

## **On the Road to Palestinian State: From Intifada To Madrid**

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this research is to investigate the Intifada as an inevitable political phenomenon which concretized the conception of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in reaction to a colonial Israeli occupation there since 1967. In specific, to analyze proportional and inverse relationship between Israeli oppression of Palestinians and their level of national consciousness in waging a revolutionary warfare for political independence. The work defines the meaning of the Palestinian Intifada in psychological and practical terms, and studies human and material conditions created by the Israeli occupation as its cause. It is shown how the Intifada forced Israel to start reconsidering its occupation policy in favor of Palestinian self-determination; also to step into the direction of PLO which after the separation of Jordan from the West Bank became unrivalled in running the Palestinian affairs. The Intifada brought a new world attention to Palestinian rights after the end of the Iraq-Kuwait crisis, especially that of the United States and the Soviet Union who under the shadow of the Intifada carried the Palestinian issue to the Madrid conference guided by the principle of exchanging Arab/Palestinian lands for Israeli peace.

The finding of the study is that the Intifada proved that “Palestinianism” as a nationalist movement is irreconcilable with “Israelization” and “Jordanization” of the 1967 occupied territories which experienced Palestinian cultural and political rebirth reaching a climax in 1987. This national Palestinian consciousness of the Israeli colonial oppression was the reason to produce positive political outcome as represented in the new Israeli and international positions of the necessity to fulfill Palestinian national rights as the basis on which the Madrid conference was to be held.

The conclusion is that returning Palestinian lands was not a given, but it took a conscious Palestinian Intifada to mobilize against Israel in order to establish a Palestinian state in the 1967 occupied territories as the only requirement of permanent peace with Israel.

### الملخص

إن هدف هذا البحث هو بحث الانتفاضة كظاهرة سياسية حتمية والتي زادت من تماسك مصطلح الدولة الفلسطينية في الضفة الغربية وقطاع غزة في ردة فعل للاحتلال الإسرائيلي الاستيطاني هناك منذ عام 1967، وبالخصوص لتحليل العلاقة الطردية والعكسية بين الظلم الإسرائيلي لفلسطينيين ومستوى وعيهم الوطني في شن حربهم النفسية من أجل الاستقلال السياسي. ويحدد هذا البحث معنى الانتفاضة الفلسطينية النفسي والعملي ويدرس الظروف الإنسانية والمادية التي خلقها الاحتلال الإسرائيلي كسبب لها، ومبين كيف أن الانتفاضة أجبرت إسرائيل لإعادتها باعتبارها سياسة الاحتلال لصالح تقرير مصير فلسطيني. وأيضا أن نتجه باتجاه منظمة التحرير الفلسطينية (م.ت.ف) والتي أصبحت بعد فصل الأردن عن الضفة الغربية لا تنافس في إدارة الشؤون الفلسطينية. لقد أوجدت الانتفاضة انتباه عالمي جديد للحقوق الفلسطينية بعد نهاية الأزمة العراقية الكويتية، خاصة انتباه الولايات المتحدة والاتحاد السوفيتي، الذين تحت ظل الانتفاضة حملا القضية الفلسطينية لمؤتمر مدريد الذي كان مبدأه مبادلة الأراضي العربية الفلسطينية بالسلام مع إسرائيل.

إن ما عثرت عليه هذه الدراسة أن الانتفاضة أثبتت أن "الفلستنة" كحركة وطنية غير قابلة للتلاؤم مع "أسرلة" و"أردنة" المناطق المحتلة منذ عام 1967 والتي مرت في تجربة انبعاث ثقافي وسياسية فلسطيني وصل إلى القمة في عام 1987. وأنه فقط بوعي فلسطيني وطني بالظلم الاستيطاني الإسرائيلي كان السبب لإنتاج مردود سياسي إيجابي كما تمثل في المواقف الإسرائيلية والدولية الجديدة كضرورة لإنجاز الحقوق الوطنية الفلسطينية كأساس الذي كان سيعقد عليه مؤتمر مدريد.

الخاتمة هي أن إرجاع الأراضي الفلسطينية ليست شيء معطاه، ولكن أخذ انتفاضة فلسطينية

واعية للتعبئة ضد إسرائيل من أجل إقامة دولة فلسطين في الأراضي المحتلة منذ عام 1967  
كالمتطلب الوحيد للسلام الدائم مع إسرائيل.

### **Abbreviations**

- |    |         |  |
|----|---------|--|
| 1- | PLO     | The Palestine Liberation Organization.                                   |
| 2- | UN      | The United Nations.  |
| 3- | PNC     | The Palestine National Council.  |
| 4- | US      | The United States of America.  |
| 5- | PFLP    | The Palestine Front of the Liberation of Palestine.                      |
| 6- | PFLP-GC | The Palestine Front of the Liberation of Palestine –<br>General Command. |
| 7- | DFLP    | The Democratic Front of the Liberation of<br>Palestine.                  |

### **Introduction**

Conditions of the Palestinian people in and outside the Israeli occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip inevitably caused the eruption of their Intifada in September 1987, heralding a new era of the Palestinian national struggle against Zionist Israel. This started the political path to the 1991 Madrid conference to settle the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. What happened between 1967 and 1991 is the main focus of studying the Intifada .

Israel's occupation of the rest of Palestine following the 1967 war created the ground for it to assume the end of the Palestinian issue. Ever since its policy has been turning Palestinians to a minority and removing the logic of returning them to their homeland Palestine which wholly became under Israeli rule.

Occupied Palestinians and those in diaspora joined in a united front against unbearable Israel which already assumed their inability to initiate such enormous revolt against its elaborate colonial infrastructure.

Colonialism as the basis of Israeli dominance served at the same time as the cause of the Palestinian Intifada which aimed at national independence.

The most valuable weapons of the Intifada which affected the Palestinian-Israeli quasion, paving the way for the Madrid and Oslo talks was the "rock", though simple, but effective and plenty. Other weapons were used as the fight intensified to include cocktail molotove, knives, axes and rifles later. Also, demonstrations, strikes, boycotting Israeli goods and media attacks enhanced the impact of the Intifada on Israel. Even Palestinian-Israeli behind the scene talks were considered positive weapon to advance the goals of the Intifada. Any numbers of these weapons were used according to circumstances favorable to the Palestinian cause.

The research will employ historical methodology by investigating the literature to analyze the Intifada as a unique political phenomenon of revolutionary impact on the fate of the Palestinian people. Primary and secondary sources will be studied to determine causes, forces, development, scope and results of the Intifada. Two variables will be the focus of the study : the Israeli occupation is the independent variable and the Intifada is the dependent variable.

Relation between the Intifada and the Israeli occupation is directly affected by their interaction. The Palestinian Intifada caused by Israeli occupation aimed at establishing separate Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Value aspects of length, intensity and scale of the occupation determined the value aspects of intensity, scope and impact of the Intifada. Israeli actions to change geographical, topographical, social, economic and political realities of the occupied territories put the Palestinian people in oppressive conditions which the Intifada came to abolish.

