arabia not on religious grounds but only when they were aligned with his enemies, idolators, in their war against him and his mission. Later on, the idea of *jihad* was utilized for political needs and was applied against both Jews and Christians.



Hamas also puts forward political arguments for rejecting any attempt to achieve a political settlement with Israel. Thus, in Leaflet No. 28:

Israel understands only the language of force and does not believe in negotiations or in peace. It will persist in its evasiveness and in building a military entity and will take advantage of opportunities to attack and to break the Arabs' nose.

And, in the same leaflet:

The Arab world is not so weak as to run after peace, and the Jews are not so strong as to be able to impose their will. How long can Israel withstand all the forces?

Furthermore, Hamas ascribes to Israel and the Jews demonic traits that justify a posture of non-dialogue: 'Israel is a cancer that is spreading on Muslim land and threatening the whole Muslim world, and it must be eradicated' (May 3, 1988). 'The Jews', according to another leaflet, 'are brothers of the apes, murderers of the prophets, blood suckers, warmongers... only Islam will break the Jews and shatter their dream' (January 1988).

Hamas often draws on historical personalities and events taken from Islamic tradition in order to underscore the religious character of the conflict with Israel. Names that frequently crop up in the leaflets are: Khalid Ibn al-Walid, who fought in the Battle of the Yarmuk (634CE) and was called by Muhammad 'the sword of God'; Salah al-Din, who vanquished the Crusaders at the Battle of Hittin (in 1187CE); Bibars, who fought the Crusaders in the Battle of 'Ein Jalut (in 1260CE); and Ja'fr Ibn Abu-Talib, who fought the Byzantines. Muslim tradition has it that during the battle Ja'fr held up the standard with one hand; when that hand was cut off he switched the banner to his other hand; and when that was also cut off, he attached the banner to his chest until he was killed.

The Haybar affair is also dealt with. Many Hamas leaflets conclude with the call: '*Allah akbar* [Allah is great] – the hour of Haybar has arrived, *Allah akbar* – death to the conquerors'. Haybar was a Jewish settlement on the Arabian Peninsula. Muhammad accused its inhabitants of treasonous behavior and the Muslims conquered it (in 628CE), massacring the inhabitants. For Muslims, Haybar became a symbol of Jewish treachery. Similarly, the Muslims who reside in the territories are looked on as *mujahidun* – the army of the holy war – or as *murabitun*, inhabitants of the Ribat. These were settlers in frontiers in the initial period of Muslim conquests; they were considered to be fulfilling a religious precept. Overall, Hamas advocates a Muslim state throughout Palestine which will ameliorate the ills of the Muslim community. Hamas thus looks askance at Palestinian Christians and is more receptive to Muslims outside of Palestine.

Hamas believes that a political solution to the conflict with Israel contravenes the religious precept of a holy war against the Jewish heretics. Its perception of Israel and the Jews as a religious – not a national – adversary rules out the possibility of a political settlement based on compromise. The alternative, according to Hamas, is 'victory or death'.

A different picture emerges from the leaflets of the United National Command. They perceive reality in secular terms. UNC leaflets, which serve as a mouthpiece for the national camp, have room for both Muslims and Christians. 'Religion is God's and the homeland is for all' (*al-Din lilli'llah wal-Watan Liljami*),<sup>4</sup> rather than Hamas's '*din Wadunya*' – faith is the whole world. Indeed, UNC leaflets rarely mention heroes or events from ancient Muslim history. Instead, we find references to modern historical figures who have become national heroes. Three names in particular are frequently cited: Sheikh 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam, who was killed by the British in 1939, and became a pioneer of the armed struggle in Palestine;<sup>5</sup> the writer and poet Ghassan Kanafani, who was killed in an IDF operation in Beirut in 1971; and Abd al-Qadir al-Husayni, who fell in the battle for the Castel, outside Jerusalem, in 1948.

UNC leaflets stress the ties between Muslims and Christians. Leaflet No. 22 (July 21, 1988), for example, calls for 'prayers [to be said] for the souls of the fallen and parades and demonstrations to protest the measures of the occupation authorities against the holy places of Islam and Christianity'. Leaflet No. 30 (December 15, 1988) refers to the forthcoming Christmas celebrations in the following language: 'December 24 is a day on which the church bells ring and calls of *Allah akbar* are heard in the mosques. To mark the birth of the messenger of peace, the lord messiah, we greet our Palestinian Christian brothers and request that they make do with carrying out the ceremonies.'<sup>6</sup>

The UNC perceives the conflict with Israel in national and not religious terms; leaflets issued by the left-wing factions add the social-class dimension. The Palestinian society will be healed, as Leaflet No. 28 says, through 'self-determination and the establishment of the independent state with its capital, Jerusalem', rather than imposing the kingdom of Islam on the Palestinian world.