It is shown above that historical methodology is best utilized to analyze variables of the Palestinian Intifada. The main questions to be answered are the following : Why did the Intifada start in 1987? What were the

forces participating in it? How did it affect the Palestinian self-determination? What was the role played by Arab and international forces in its direction and outcome? Had the Madrid conference been held due to the Intifada? Did the Intifada succeed or fail?

### **The Reasons of the Intifada**

#### **Israeli Destruction of Palestinian Land and People in the West Bank and Gaza Strip**

Occupation of the Palestinian territories in 1967 brought an ever expanding Zionist-Israeli colonialism to a full circle in Palestine. Integrating the Palestinian territories into Israel proceeded by leaps and bounds in a short time from reaching a cease-fire with defeated Arab countries. Through various means of deception and force, Israel controlled Palestinian lands for Jewish settlements and military bases to create new topographic, economic and political facts impossible to reverse in return for any settlement with the Palestinian people.

Israelization of the Palestinian territories began as early as June 27-28, 1967 when Israel amended the law and administration ordinance to start the process of extending its sovereignty over two million Palestinians under its control and to cut them off from another two millions in diaspora. East- Jerusalem was annexed to Israel and a military government run by the defense minister was established to separately rule the West Bank and Gaza. Although local Jordanian and Egyptian laws were kept, but military governors had exclusive legislative and executive powers to rule as they chose for purely Israeli interest which began the policy of changing the status quo ante by creating new facts on the ground. This was done in defiance of the international law prohibiting the occupying power to take actions in order to change the identity of land and people. Israel rested its right to all Palestine on the perception of its nationalism and British colonialism(Peretz, 1990, p. 2, 4-5).

Israeli military, political, legal and administrative measures were to expedite the creation of permanent Israeli facts on Palestinian lands. The process started with the Labor Allon plan of July 1967 for a strategic

reason to establish two rings of settlement in the Jordan valley, Hebron and Latrun near Ramallah. Besides their defensive nature, the Jordan valley settlements were of agricultural purpose with an expected population of 4500 in 1986. Also these settlements posed a barrier between Arab villages on the mountains to the West and Jordan to limit their expansion eastward (Benvenisti, 1984, pp. 51-52). The settlement wave began with the labor government after 1967 in spite of claiming readiness for political compromise with Jordan. It kept increasing settlements to become permanent feature of the territories. The settlement population, aside from East-Jerusalem, rose with each year to reach in 1972–1182; 1973–1514; 1974–2019 ; 1975– 2581; 1976-3176; 1977-5023 (Demant, 1989, p. 224-226).

Israelization of the territories reached its peak with the Likud government taking power in 1977. Menachim Begin shifted from the Allon plan of security to a new one of ideological settlement policy in coordination with the Gush Emunim movement set up in 1974 for the purpose of residing anywhere in the territories. The new settlement assault was driven by religious extremism to limit Palestinian control of lands. Palestinian towns were to be encircled and cut off by Jewish settlements as it came in the Ariel Sharon project based on the Gush–Drobles plan in the World Zionist Organization of 1978, 1980 and 1981. The aim was to undermine the basis of a future Palestinian state. The Likud settlements focussed on attracting middle class people unlike the traditional Labor settlements of agriculture like moshavim (cooperative settlements) and kibbutzim (communal settlements). Examples of Gush Emunim settlements were Elon Moreh in Nablus, Ofra in Ramallah and Ma'ale Adumim in East-Jerusalem which Begin was willing to build more of them; such settlements were called Yishuv Kehilati–suburban commuting centers of educated middle class people (Demant, 1989, p. 224).

Taking Palestinian lands and resources eroded the unity and survivability of the Palestinian people, turning them to masses of wage-workers in Israel by destroying their most important source of living, agriculture. The water resources were controlled by the Israeli water system *Mekorot* which prevented Palestinians from digging wells, but giving itself the

right to pipe water to Israeli use (Mekorot is Israel national water company). For the lack of water resources, Palestinian agriculture could not develop in the face of advancing Israeli agriculture with unlimited water supplies. Also, the Palestinian agriculture lacked investment and marketing to remain dependent on Israeli agriculture. Only one third of the Palestinian general product(GNP) came from agriculture and the number of agricultural workers declined steadily since 1967. In the West Bank, agriculture in GNP declined from 34.8 percent in 1968 to 22 percent in 1979 and agricultural workers from 42 percent in 1968 to 30 percent in 1980 . And the general domestic product ( GDP) remained static, 35 percent in 1970, 36.2 percent in 1975, 31.4 percent in 1977, and 35 percent in 1980. The picture is grimmer in Gaza where the GNP from agriculture was 28.1 percent in 1968 went down to 12.3 percent in 1980 and the GDP declined from 28.4 percent in 1968 to 19.2 percent in 1980. The agricultural workers dropped from 33 percent in 1969 to 18.2 percent in 1980(Benvinisti, 1984, pp.12-15). These numbers obviously show continued deterioration of the Palestinian agriculture as the foundation of the Palestinian national economy.

The Palestinian industry met the same fate of collapse. In the west Bank, industrial growth fell from 9 percent in 1968 to 6.5 percent in 1980 . The number of the industrial workers did not increase—15000 in the West Bank and 7000 in Gaza. Palestinian industry had to work through restrictive Israeli laws of taxation, marketing and organization. It was further weakened by Israeli industrial suburban settlements with a tightening grip on the Palestinian economy which was made an appendage to the Israeli economy. Palestinians were not encouraged to become either entrepreneurs or technically trained workers to prevent competition with Israeli industry. The Palestinian industry fell victim to discriminating Israeli strategy of “integration and exclusion” to serve Israeli interests at the expense of the Palestinian economy(Benvinisti, 1984, pp. 15-18).

From the mid 1970 onward, there was economic stagnation in Israel which reduced the need for Palestinian laborers. Also poor economic conditions of the territories in combination with Israeli political and

military control forced Palestinians to look for work elsewhere. Palestinian immigration increased under the Likud pressure since 1977 to get rid of many Palestinians. Converting Palestinians from peasants to workers helped Israel to open the way for their immigration outside the territories. This was one of the social costs of the Israeli occupation the Palestinians had to pay (Abu-Lughod, 1989, pp. 402-403, 406-407, 410). Another cost, as Benvenisti showed, was to prevent Palestinians from developing urban centers of national consciousness in the territories (Benvenisti, 1984, pp. 6-7, 64, 86-69).

To Benvenisti, social, political, economic, military and psychological conditions of the West Bank and Gaza practically made them inseparable from Israel whose conflict with the Palestinians had become internalized as it became dual society. He held the view that the PLO did not understand the Palestinian reality in the territories and continued battling Israel the same old way after its expulsion from Lebanon in 1982 which put it in the danger of losing Palestinian population as it lost lands due to Israeli facts on the ground. However, he added, that Palestinian nationalism did not weaken but consolidated itself with fighting Zionism; and that Israel had to face the question of either become Jewish or democratic; which necessitated finding a balance between Israeli nationalism and humanism should Zionism remain a viable force (Benvenisti, 1984, p. 64, 67-69).