Where Israel is concerned, UNC leaflets are harsh in their

<sup>4</sup> *Al-Hadaf* (Popular Front organ), October 12, 1987. Cp. the Jewish saying: 'Heaven is the Lord's, and the earth He gave to man'.

<sup>5</sup> Fatah views Sheikh 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam as a national hero and not a religious figure. In his memory Fatah issued a special publication (in Arabic), *The Revolution of Sheikh 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam* (June 1977). The Palestinian left regards him as a social rebel.

<sup>6</sup> The idea is to play down the Christmas festivities and not decorate the streets as in previous years. A similar call, to refrain from holding festivities, went out to Muslims on the Feast of the Sacrifice.

denunciations of Israeli policy and Israeli leaders. The detention camps are described as 'Nazi camps' (Leaflet No. 15); Sharon, Peres and Rabin are 'fascist dwarfs' (No. 16); Rabin is a 'shedder of blood' (No. 11); Rabin is a 'terrorist' and Shamir is 'arrogant' (No. 25); the settlers are 'bestial' or a 'wild mob' (No. 27); and the Israeli military authorities are a 'Zionist machine of suppression and fascist hangmen' (No. 28). Yet as the following passage shows, the leaflets also repeatedly recognize the need for a peaceful solution based on the PLO formulation of

an active international conference under UN supervision with the participation of the five permanent members of the Security Council and all parties to the conflict [including] the PLO, our sole legitimate representative, as an equal party, and on the basis of UN Resolutions 242 and 338 with the right of self-determination for our Palestinian people. This emphasis demonstrates our people's devotion and sincerity and its aspirations to establish a just and comprehensive peace in the light of the détente in the international arena and the tendency to resolve regional conflicts on a basis of international legitimization. (Leaflet No. 29, November 11, 1988.)

The UNC also addresses practical demands to Israel, directly or indirectly, which indicate that its perception of Israel is pragmatic and not demonic, realistic and not mythological. Leaflet No. 26 (September 27, 1988) contains a typical list of such demands:

- Repeal of the 1945 Defense Emergency Regulations.
- Removal of the army from Palestinian settlements and public places.
- Release of all prisoners... and the return of the deportees.
- The holding of free elections in all the municipalities and the town and village local councils under UN supervision.
- A cessation of punitive measures such as: economic siege, demolition of houses, torture, administrative detentions, and the building of [Jewish] settlements.

In some cases the leaflets are addressed to the Israeli public or to specific groups in an effort to explain why the intifada broke out and why a peaceful settlement is necessary. Leaflet No. 28 (October 30, 1988) offers a striking example of this approach:

The United National Command emphasizes to the Israelis that our uprising... did not seek the bloodshed of Palestinians or Jews but was a revolution against the oppression of the occupation, [against] suppression and fascism, and [a demonstration of] national resolve to establish a just peace in our region, which will come about only through the establishment of our Palestinian state on our national soil.

While we ask our National Council to adopt realistic political plans and decisions in order to support our people [in its efforts] to put an end to the occupation and establish our independent state, we also take the opportunity to stress the call recently addressed by the PLO and the United National Command to the Israeli public, calling on the Arab and Israeli electorate to vote for the forces of peace who support our people's right to self-determination and the establishment of our independent state on our national soil.

Examples of calls to specific Israeli groups appear in leaflets 23 and 25. The former (August 5, 1988) urges Israeli physicians 'to raise their voice against the occupation' and praises those among them who 'rejected the occupation measures regarding the non-treatment [by Israeli hospitals] of persons wounded in the uprising'. This leaflet also calls on 'all Israelis who are subject to harassment because of their support for our people's national rights to explain to the Israeli public our just rights. This, because a person who assents to the suppression of others cannot be free.' Leaflet No. 25 (September 6, 1988) is addressed to the Jewish settlers:

In order to avoid bottles [i.e., petrol bombs] and stones, Shamir gave the settlers a green light to open fire on the Palestinian inhabitants. We address ourselves to them and to others. Are you aware that the solution of the stone problem will come only when you remove yourselves from our lands and recognize our legitimate national rights [and our right] to self-determination and an independent state, and not by means of rampage and oppression?