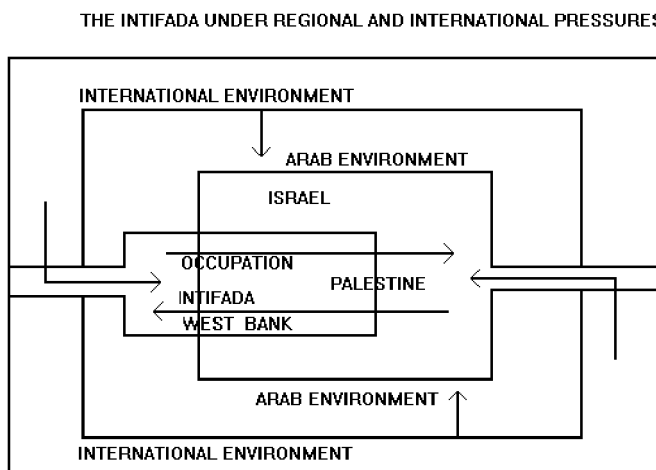
By 1987, the question for Palestinians became either to be or not to be. Feeling isolated from Arabs and subjected by Israelis, a new generation of Palestinians under occupation prepared themselves for revolt. The PLO and religious groups initiated military operations in the territories and across borders from Lebanon (Peretz, 1990, pp. 33-37). The ground was set for the major eruption in the territories with the prediction of all parties involved. The expected upheaval was sparked by Israeli killings of Palestinians in December 1987 to explode the Intifada as a new phase in the Palestinian struggle for a statehood. In the next part, we will discuss its nature, forces and immediate impact on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

## **The Intifada**

### **Nature of the Intifada**

Linguistically, the Arabic word “Intifada” means a willful revolt against danger to life. Naturally, one is required to remove danger by employing certain methods to bring about conditions favorable to dignified life. From this comes the political meaning of Intifada in the Palestinian context to mean the revolution of the Palestinian people against Israeli occupation for political independence. The Palestinian Intifada was born out of unbearable psycho-political and socio-economic conditions developed over a long time by Israel to destroy the Palestinian existence; its stated aim for them was to go free by ending the Israeli occupation with any price (Dar El-Jaleel, January 5, 1988, pp. 2-3).

The Intifada was a natural response of the human will against bitter reality to reach a life of hope, opportunity and happiness. Responding to their inner feelings, Palestinians rose to replace Israeli harsh conditions with a promising life. Their battle was to be fought on two fronts, internally and externally.



Inside the Palestinian lands, Palestinians mobilized against Israel which was trying to obliterate their national identity. Edward Said described the Israeli practices to strangle the Palestinian political life by saying that Israel fought any sign of Palestinian nationalism. Ideas of state, citizenship and leadership were fought tooth and nail. Palestinian nationalists were liquidated and the whole people succumbed to the most draconian laws to reduce their life to that of subaltern (Said, 1989, pp. 6-8).

Stopping the political dismemberment of the Palestinian society required fighting the Israeli-sponsored Palestinian organizations and individuals working to replace the formal Palestinian leadership of the PLO. The Villages Leagues Israel created in 1982 was to be the alternative to the PLO leadership in a negotiated settlement. Immediately, the Intifada isolated that organization of traditional figures and put in its place revolutionary popular committees to function as an overall national structure in all aspects of life. It was the first step for establishing a Palestinian state headed by the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people. This came as a rejection of the Israeli prime minister Moshe Shamir's project of imposing local rule on them under Israeli suzerainty (Dar El-Jaleel, June 20, 1988, pp. 17-20).

The political revival of the Intifada meant reconstructing the economic life of Palestinians as primary conditions for its continuation. It managed through population committees to stop workers, merchants and industrialists to deal with Israel and regulate prices, wages and work conditions; also running agricultural projects and social benefit system for the needy. An economic structure began to develop covering all Palestinian areas as separate from the Israeli colonial system (Dar El-Jaleel, June 20, 1988, p. 14-17).

The economic aim of Intifada was to maintain the unity of Palestinian land and people for independence. Israel worked hard to dismember the Palestinian society by confiscating land for Jewish settlements to deal a final blow to Palestinian nationalism, a process that picked up pace by the Likud government of the 1977 with the goal of driving Palestinians off

land(Ma'os, 1993, pp.189-193; Matter and Demant in Naseer Aruri, 1989, p. 200, 223). Their loss of land was furthered by inhumane Israeli laws of turning them to masses of wage workers in subhuman living conditions. The situation was described by a scholar in the following: "There was a proliferation of over a thousand laws and regulations designed not only to enforce the subaltern, rightless position of Palestinians under Israeli jurisdiction, but also to rub their noses in the mud, to humiliate and remind them of how they were doomed to less-than-human status"(Said, 1989, p. 6). Economic deterioration extended to Palestinian industry as the national base for political independence. Israel industrialized Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip through what Meron Benvenisti called the policy of "integration and exclusion" aiming at deindustrializing the occupied territories to become markets for Israeli goods; and hinder building an infrastructure to stay dependent on the Israeli industrial establishment(Benvinisti, 1984, pp. 16-18).

Fighting Israeli colonial economism was a prerequisite to political liberation which had also its international aspects. The Intifada rejected the American-supported Israeli proposal of Palestinian self-rule to bypass the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people. Instead, it endorsed the international conference with PLO attendance along the five major powers of the United Nations (UN) to work for the Palestinian return and independent state(Dar El-Jaleel, June 20, 1988, pp. 20-21). The trend for a Palestinian state separate from Jordan led by Yasser Arafat gained momentum in the Palestine National Council (PNC) meetings in Algiers of April 1987 and November (1988). The two meetings endorsed a solution based on the UN resolutions 181, 242, 338 though the last two were still objectionable to Palestinians for vagueness on their national rights(Said, 1989, pp. 12-15, 18).

The PNC meetings reflected a high Palestinian mobilization of the Intifada in Diaspora. Palestinians in different countries poured support for their compatriots fighting Israeli occupation, especially, those in surrounding Arab countries where they suffered greatly since 1948 at the hand of corrupt regimes in Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. They saw setting

up a Palestinian state as the only way out of their statelessness. The idea of state was tremendously supported by the UN, the non-aligned movement, the socialist bloc and Islamic countries against the position of Israel and the United States(Said, 1989, pp. 19-20).

In spite of the Israeli-American alliance, the international conditions were convenient for waging Intifada which could any time be sparked by the inhumane conditions in the territories. The spark came when an Israeli truck driver killed four Palestinian workers on December 8, 1987 in Jabalya camp in Gaza Strip in vengeance to his relative killed in Gaza two days earlier. News spread in the territories that the four workers were killed in cold blood which instigated Palestinians to demonstrate the second day in Jabalya where some killed and others injured(Schiff and Ya,ari, 1989, pp. 17-20). The Palestinians felt compelled to react in a series of actions against Israeli atrocity in the territories staging what came to be called Intifada.

It spread like wildfire among Palestinians of all political persuasions and social backgrounds who joined in a national crusade for emancipation from Israel's oppression. A rare phenomenon of its kind in the Middle East with a simple weapon of "rock" used against most modern Israeli weapons to achieve what all Arab-Israeli wars could not over decades. The Intifada became the means to fulfill Palestinian hopes for an equal national status with Israelis and others by having their own place called home. To this end, different Palestinian forces decided that it was time to embark on the holy mission of liberation (Jihad).

### **Forces of the Intifada**

Palestinian classes joined together in a national revolt with clear vision of direction, means and goals of their doing. It was not accidental nor desperate movement of people without national feelings and values. But was guided from start by politically motivated people of different groups in the territories led by the United National Leadership of the Uprising under the PLO guidance. It was a popular movement with solid organization contrary to what Israel described as local resistance

supported by Iran, Syria and the PLO. The Israeli defense minister Yitzhak Rabin warned of crushing it easily with the “iron fist policy”.(Dar El-Jaleel, June 20, 1988, pp. 10-12 and January 23, 1988, pp.1-2)). Even this policy did not deter Israeli Arabs from supporting their compatriots in the territories like participating in the general strike on December 21, 1987 to help their fellow Palestinians gain freedom (Tamari,1989, p. 133).

The Intifada was brewing under the surface for years due to the repressive Israeli measures and the ineffectiveness of international efforts for a settlement. Unlike previous operations, the Intifada was coherent, durable and large-scale movement which broke Israel’s control of the territories. Students, workers, middle class and women of all political groupings worked together through popular committees in running the day-to-day life of Palestinians. The Intifada succeeded in molding them in one coherent society with new revolutionary ethics and values(Abd al-Majid, 1989, pp. 12-16). In terms of political classification, Palestinians belong to various parties of nationalist, Marxist and Islamic ideologies.

Among the nationalists, Fateh stood to be the most important organization as it included Palestinians from all segments of society. Its influence spread among religious people and unions of lawyers, physicians, engineers, youths, journalists, students and teachers. Fateh huge following strengthened the PLO position versus Jordan and Israeli-supported figures in the territories. Israel always refused to recognize the PLO representation of the Palestinian people and tried to minimize its role in the Intifada (Schiff, 1988, pp. 12-15).

Abu Jihad (Khalil al-Wazir) and Arafat were the main Fateh leaders in the PLO who took notice of the significance of the Intifada against Israel. Although they were late for few weeks from its eruption, but they managed to control its unified national command which was a continuation of Feisal Husseini’s efforts who was another Fateh figure in Jerusalem. On the whole, Fateh began mobilizing support within Palestinian institutions in the territories since it won the municipality elections of 1976. But it also cooperated with other radical organizations

of the PLO like the leftist fronts of George Habash and Ahmad Jibril as well as the Palestine Communist party in running the united national command. However, each group kept its own identity while joining the rest in leading the people (Schiff and Ya'ari, 1989, p. 47, 191, 195, 202-203 and Stork, 1989, pp. 71-73).

Whereas the PLO was gaining popularity at the expense of pro-Jordanian figures, Arafat was rivaled by some competing forces, especially, the Islamic resistance movement. Unlike them, he was willing to compromise with Israel. In the word of Major-general Frayem Snaih, director of the Civil Administration, the PLO was seen amenable to the idea of Palestinian self-rule in return for final settlement with Israel (Schiff, 1988, p. 12).

Regardless of Israel's evaluation of the forces of Intifada, all Palestinians rushed to arms in a historic upheaval against common enemy. Despite their disagreements on methods of resistance, but all accepted that independence could not be compromised. The Islamic resistance movement appeared on the scene as true revolutionary force committed to removing unbearable colonial conditions of life. Departing from the Islamic belief that God's given freedom of people is contrary to their subjugation and therefore, the Palestinian people had to break free from Israeli occupation.

Drawn on Muslim Brotherhood philosophy, Islamic organizations, such as Harakat Al-Muqawamah Al-Islamiyyah Hamas and the Islamic Jihad (Holy War) developed among Palestinians to fight along side the PLO against Israel. Hamas as a continuation of the famous Iz al-Din al-Qassam revolt against the British Mandate in 1935 considered Palestine the property of God in hands of all Muslims who must sacrifice for it (Ayed, 1988, p. 66-70).

Among Islamic revolutionaries, Hamas leader Sheikh Ahmad Ismael Yassin from Gaza city stood to be the most important local figure of the Intifada. Although he had disagreements with Arafat about a political solution with Israel, but he recognized the PLO leadership in the

Palestinian arena. Yassin and Arafat were aware of Israeli attempts to draw a wedge between them to crush the Intifada. Israel realized that Hamas was leading uncompromising Islamic resistance adopted by Palestinian rank and file. It took action to squash the movement among which was arresting its godfather Yassin and others (Schiff and Ya'ari, 1989, p. 220, 224, 227, 223, 235, 237, 238). Such action gave more unifying force to the Palestinian parties fighting Israel for liberation.

Like Hamas, the Jihad Islamic organization recognized the PLO as the leading national umbrella of all Palestinians. Similar to Arafat, it espoused the idea of a Palestinian state. There was along history of cooperation between the two sides on religious and national grounds. Fateh saw in Jihad an extension of it in the struggle against Israel, looking at each other as two-sides of the same thing (Al-Madhun, 1988, p. 36).

In spite of political differences, all Palestinian groups participated in the Intifada expanding to every city, village and camp under Israeli occupation. Their weapon of rock was simple, plenty and effective to an extent unknown before in revolutionary warfare. The Palestinian uprising rightly took the name of the "rock revolution". Primitive techniques, such as "Mugla" (rock-thrower) and "sling-shot" were used effectively in offensive and defensive operations. Also, molotove cocktails were thrown on Israeli soldiers whose movement was impeded further by burning tires on roads. Moreover, strikes like those on January 11 and 14, 1988 were waged as weapons to pose a united front against Israeli military and civilian administration (Dar El-Jaleel, June 20, 1988, pp. 13-14). Palestinians young and old, men and women, students and workers, farmers and middle class of all professions closed ranks in their battle of freedom.

The Palestinian leadership of PLO and Palestinians under Israeli occupation shouldered their duties faithfully. They were united by the goal of defeating their enemy, Israel. Arafat became stronger than ever before as the undisputed leader. Israelis began seriously looking at him as the man with whom to negotiate a settlement of conflict. Palestinian independence became the main topic of discussion of Palestinians and

Israelis whose lives had directly been changed by the Intifada.

### **Immediate Impact of the Intifada on Palestinians and Israelis**

The Intifada brought the two main conflicting parties, the Palestinian people and Israel to a new stage of interaction. The rules of the game changed in favor of finding common ground for reconciling their national interests. For Palestinians sought a life free and independent of Israeli occupation, and Israel slowly began absorbing it as inevitable fact for reaching an end to the Palestinian-Israeli dilemma. They had a mutual conviction that none of them could eliminate the other and their coexistence as separate identities was the only solution.