The conflicting stands of Hamas and the UNC regarding a Palestinian state and the political process has often generated friction and tension between the two groups. These disparities were heightened as the UNC increasingly expressed support for a peaceful solution and PLO activity in the same direction intensified. As a result, Hamas was increasingly inclined to operate without prior coordination with the UNC. Thus, in Leaflet No. 25 (September 6, 1988), the UNC assails Hamas's decision to call a two-day general strike on a date different from that determined by the UNC. The UNC terms this a blow to unity of ranks and a boost for Israel. The UNC also decries acts of violence against those who did not respond to Hamas's call for a strike.

Hamas was not long in retaliating, and in its Leaflet No. 30 (October 5 1988) shrugged off all blame:

It is the Jews [who] are striving to split our ranks by circulating rumors that the Hamas movement is competing [with other movements] or wishes to be a substitute for them. In reaction to these rumors we call on the people to study the covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement [of August

1988] in order to familiarize themselves with it and grasp its goals. The competition will take place through confrontation with the [Israeli] enemy and by inflicting severe damage to his camp. We reiterate that we are for unity of ranks, against division, and in favor of everyone who works faithfully for the liberation of Palestine – all of Palestine. We are against relinquishing even one inch of our country, which is saturated with the blood of the friends of the Prophet and his followers.

Tension between Hamas and the UNC mounted in the wake of the events at the Palestine National Council meeting held in Algiers in mid-November 1988, which declared the establishment of a Palestinian state. In Leaflet No. 29, (November 20, 1988) entitled 'The Joy of the Palestinian State', the UNC urges

a number of fundamentalist elements to prefer the general national interest... of our people over their presuppositions and their factional interests, and to cease displaying negative stands and manifestations. For, they are serving the enemy, whether they wish to or not. They must learn the lesson of the mass celebrations... in honor of the declaration of the [Palestinian] state, which express the deep roots of our legitimate leadership and sole representative, the PLO. The opportunity still exists to unify all the faithful forces in the melting pot of the uprising and the United National Command.

In reaction, Hamas declared, in Leaflet No. 31 (November 27, 1988), that it opposed splitting the ranks and that such attempts might result from 'leaflets planted in the Hamas movement which were circulated by the [Israeli] occupier in order to split the ranks and cast aspersions on the [various] streams'. And, above all: 'Unity of the people must be maintained. We must spurn the enemy's attempts to cause a rift between families, clans, streams and ideas.'

Hamas's response to the charges of the UNC attest to the former's complex attitude towards the national camp. On the one hand, Hamas is not eager to aggravate its disagreements with the UNC to the point of a head-on clash. Such a development would have a boomerang effect in the struggle against Israel, and prove counter-productive in terms of moving forward the goal of a Palestinian state. On the other hand, Hamas does not undertake to back away from a confrontation in the future, if the UNC, together with the PLO, assent to a political settlement which jettisons the principle of liberating all Palestine.

Hamas's covenant sheds light on the movement's ambivalent relations with the national camp. In it, Hamas-PLO relations are likened to those within a family:

The Palestine Liberation Organization is one of the closest [bodies] to the Islamic Resistance Movement. It contains fathers, brothers, relatives and friends. Can the Muslim abandon his family and friends? Our homeland is one, our tragedy is one, and our fate is one.

At the same time, the PLO's secularism is not to their liking:

We cannot exchange the Islamic nature of Palestine in the present and the future for the secular idea. The Islamic nature of Palestine is part of our religion, and whoever relinquishes his religion loses out.

When the PLO adopts Islam as a way of life, 'the movement's attitude towards the PLO will be as son to father, as brother to brother and as relative to relative'.<sup>7</sup>

The ideological discord between Hamas and the UNC-PLO creates the potential for an irreparable rift between the two camps. Still, along with the conflicting interests in the ideological realm, there is awareness of common interests in the practical domain, i.e., in the daily struggle against the Israeli authorities. As long as Israeli military activity continues at full blast and as long as a PLO-type Palestinian state has not arisen, it is unlikely that the ideological differences between Hamas and the UNC will lead to a drawing of the battle lines.

### *The Question of Civil Revolt*

A second goal of the intifada shared by the UNC and Hamas is to jolt the Israeli ruling mechanism in the occupied territories by means of a civil revolt that will cause Israel's removal from these areas. On this issue, unlike others—such as the meaning of a Palestinian state, the political process, the attitude towards Israel—the common approach of the two bodies is pronounced. This closeness is reflected in their nearly identical directives to the Palestinian public on its activity in the uprising.

The population is called on to cooperate in both violent and non-violent actions. The former include throwing stones and petrol bombs, erecting barriers, burning tires, wielding knives and axes, clashing with the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), and attacking collaborators. To ensure that these operations are carried out, the UNC makes use of 'shock squads' (al-Majmu'at [or al-Firq] al-Dariba). These units are entrusted with ensuring that the requisite actions, both violent and non-violent, are implemented. A detailed description of their activity appears in the UNC's Leaflet No. 22 (July 21, 1988):

<sup>7</sup> R. Paz, *op. cit.*, pp. 15–16.

The United National Command congratulates the shock squads for their active role against the [Israeli] occupation forces, their mechanisms and offices, and against those who deviate from the will of the people. They are called on to strike with an iron hand against anyone who has not resigned [from the Civil Administration]. They are requested to block roads during the days of the general strike and to permit only doctors' cars to pass. They are to write national slogans [on walls]... and sign them solely in the name of the United National Command. They are to raise banners, organize demonstrations and burn tires, throw stones [and hurl] Molotov cocktails.

Leaflet No. 26 (September 27, 1988) calls on the inhabitants 'to continue the daily confrontation with the occupation soldiers and the settlers, and to destroy enemy property'. Both this leaflet and the previous one urge action against collaborators.

In the area of non-violent activity, the population is called on to obey three types of directives: (1) severing economic and service contact with Israel; (2) civil disobedience, i.e., disobeying laws and regulations; and (3) carrying out activities that promote solidarity.

The directives on severing contact with Israel include:

- (1) not working in Israel;
- (2) not working in Jewish settlements in the occupied territories;
- (3) boycotting Israeli products;
- (4) withdrawing deposits from Israeli banks;
- (5) resigning from the Civil Administration;
- (6) developing a home-based economy, including the growing of vegetables and the raising of domestic animals in one's yard, and, to farmers, 'sowing grains and legumes such as lentils, chick peas, broad beans, garlic, wheat, and so forth, for storage' (UNC Leaflet No. 24, August 22, 1988);<sup>8</sup>
- (7) expanding local plants and taking on new workers;
- (8) setting up and expanding popular committees on education, information, guard duty and agriculture; and
- (9) establishing and cultivating local bodies for 'popular education' – a directive aimed at parents, teachers and students calling on them to uphold the routine of studies despite the protracted closure of educational institutions by the Israeli authorities.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> The home economy aspect rarely appears in Hamas leaflets. The reason is that the population density in the Gaza Strip, which is Hamas's power base, precludes the use of yards for agriculture.

Directives regarding civil disobedience include:

- (1) non-payment of taxes;
- (2) non-payment of fines;
- (3) staging partial commercial strikes; and
- (4) holding general strikes on specified days.

Where activities to enhance solidarity are concerned, the population, or at times certain groups, are called on to fulfill the following instructions:

- (1) day-long strikes of solidarity with prisoners;
- (2) day-long strikes of solidarity with families of victims;
- (3) memorial days for traumatic events such as Black September (the civil war in Jordan in September 1970), Sabra and Shatilla, Qibiyeh, and the establishment of the All-Palestine Government in Gaza in September 1948 under the auspices of the Arab League;
- (4) coordination of dealing with prisoners by means of lawyers and the organizing of press conferences to expose conditions in the camps to Israeli and world public opinion;
- (5) sit-down strikes by students, teachers and parents in front of foreign missions and closed schools;
- (6) volunteer work with farmers to help with the olive harvest;
- (7) assistance to needy families;
- (8) refraining from rent increases;
- (9) reducing fees charged by doctors and hospitals; and
- (10) inscribing slogans on walls and raising flags.

An analysis of the instructions contained in the first 30 leaflets of the UNC and Hamas shows a steady and significant rise, over time, in the number of violent and non-violent directives.

Table 1 shows that of 315 directives, both violent and non-violent, contained in UNC leaflets, 70 (22.2 per cent of the total) appeared in the first ten leaflets, 111 (35.2 per cent) appeared in the period covering leaflets 11–20, and this increased to 134 directives (42.6 per cent) during the period in which leaflets 21–30 appeared.

A similar tendency, albeit smaller in scope, is discernible in the first 30 leaflets issued by Hamas.

\* The Islamic Jihad is the only body that favors the continued closure of educational institutions. A Jihad leaflet (undated) states: 'A policy of calm in our occupied Muslim Palestine, and the dousing of the fire of the comprehensive uprising, is the aim of our crafty enemy. We must say "no" to this policy a thousand times, and a thousand times "yes" to the closure of the schools and educational institutions so that our children and youngsters will turn to the sacred stones, to a lengthy and blessed struggle, and so that the sacred hands will turn to the shattering of the injustice and its expressions, and so that Muslim Palestine will be a graveyard for the heretical invaders.'