The Palestinian side through its popular committees in the territories with a unified national command under direct PLO supervision proved capable of forming a state; its requirements of land, people and leadership existed. The Palestinian dream for such a state was being realized through the Intifada for the first time in modern history. The Intifada created a national consensus among all Palestinian parties on the necessity of a sovereign Palestinian state led by the PLO. The Palestinian unity and fighting capabilities lifted the PLO to a new horizon of importance since its military set back of 1982 in Lebanon. By contrast, the role of Jordan was weakened as an Israeli option for any settlement (Dar El-Jaleel, June 20, pp. 30-31).

Palestinians grew bolder in rejecting Arab or Israeli trusteeship as the Intifada taught them self-reliance in fighting the enemy and managing their daily affairs at once. They had tasted the freedom of running their own affairs as the first step toward their political independence. Any deviation from this direction was rejected by forces of the Intifada. The split-faction of Fateh led by Abu Musa was isolated from the Intifada as destructive to the Palestinian unity. Such unity was enhanced by the participation of the 1948 Palestinians-ruled by the same colonial Israeli regime- in the battle for national independence (Abd al-Majid, 1989, pp. 110-1120).

Through the Intifada, Palestinians gained confidence in their capacity to

change their political status in the face of a modern Israeli army backed up by an elaborate network of civilian administration and a wide-spread structure of settlements in the Palestinian midst. The Intifada was a war of attrition to weaken the Israeli military power and morale; and to crush the Israeli security dogma of annexing the Palestinian land as necessary (Schiff, 1988, pp. 13-18). A new spirit of fighting Israelis surged among Palestinians regardless of price to be paid. They believed in the worthiness of death or injury or imprisonment for their liberation. Throughout the territories, they met Israeli bullets, bombs, booting, clubbing, torture, terror and curfews. The Israeli army appeared paralyzed to deal with the Intifada contrary to what the Israeli political leadership expected. Meanwhile, Palestinians as Zeev Schiff put it had the feeling of victory and were encouraged to mobilize nationally against Israel (Schiff, 1988, pp. 13-15).

The Palestinian determination to win was met by an Israel caught unprepared to handle the Intifada of such magnitude. At first, Israeli political and military leader acted with the usual intrasingence and randomness to be overtaken later by events; however, some Israelis realized the enormity of the situation. The Likud-Labor unity government reacted as if the Intifada was a passing cloud initiated by so-called terrorists with an outside support and must be crushed by force. And that Israel's grip on the territories could not be broken as premier Shamir and defense minister Rabin advocated. But the Likud party more strongly than the Labor stressed its opposition to any accommodation with the Palestinians who must be ruled by Israel or be finally transferred to Jordan (Dar El-Jaleel, June 20, 1988, pp. 39-42; Bishara, 1989, p. 221; Abdallah and Al-Said, 1988, pp. 39-42).

The standard Israeli response, however, began changing as the Intifada was taking root among Palestinians and more trouble was coming to Israel. It was the first time Israel met with a serious threat from inside which forced it to soften its attitudes on both governmental and public levels toward the Palestinians. Some Likud figures like Moshe Arens and Dan Merridor saw the way out in applying an autonomous rule with postponing Palestinian sovereignty for later time. The Palestinian issue

was furthered ahead by the Labor party when it stated its willingness to negotiate peace with Palestinians; especially, its splinter Mapam (the united workers party) accepted to negotiate with the PLO for self-determination. This solution was recognized by the Israeli left and Arab groups to mean a Palestinian state headed by the PLO. It gave credence to Israeli military circles considering the territories as security liability to Israel in being a cause of war and increasing military expenditure (Bishara, 1989, pp. 219-222).

The impact of the Intifada was apparent in the economic loss to Israel with few resources to go by. Israeli businesses lost cheap pool of Palestinian labor and considerable market for its goods as boycotted by Palestinians; in addition to more expenditure on Israeli military operations against the Intifada. The war against Israel entailed initiating self-sustained Palestinian economic structure independent of the Israeli economy used as a political tool of the Israeli occupation. Israeli tourism and industry were reduced noticeably by the Intifada. An Israeli former economy minister, Jad Ya'cobi estimated in 1988 the loss at nine hundred million dollars. Part of the problem also was the coming of foreign workers with an additional cost to the Israeli economy and social ills for society (Dar El-Jaleel, June 20, 1988, pp. 45-46).

While the 1988 Likud government continued its anti-Palestinian rhetoric, a big chunk of the Israeli public began accepting the fact that the PLO was the key to peace. Academics and political analysts called on government to quit using force and resort to negotiations with the PLO to end a life of fear and violence brought about by following the dream of "Greater Israel" (Dar El-Jaleel, January 20, 1988, pp. 43-44).

There was a growing public and key leading figure support for a reconciliation with the Palestinian people in the face of routine Israeli rejection of the PLO. The new developing trend was picked up by the US to work out a final settlement of the conflict. The PLO was told that if agreed to recognize Israel, it will be accepted to represent the Palestinian people. Arafat accepted the American conditions in public statements in Stockholm and Geneva allowing for direct talks with the Americans.

President George Bush carried on the talks to a new level with the Soviet Union in the direction of an international conference for a settlement (Schiff and Ya'ari, 1989, pp. 302-305, 308, 313, 314).

The settlement began centering around the PLO role in the negotiations and king Hussein of Jordan was seen incapable of leading the Palestinians. Israelis found it unavoidable to deal with Arafat and started contact with him. Even the joint Shamir-Rabin initiative calling for exchanging land for peace ignore Arafat, but in fact its application began the process of separating Israelis and Palestinians with strengthening the impetus for Palestinian independence from Jordan (Schiff and Ya'ari, 1989, pp. 323-325).

## **The Overall Outcome of the Intifada**

### **A new Political Trend: Palestinian-Jordanian Separation**

The PLO came through Intifada as the main force of Palestinian nationalism which hastened the process of going a part from Jordan. Palestinians and Jordanians were locked in a forced marriage by virtue of the colonial British mandate. Britain created the Hashemite kingdom of Jordan to coexist with Israel at the expense of an independent Palestinian people made forcibly Jordanian subjects by king Abdallah as part of the project of Greater Syria under his rule (Milman, 1989, pp. 10-18).

Distrust between the two sides grew through the rule of king Hussein until 1974 when the UN and the Arab league recognized the PLO instead of Jordan to represent the Palestinian people (Baily, 1984, p. 76, 81). The best recognition of the PLO came from Palestinians under Israeli occupation winning the 1976 municipal elections which unseated pro-Jordanian-Israeli personalities. The PLO wide-spread popularity was shown extensively of demonstrating students in the territories instigating supportive response by Israeli students (Taraki, 1989, p.441 and Aruri, 1989, pp. 22-25). As PLO was growing in strength at the expense of Jordan, Israel was trying to reverse the current of history by increasing its suppression of Palestinians whose nationalist momentum was to be halted by deals with Arab States.