**Table 1**  
*Types of Directives in UNC Leaflets*  
*by Periodic Distribution*  
*(absolute numbers)*

Period		1	2	3	
Type of Directive		(1-10)	(11-20)	(21-30)	Total
(a)	<i>Violent</i>	10	32	45	87
(b)	<i>Non-Violent</i>				
	Severing contact	19	21	15	55
	Disobedience	18	22	27	67
	Acts of solidarity	23	36	47	106
	Total	70	111	134	315
		22.2%	35.2%	42.6%	

**Table 2**  
*Types of Directives in Hamas Leaflets*  
*by Periodic Distribution*  
*(absolute numbers)*

Period		1	2	3	
Type of Directive		(1-10)	(11-20)	(21-30)	Total
(a)	<i>Violent</i>	11	16	25	52
(b)	<i>Non-Violent</i>				
	Severing contact	10	11	3	24
	Disobedience	7	2	19	28
	Acts of solidarity	8	11	16	35
	Total	36	40	63	139
		25.9%	28.8%	45.3%	

Table 2 indicates that of 139 violent and non-violent directives in the Hamas leaflets, 36 (about 26 per cent of the total) appeared in the first ten leaflets, 40 (29 per cent) in the period covered by leaflets 11-20, and 63 (over 45 per cent) in the period between Leaflet No. 21 and Leaflet No. 30.

A comparison of the directives contained in UNC and Hamas leaflets shows that the former contained nearly 2.5 times as many directives. This is consistent with the fact that already at the outset of the intifada, UNC leaflets contained more detailed instructions than Hamas leaflets. This trend continued: as the intifada progressed, UNC directives became increasingly detailed and specific as compared with Hamas directives. The source of these differences lies in the character and goals of the mother-movements with which each group is affiliated. The PLO, with which the UNC is associated, has a concrete goal of establishing a state in the West Bank and Gaza within the foreseeable future. Consequently, the PLO encourages actions based on here and now considerations, which require detailed instructions. In contrast, the Muslim Brothers, the movement behind Hamas, envisages the

**Table 3**  
*Types of Instructions*  
*Contained in UNC Leaflets by Periodic Distribution*  
*(per cent)*

Period	1	2	3
Types of Directive	(1-10)	(11-20)	(21-30)
(a) <i>Violent</i>	14.3	28.3	33.6
(b) <i>Non-Violent</i>			
Severing contact	27.1	18.9	11.2
Disobedience	25.7	19.8	20.2
Acts of solidarity	32.9	32.4	35.0
Total	100=70	100=111	100=134

establishment of a state in all of Palestine as a long-range goal. The worldview of the Brothers rests on a religious outlook which espouses goals that are absolutist in character. As a result, Hamas's directives are less concrete and more general.

Another reason for the difference in the style of the instructions is that, as compared with Hamas, the PLO is a mature organization, larger and more complex in structure, and more experienced in overt political, economic and social activity within the Palestinian population in the territories. These factors heightened the PLO's sensitivity to the issues that impinge on the day-to-day life of the population and influencing the expectations it has of the organization. Yet despite the disparity in the range of instructions between the UNC and Hamas, we find in both groups an identical trend of steady increase in the number of such instructions, both violent and non-violent.

The data show further that the increase in the number of directives was accompanied by a significant change, over time, in the proportion between instructions calling for violent or for non-violent activity.

Table 3 shows a significant rise in the weight of instructions calling for violent activity in UNC leaflets during each of the three periods. In the first period 14.3 per cent of the 70 instructions entailed violent action, in the second period the proportion had risen to 28 per cent, and by the final period such instructions accounted for a third of the total. Looked at from a different angle, in the third period the weight of violent instructions increased more than twice in comparison to the first period.

Concurrently, a drastic decrease is visible in the scope of the instructions for severing contact with Israel in the areas of the economy and services: from 27 per cent in the first period, to 11 per cent in the third. The two other types of non-violent instructions – disobedience to orders and encouragement of acts of solidarity – remained stable.

Where Hamas is concerned, the overall picture regarding vio-

Table 4  
*Types of Instructions*  
*Contained in Hamas Leaflets by Periodic Distribution*  
*(per cent)*

Period	1	2	3
Types of Directive	(1-10)	(11-20)	(21-30)
(a) <i>Violent</i>	30.5	40.0	39.7
(b) <i>Non-Violent</i>			
Severing contact	27.8	27.5	4.8
Disobedience	19.4	5.0	30.2
Acts of solidarity	22.2	27.5	25.4
Total	100=36	100=40	100=63

lence and the severing of contact with Israel is substantially the same.

A comparison of the category of violent instructions in Hamas and UNC leaflets reveals that the violence level of the former is high from the outset of the intifada, and this level is maintained throughout the year. In the UNC the violence level is initially low but gradually creeps upward during the year until in the third period it approaches that of Hamas. The disparity in the proportion of violent directives in the UNC and in Hamas should not cloud the fact that both groups evince an identical trend: a heightened recourse to violent directives, on the one hand, and a sharp decline in directives urging a breaking of economic ties with Israel, on the other. In UNC leaflets this trend is discernible already in the second period, while in Hamas it emerges in the third period of 1988.

These parallel trends attest to contradicting considerations guiding the groups that are behind the uprising. On the one hand, they believe that violence is a necessity: violence serves as an outlet for the younger generation's ideological fervor and political frustrations and its concomitant desire for extreme action. The demographic weight of the younger Palestinians, their level of education and political awareness, together with the organizational frameworks at their disposal, made them a leading element of instigation in the uprising. Moreover, as the violence increased and claimed more casualties on the Palestinian side, the intifada's political gains increased accordingly. The daily skirmishes between the population and IDF troops, which were widely covered in the media, thrust the Palestinian problem and the PLO back into international consciousness. Public figures, politicians and the press in countries friendly to Israel were sharply critical of Israeli policy, while governments and international organizations condemned the methods employed to suppress the uprising.

The surging violence also deeply affected Israel itself. Many Israelis perceived the ongoing occupation as morally indefensi-

ble, socially destructive, economically costly, and politically and militarily harmful. Israel's political leadership faced mounting pressure from broad strata to desist from the attempt to quell the uprising by force and to propose political modes that would put a stop to the bloodshed.

In short, it is the Palestinians' growing awareness of the vital role played by violence in propelling the intifada and in producing political gains, that explains the significant increase in the violent directives contained in UNC leaflets and the continuously high level of violent directives in Hamas leaflets from the outset.

On the other hand, the true capacity for endurance of the intifada depended on the economic staying power of the Palestinian population. In the absence of self-sustaining economic ability, dependence on Israel became a matter of existential need. Under these circumstances, excessive pressure to sever contact with Israel in the areas of the economy and services was beyond what the public could cope with. It meant economic hardship for tens of thousands of workers who earned their living in Israel and a tremendous loss of revenue for many local merchants and factory owners who had commercial and economic ties with Israeli firms. Too harsh an economic blow to these sectors was liable to weaken the influence of the UNC and Hamas, intensify disobedience, and encourage anarchy. If behind the intifada's strength lies its ability to gain the cooperation of all strata of the population, youth and adults alike, then one might understand how and why what had been perceived as ideologically heretical became, over time, economically inevitable.

The inability or unwillingness of the whole sector of merchants, factory owners and workers to carry out the directives calling for a severing of economic contact with Israel led both the UNC and Hamas to adapt themselves to the circumstances and act according to the dictum that 'a righteous man knows the needs of his beast' (Proverbs 12:10). The data show that the passage of time brought with it a decline in the number of directives urging an economic break with Israel. Instructions in this spirit continued to appear, but they were now more selective. This was particularly noticeable as regards the issue of working in Israel and boycotting Israeli products. The leaflets note clearly that avoidance of working in Israel is confined to days of general strikes or to sectors that compete with products of the territories, such as citrus fruits and its subsidiary industries. In the same vein, the leaflets call for a boycott of products for which local substitutes are available. This refers mainly to milk products, agricultural produce, cigarettes and soft drinks.<sup>10</sup>

The decline in the number of directives calling for a total break with Israel in the economy and services testifies to a reassessment

<sup>10</sup> A Hamas leaflet, of April 15, 1988, mentions specifically three soft-drink brands: Crystal, Tempo and Schweppes.

that gained a growing hold in both the UNC and Hamas as to the limits of strength of the intifada. It is this awareness that explains why both groups stepped back from calling for a general civil revolt and preferred to hammer home the idea that the uprising is a stage towards a total revolt.

This outlook is illustrated in the following examples from UNC leaflets:

Leaflet No. 6 (February 5, 1988) urges that the efforts of the various bodies be united and calls for the creation of new local bodies 'to pave the way for a general civil revolt'.

'The uprising is a lengthy process that is fraught with difficulties. The road to revolt requires the establishment of more popular committees, neighborhood committees, [and committees for] education, guard duty, agriculture, information and solidarity.' (Leaflet No. 15, April 30, 1988.)

'The declaration of the stage of [total] civil revolt in the uprising depends on the emergence of the necessary conditions for its realization; of which the most important is the completion of the creation of the mechanism for the rule of the people in all the towns, villages and [the refugee] camps in the occupied territories.' (Leaflet No. 19, June 8, 1988.)

'The uprising is a stage on the road to total civil revolt.' (Leaflet No. 21, July 6, 1988.)