The Camp David accords of 1979 with Egypt meant by Israel to eliminate the PLO in favor of bringing Jordan back to the political arena. Accordingly, the PLO was dismissed in spite of Arab and international recognition to be the national leadership of the Palestinian people; a process furthered by evicting the PLO from Lebanon in 1982 as a step of giving Jordan a leading position in Palestinian affairs. Between 1982 and 1987, Israeli and Jordanian leaders met secretly several times to divide responsibilities in the territories and go for the international conference without the PLO presence (Milman, 1989, pp. 40-43).

Nonetheless, Israeli attempts failed to insulate the PLO from its constituency in the territories where it was unrivaled. For Palestinians, Jordan became something of the past, irrelevant to their national feelings. The Intifada came to end the long-imposed Jordanian trusteeship, making separation of the two banks of Jordan irreversible.

Separation developed as a result of competing interests of parties to the conflict, local and outside powers had different approaches and goals of their involvement in the conflict. Jordan and Israel met the Intifada with common agreement of holding the international conference to weaken the PLO leadership in the territories. In the conference, Israel and Jordan will impose their will on the Palestinian people according to the UN resolutions 242 and 338. Hussein and Peres met secretly in London to chart their roles in the Palestinian drama (Dar El-Jaleel, January 23, 1988, pp. 5-6).

Jordan relied on Israel to quell the Intifada by force before it had dangerous ramifications for both sides. But this task was impossible to achieve as the upheaval permeated the Palestinian society. And the more Israel applied force, the more Palestinians got revolutionized until reaching the point of negotiating with them as the only way out. Even the US came to the conclusion that it was wrong to keep ignoring the PLO as the leader of Palestinians. It was practical to recognize its national stature by the US and Israel (Anaberi, 1988, pp. 2-5).

If Israel and United States finally bent to Palestinian resistance, Jordan

could not stay on its own but followed suite in the aftermath of the Arab summit of Algiers in June 1988. The summit blessed the PLO leadership by asking Jordan to comply with the Arab consensus in supporting the Palestinian Intifada (Dar El-Jaleel, September 8,1988, pp. 2-5). King Hussein noticed that the Palestinian people did not rise against Israel to bring him back in charge of their life. He saw it practical to let Palestinians decide their fate according to the new circumstances.

On July 30,1988, Hussein declared that the two banks of Jordan are legally and administratively separate for the sake of a Palestinian state headed by the PLO. He said that: “Since there is a general conviction that the struggle to liberate the occupied Palestinian lands could be enhanced by dismantling the legal and administrative links between the two banks, we have to fulfill our duty, and do what is required of us ... today we respond to the wish of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and to the Arab orientation to affirm the Palestinian identity in all its aspects. We pray God that this step be a substantive addition to the intensifying Palestinian struggle for freedom and independence”(Hussein, August 1, 1988, p. 2). This address officially ended thirty eight years of forced Jordanian-Palestinian union paving the way for an independent Palestinian state.

It was for Jordanian-Palestinian interest to go a part by the given conditions created by the Intifada. “we can not continue in this state of suspension, which can neither serve Jordan nor the Palestine cause,” Hussein said. He added, it does not mean the end of cooperation between the two sides but will further it. We “assure you that these measures do not mean the abandonment of our national duty, either towards the Arab-Israeli conflict or towards the Palestinian cause... such measures will contribute to the struggle of the Palestinian people and their glorious uprising”, he affirmed. While continuing the rhetoric of having together one destiny, practically Hussein set Jordanians and Palestinians on a separate course. He differentiated between Jordan and Palestine by saying “Jordan is not Palestine; and the independent Palestinian state will be established on the occupied Palestinian land after liberation, God willing,” yet, he assured Palestinians in Jordan of remaining Jordanian

citizens(Hussein, August 1, 1988, p. 2).

Palestinians welcomed the new development as a fruit of their Intifada making the PLO truly their sole representative and with a special role to play in settling the conflict. Egypt spoke to this point by saying that the Jordanian move was a message to Israel and US to reserve a seat for the PLO in negotiations (Jordan Times, August 2, 1988, p. 1).

Israel reacted strongly against the Jordanian move and warned Palestinians and Americans of consequence. Likud leaders threatened to annex the territories if Palestinians declared independence and revolted against possible American-PLO talks as seen weakening to Palestinian moderation. However, the US moved toward recognizing the PLO if accepted Israel(Jordan Times, August 8, 1988, p.1).

In spite of the violent Israeli reaction, Palestinian independence occupied the center of political discussion in and outside the Middle East and the stage was set for new initiatives which would carry the Palestinian national aspirations to a new height.

### **The Drive for Palestinian Independence**

Hussein's announcement of delinking the two parts of Jordan opened the way for a plethora of political activities regarding a Palestinian-Israeli settlement. The PLO emerged unrivaled to negotiate with other parties. Israel and the US were forced to shift emphasis from Jordan to the PLO for deals. The Israeli Likud government made contact with PLO figures like Feisal Hussein and Sari Nuseibah in the territories to explore options. Hussein and Nuseibah's efforts to convince Israel of Palestinian independence failed; Israel accepted a middle way between the Camp David agreement and a state(Schiff and Ya'ari, 1989, pp. 274-277).

The PLO became convinced that unless it recognized the 242, 338 UN resolutions, Israel will not take it seriously. Arafat used the PNC meeting of November 12, 1988 in Algiers to accept these resolutions and declare Palestinian independence (Schiff and Ya'ari, 1989, p. 284).

The Israeli Labor party found it encouraging to start serious talks with Arafat against the wish of the Likud party. There were secret contacts between Peres and Arafat through a French mediator. The Labor-PLO communication was supported by the US though it weakened King Hussein. The PLO partnership in the international conference was to be guaranteed since Arafat met Israeli and American demands. The change in PLO political position vis-a-vis Israel and the new political conditions that Intifada created forced the US to change its policy. The State Department began seeing Arafat as a positive element in the peace process which took on a new level after Hussein's withdrawal (Harif, 1988, pp. 2-4).

The Secretary of State George Shultz saw that the status quo could not hold as the Intifada was raging and a solution had to be reached on the basis of land for peace as it came in the resolution 242. This was the reason why Arafat accepted to recognize Israel as a price for Palestinian independence. His recognition was finely announced by addressing the UN-General Assembly on December 14, 1988 in Geneva which prompted American approval and Israeli rejection. Israel tried to impede American-PLO cooperation by saying it will not go to the 1967 borders; also, the PLO had to change the Palestinian charter and the US must not accept a Palestinian state (Schiff and Ya'ari, 1989, pp. 3-4, 8).

The aim of Israel was to freeze the concept of Palestinian independence and insisted on Jordan as the partner in negotiations. But, it was a losing battle for Israel since its major patron the US switched gear to a more realistic approach which would bring the conflict to an end. The new secretary of state James Baker told the congress that Israel must talk with the PLO in order to make peace (Schiff and Ya'ari, 1989, p310).

With change in the American attitude toward the Palestinians, the PLO became convinced that Israel under the pressure of the Intifada will come to its sense. Indeed, there were Israeli voices urging changes in the traditional views toward the Palestinians. Likud and Labor leaders were forced to think of running elections in the territories though not with PLO participation. Peres realized that without the PLO, there would be no

settlement which Rabin understood it could be reached on the basis of land for peace with the PLO inevitable participation (Schiff and Ya'ari, 1989, p. 319, 322-323).

The PLO was inseparable factor from political considerations of local and international players. It was realized that no solution could be reached without its involvement . For Palestinian sake, it was managing the Intifada as a means of pressure at the time of going the political root of superpower efforts regarding Palestinian independence.

### **American-Soviet Rivalry and Settlement of the Conflict**

The Intifada broke out in the context of intense international system entering a new phase of cooperation between the US and the Soviet Union. While the American president Ronald Reagan persisted in the 1980s with anti-Soviet policy, the Soviet president Mekhael Gorbchev came in 1985 with a policy of reconciliation toward the West. Each of them tried to rejuvenate his country's political system to enhance its leading role in world affairs. For mutual economic interest, they reduced their strategic competition which meant cooperation in international conflicts, such as the Arab-Israeli one. For internal reasons, the Soviet Union accepted a second status to the US in handling the conflict. Similarly, Western Europe followed the American leadership which with Soviet compliance freed Israel from strong international pressure. A situation which demanded larger efforts from Arab countries and Palestinians to pressure Israel into a settlement. The Palestinian Intifada was the most effective factor to make Israel amenable to the UN call for Palestinian self-determination (Al-Khalil and Others, November 1989, p. 50, 56, 65, 66-69).

The US and the Soviet Union saw in the Intifada an opportunity to strengthen their position at each others expense through hectic diplomatic activities. While the Soviet Union sought weakening the US position by convincing Arabs and Palestinians that America stood with Israel. The US responded by presenting proposals to bring Palestinians and Israelis to negotiations.

For the Soviets, they looked at the Intifada as a Palestinian-Israeli war of rich opportunity to expand Soviet interests in the Middle East. By the end of 1988, the Reagan administration appeared incapable of containing the Intifada and pressuring Israel. The Secretary of State Shultz could not through his Middle East visits early in the year achieve progress by bringing Israelis and Palestinians together. The failure of American diplomacy was caused by the intransigent Shamir government refusing to accept change in the status quo (Schiff and Ya'ari, 1989, p. 301).

American inability to affect Israel's policy was matched by Soviet rapport with Israel. Soviet diplomats broke the ice with Israel by hinting to support any Israeli proposal more appropriate than the international conference for peace in the region. In a good gesture, the Soviets put pressure on Syria to follow political solution to the conflict than war (Schiff and Ya'ari, 1989, pp. 311-314). The purpose of Soviet diplomacy was to have access to both sides of the conflict like America had; so that it could play a much larger role in the settlement.

The Reagan administration wanted to exploit the Intifada by pressuring Israel for recognizing Palestinian rights. The American representative at the UN, Vernon Walters spoke of peace based on Israeli security and a Palestinian state. Shultz tried to pursue it by implementing transitional autonomy before reaching the stage of an international conference. Israel will have to withdraw its forces from most areas and Jordan not the PLO will administer the territories (Haideri, March 1988, pp. 106-109). Late in 1988, the US recognized the PLO whose role was to depend on its compliance with the American demands as indicated earlier.

The American administration of George Bush carried on the same policy of rejecting an early international conference for smaller steps with Soviet participation. The Secretary of State James Baker pressured the PLO to stop its armed struggle the Intifada and Israel to take encouraging steps for Palestinians (H. N., April 1989, pp. 127-131). The Israeli national unity government of Shamir responded on May 5, 1989 by adopting a plan for elections in the territories without PLO participation and compliance with the principle of land for peace. This plan was based on

what Israel selected from the Egyptian ten-point proposal as the basis for settlement (Sh. A., October 1989, p. 119). Shamir rejected certain points allowing for PLO participation and Palestinian independence, narrowing the whole plan to some Palestinian elections. The American Secretary of State Baker tried to combine Israeli and Egyptian proposals in a way acceptable to all parties, including the PLO. The PLO had to accept local Palestinian participation joined with some Palestinian outsiders and non-UN participation in the early stage of negotiations (Al-Abdallah, October 1989, pp. 144-145). However, the Israeli defense minister Rabin accepted the participation of Palestinians appointed by Egypt which was coordinating with the PLO; a point of disagreement with the premier Shamir (Schiff and Ya'ari, 1989, p. 323).

Shamir's anti-PLO policy caused friction between the US and its European allies who could no longer accept to be marginalized as it was the case with the Reagan administration. During his administration, Europe accepted non-PLO but local participation in negotiations and rejection of Soviet demand for holding the international conference on the conflict (Haideri, March 1988, pp. 110-111). During the Bush administration, the European community recognized the PLO as the main Palestinian factor in negotiations based on land for peace achieved through an international conference leading to a Palestinian state (H. N., February 1989, pp. 117-120).

Like Europe, America capitalized on the PLO as irreplaceable factor for peace. The increasing American respect for the PLO was antagonized by the 1990 Shamir government accusing president Bush of siding with the Palestinians. More settlements were built in spite of American warnings which restrained relations between them. To contain Israeli opposition against the PLO participation in negotiations, the US suspended temporary contacts with the PLO to tempt Israel go with the Bush policy (Adallah, August 1990, pp. 99-102). The PLO attributed the policy reversal of Bush to Israeli blackmailing of the American foreign policy under the guise of fighting "terrorism". It also succeeded in convening Arab ministers in Tunis on July 16, 1990 to alarm the international

community to the negative American policy. The overriding interest of such PLO activities was to encounter Israeli rising suppression of the Intifada (Sh. S., August 1990, pp. 114-115).

Deterioration in the PLO-American relations came with the advent of a “new international system” of an American-Soviet cooperation to pressure Palestinians and Israelis into negotiations. There was an agreement between the two superpowers on the shape of settlement as follows: Israel must relinquish the occupied territories including Jerusalem with security arrangements for Israel, illegality of Jewish settlements and the need for establishing a Palestinian state. Their disagreement touched on the way of settling the conflict. The US followed the Step-by-step policy through American-Soviet supervision and the Soviet Union, though not against it, preferred an international conference (Golan, 1991, pp. 176-177).

This direction of settlement gained strength with the collective spirit of the “new world system” tested in the Gulf crisis of 1990. Former enemies joined in one camp against the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. The new momentum was to be extended to the Arab-Israeli conflict though with less intensity. It was inevitable for the superpowers to settle the Palestine conflict by the new collective spirit. Political and security arrangements were to be made to achieve peace in the Middle East as part of the “new world system” which Gorbachev and Bush discussed in Helsinki to establish firmly after the Gulf crisis (Khalifa, Fall 1990, p. 69).

Although, the Gulf war—mostly fought by American forces—discredited Israel’s strategic significance, yet the US did not renew contacts with the PLO after the war ended in spring of 1991. American efforts concentrated on holding the international conference according to the 242, 338 resolutions with Palestinian presence through Jordan not the PLO. Egypt, Syria, and Jordan in consultation with the PLO supported American efforts for such conference without UN involvement and direct PLO participation. The Arab, especially the Syrian acceptance of the American role, encouraged Baker to visit the region in July 1991 to narrow Arab-Israeli differences. He found out that Palestinians in the territories would

not be able to participate without PLO endorsement (Shahin, September 1991, pp. 112-113).