A similar picture emerges from Hamas leaflets:

'Know that victory lies in forbearance and that God is on the side of the just' (a leaflet from January 1988), and, 'Know that the road with the Jews is long and will not end soon' (undated leaflet).

'Spare no effort to fan the flames of the uprising until God gives the sign for an end to the distress. Make frequent mention of God's name for after suffering comes tranquility and after distress will come wellbeing.' (Undated leaflet.)

'Accustom yourselves to tolerance and steadfastness and prepare for a lengthy effort in studies and accomplishments.'

The controlled civil revolt, like the ongoing decline in the number of directives calling for the severing of economic ties with Israel, means that the leading bodies of the intifada have half-tones in their register. The Palestinians are aware of profit-and-loss considerations. They are avoiding sliding into absurdities in trying to achieve their objectives. They recognize the limits of their strength and are careful not to reach a point of no return in the confrontation with Israel. The intifada is not free of internal contradictions and conflicting interests. Nonetheless, it has been able to find ways enabling it to live with contradictions without succumbing to them.

The intifada draws its strength from its success in forging a sense of mutual dependence and partnership between the middle strata and the radical youth: between the merchants, businessmen, factory owners, doctors, lawyers, engineers and other members of the white-collar sector, on the one hand, and the 'rolling stones' generation that imbibed its doctrine from West Bank universities, Gaza Strip mosques, and youth organizations in both areas, on the other. This younger generation existed before the outbreak of the intifada. But the conditions conducive to its cooperation with the middle strata could not come to fruition as long as an effective local leadership was in power. This leadership was able to shield the middle strata from radical pressures exerted by the young guard. The enfeeblement of the previous local leadership, a development due in large measure to Israel's expulsion of many of their prominent figures, created a vacuum which was filled by the young people. In the absence of a local leadership, the middle strata were no longer protected. They were pulled, almost willy-nilly, into the radical action of the intifada.

The interlocking of the youngsters and the merchants and the rest of the middle strata accounts for the fury of the outburst but not for its duration. The merchants and the businessmen are losing money and complaining; so are those in the public service. Their interests are not consistent with the interests of the youngsters who are fired by national fervor and a passion for self-sacrifice. The repeated instructions to the merchants to open for business only as set forth in the leaflets, and not to raise prices, along with insistent calls to local workers in the Civil Administration to resign, testify to a large measure of unease in these groups. If the solidarity between the middle strata and the younger generation persists, this is due to the ability of the United National Command and Hamas to make effective use of several mechanisms that have reduced the danger of a split and enabled the momentum to be maintained.

A perusal of the leaflets shows an effective use of three mechanisms: organizational tools, economic means, and symbolic rewards.

#### *Organizational and Economic Sphere*

The leaflets show that the intifada is characterized by decentralized activity that emphasizes local action. The local activity is borne by the popular committees that have been created in the course of the uprising. There are hundreds of these, in urban neighborhoods, in villages and in the refugee camps throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip. As may be gleaned from UNC leaflets, these committees are the equivalent of an executive branch. Their task is to ensure that instructions are carried out in the

spirit of the leaflets and to see to the daily needs of the population which is under constant Israeli military and economic pressure. The existence of the committees enables close supervision, through the use of various inducements, or by coercion if necessary, against persons who choose to disregard the directives.

The leaflets also point to the existence of a broad range of organized committees, on a professional or a geographical basis. Professional committees mentioned in leaflets include those of merchants, doctors and jurists, and committees to care for prisoners. Groups operating on a geographical basis include neighborhood committees, guard and defense committees set up after local policemen resigned, and mutual help committees. The 'shock squads' operate congruent with these committees. Their task is to ensure that directives are carried out and, if necessary, to punish those who are unwilling to heed the instructions. The operational echelon at the local level includes also bodies that existed before the intifada, whose activity is now integrated with that of the popular committees. Among these are associations of women, workers and students, charity and welfare organizations, and religious societies.

The ramified activity of the various organizations was to erode the standing of Israeli governing mechanisms. In large measure the committees became parallel ruling bodies enjoying popular local encouragement and cooperation. Nor have the leading bodies of the uprising neglected the economic sphere. Financial aid is proffered to those harmed by Israeli actions, such as families of persons killed, wounded or deported, and families whose houses have been demolished. Similarly, some directives are intended to reduce the economic hardships suffered by the population. Commercial strikes are usually partial, the boycott of Israeli products is selective, and the same holds as regards working in Israel. Often, the leaflets are worded to imbue the population with the feeling that the leadership of the uprising is aware of their plight and is doing all in its power to ensure that the economic burden is shared equally. Examples are the directives calling on property owners to defer rental payments for those unable to afford them, and not to raise rents. At the same time, those who do have the means are urged to pay on time. In like vein, the leaflets call on doctors and hospitals not to increase the costs of medical services, and on lawyers to refrain from raising legal fees.

#### *Symbolic Gratifications*

Most striking under this rubric is the effort to impart to the population a sense that they are partners in a historic event of supreme national importance. The leaflets seek to exalt the activity of the entire populace and laud its contribution to the achievements of the intifada. These achievements, as seen from the perspective of the leaflets, are many and varied.

Economically, the intifada has cost Israel \$2 billion during its first year, according to the calculations of the United National Command. Militarily, it has demonstrated that Israel cannot cope with stones and petrol bombs. Two-thirds of the Israeli army is said to be engaged in suppressing the riots. Israeli soldiers require psychological treatment as a result. One UNC leaflet quotes the chief-of-staff, Lt. Gen. Dan Shomron, as stating that the intifada cannot be vanquished by force. In the civilian sphere, the leaflets note with satisfaction 'the dismantlement of the mechanisms and tools' of Israeli rule in the territories and the building of mechanisms of 'national government'.

Politically, the leaflets point to the contribution of the intifada in bringing the Palestinian problem to international consciousness, along with the diplomatic damage and domestic strife it is causing in Israel. UNC Leaflet No. 30 (December 7, 1988) states:

The gripping deeds of heroism performed by our generous masses, while challenging the might, tyranny and wickedness of the occupation, have served as a primary factor in placing our Palestinian problem at the head of the international, Arab and local agenda. Thus the Palestinian problem has become a subject at every diplomatic and political meeting and talk throughout the world. At the same time the despised occupation has fomented situations of social and political rift thanks to the persistence and escalation of the uprising.

Hamas leaflets contain similar sentiments. From a leaflet dated February 11, 1988: 'Our Muslim people has magnified the conflict [and deepened] the rift in the ranks of the enemy through our uprising'.

The leaflets also make much of the sense of pride and self-esteem that the intifada has imbued in the Palestinians in the territories. UNC Leaflet No. 23 (August 5, 1988) declares:

You have proved... that the measures of the enemy, including deportation of people, demolition of houses, harassment of the inhabitants, economic steps, the declaration of war on the popular and national committees, the closure of the national institutions, and issuing propaganda through [Israeli] information efforts and through traitorous agents that the uprising is ending or slackening – all these measures have failed in the face of your burning passion and your great readiness for sacrifice.

Once again, the picture in Hamas is similar: 'The Muslim people is wreaking its revenge and restoring its past splendor' (leaflet of February 11, 1988). Hamas, like the UNC, emphasizes the population's staying power thanks to which 'Israel's attempts to impose collective punishment, political and media strangulation... have



failed. The thick club has failed, and the economic pressures and starvation [tactics] have failed' (leaflet of April 7, 1988).

At the conclusion of the first year of the intifada, the recourse to varied symbolic organizational and economic modes had borne positive fruit. The intifada, which began as a spontaneous outburst, soon took a course of intensive and ongoing activity in which all strata of the population took part. Collective steadfastness, a readiness for personal sacrifice, and a sense of national pride, in the face of harsh Israeli punitive measures, are the major achievements of the intifada.

The central bodies behind the day-to-day activity – the United National Command and the PLO, on the one hand, and Hamas, al Mujamma' al-Islami and the Muslim Brothers, on the other, were able to ensure a considerable degree of obedience to their directives and to obtain broad compliance from the population. In the absence of a local leadership, the popular committees and the 'shock squads' narrowed the range of possible deviation by opponents and induced hesitators to obey the directives. Concomitantly, means of persuasion exerted on fence-sitters, along with carefully calculated directives in the economic sphere and imbuing the population with a feeling that they were bearing a shared burden and a sense of partnership in national achievements, heightened the readiness for active participation.

Israel's failure to suppress the intifada results from its inability to come up with a quick and effective response to the coercion and persuasion mechanisms wielded on the Palestinian population in the West Bank and Gaza by the groups behind the uprising. Israel's difficulties in this sphere have diverse causes: political constraints, domestic differences, legal limitations, and moral considerations that guide the nation's political and military echelons. Supposing that these factors will continue to dictate the nature of Israeli activity and that, in turn, this activity will render it difficult for Israel to prevent those behind the intifada from continuing to gain the obedience and compliance of the population, political dialogue becomes an unavoidable option. If not, the war of the clubs against the stones will not cease, the leaflets will blossom, and the intifada will continue to be a millstone around Israel's neck.