Baker realized that Palestinians in the territories insisted that the PLO must represent them and his diplomacy would fail if ignored it. The PLO had to be brought in the process gradually. His efforts in the later part of 1991 focused on convincing Israel of behind the scene PLO participation in negotiations. Similarly, he convinced Palestinians of accepting Israeli demand of indirect PLO involvement in the planned Madrid conference. His visits in the fall of 1991 worked on the assumption of not fully giving what Palestinians and Israelis wanted. The complicated issues of East Jerusalem, Palestinian final status and Jewish settlements were to be resolved by their agreement through negotiations. However, he recognized the Palestinian political rights to be realized through two-staged negotiations instigated by the Madrid conference (Al-Madhun, November 1991, pp. 134-137).

The Soviet Union accepted the American formula in exchange for joining the US in supervising the Madrid conference. Soviet pressure was exerted on the PLO to play behind the scene role in the scheduled Madrid conference and to postponed discussion of the East Jerusalem issue. To strengthen its clout in the conference, Moscow declared its readiness to resume diplomatic ties cut with Israel in 1967 (H. N., November 1991, p. 113).

By American-Soviet cooperation within the "new world system", they could bring Palestinians and Israelis to negotiations in Madrid on October 30, 1991. Arabs, Palestinians and Israelis were to negotiate on the basis of exchanging land for peace. The conference was to lay the foundation of a just and comprehensive solution to the Palestinian dilemma as the center of the Arab-Israeli hostility.

### **Hopes and Fears of the Madrid Conference**

By the time of Madrid conference, achieving the Palestinian self-determination became the litmus test of strength and honesty of local and international forces in settling the Arab-Israeli dilemma. It was made

clear that peace negotiations were to take place under an American-Soviet umbrella and not the UN. Still parties going to the conference held on to their basic positions regarding the conflict, but with the hope to reach a compromise on general principles for a negotiated settlement. Although, every thing was subject to discussion, but without implementing decisions. The conference was more of a testing ground of intentions than seemed to be a sure way of ending the conflict.

As the parties were playing the political game, the Intifada was raging against Israel to remind them of Palestinian determination for independence. The Palestinian resistance escalated in term of techniques, scope and organization to enhance the PLO position regarding the conference. Attacks of bombs, bullets, knives and rocks against Israeli soldiers increased during the weeks of deliberations preceding the conference. Particular about the attacks was the rising participation of women willing to pay heavy price for their country. Between August and October 1991, more women were killed, arrested and jailed for attacking Israeli soldiers in Nablus, Jerusalem, Jenin and Ramella. Women sacrifices were part of a national effort to make life unbearable to Israelis in the territories. This was coupled by fedayeen attacks against Israel across the borders of Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. Israel reacted with more repression of Palestinians under occupation and in Lebanon to deprive them of political gains from military activities (Sayigh, November 1991, pp. 116-121).

Like in the military field, Israel attempted to undermine the Palestinian national rights in the political arena of Madrid conference. It stipulated its attendance of the conference by preventing the PLO participation in it, and not discussing Jerusalem and Palestinian state. For tactical reasons, the US accepted such conditions to get Arabs, Palestinians and Israelis started on a long way to peace. However, it did not accept Israeli conditions as final positions in negotiations and likewise rejected those of the other side (Al-Abdallah, November 1991, pp. 123-127). Yet, it assured Palestinians of their political identity and rights, their capacity to decide their fate without imposing on them unwanted representatives, nor would it accept Israeli annexation of East Jerusalem or preventing

Palestinian outsiders from participating in the conference guided by the UN resolutions 242, 338 and exchanging land for peace (Al-Madhun, November 1991, p. 137).

Peace for Israel and land for Arabs was the driving force of Bush policy which the Shamir government rejected to be the formula of settlement. Hence, it was for Bush to twist Israel's arm in order to convene a conference accepted by the other side. The most effective weapon of bringing Israel to sense was to hit it in finance. He opposed giving Israel a ten billion dollar loan unless it accepted his conditions for holding the Madrid conference which would enhance American interest in the Middle East. The loan was postponed for four months starting with September in order to prevent Israel from using money for building settlements, create budget imbalance and weaken the Likud government in the coming Knesset election. Jewish pressure in Congress could not stop Bush from playing his role in serving American interests in the region (Bustami, November 1991, pp. 128-130).

Israel complied with the Bush condition of holding the peace conference on the basis of land for peace. It could not risk to stand as the only party opposing the conference. Arab sides, especially, Syria and the PLO demanded American assurances respecting the Palestinian rights as realized by a comprehensive settlement unlike what happened in the Camp David agreement of Egypt and Israel. With the agreement of parties, the US and the Soviet Union issued invitations for attending the Madrid conference to reach comprehensive, permanent and just peace (Shahin, November 1991, pp. 104-106).

The conference was held on November 30, 1991 in Madrid-Spain where parties presented conflicting demands and was the role of Bush and Gorbachev as the organizers to bring them to a compromise through persuasion not force. The head of Palestinian delegation Haider Abed al-Ashafi spoke of the necessity of fulfilling the internationally supported Palestinian right in a state with East Jerusalem its capital in the 1967 borders which the Intifada came to bring about. Palestinians wherever they resided composed one people led by the PLO which was recognized

World-wide as the incarnation of their unity. He maintained that a just solution was to be based on the UN Partition resolution 181 of 1947, 242 of 1967 and 338 of 1973(Al-Shafi, Fall 1991, p. 206).

These resolutions also besides resolution 425 on Lebanon were the points of emphasis for the Jordanian foreign minister Kamel Abu Jaber who called on Israel to withdraw from all Arab lands in exchange for its peace. Israeli settlements must be dismantled and Palestinian refugees must be able to return. The Palestinian people should be allowed to decide their fate on their homeland and Jordan was not Palestine (Abu-Jaber, Fall, 1991, p202).

Palestinian rights were points of departure for the Syrian foreign minister Faruq al-Shara who urged Israel to respect the UN resolution 194 on Palestinian return and other resolutions on their self-determination. It must abide by resolutions 242, 338, and 476, 497 revoking Israeli annexation of Jerusalem and Golan and 425 pulling out of Lebanon. He affirmed that Israel must leave all Arab lands of 1967 in order to reach comprehensive, just and honorable peace (Al-Shara, Fall 1991, p. 219). Withdrawing from all Arab lands and recognizing the Palestinian people was the central message of the Egyptian foreign minister Amr Musa. He considered the Palestinian issue as the core of conflict with Israel and a just solution must be according to international law and the UN resolutions 242 and 338(Musa, Fall 1991, p. 195).

Against all Arab demands, Israel declared it will not withdraw according to resolutions 242, 338 and others because the Arabs had lots of land with many times more people than Israel. For Palestinian Arabs, they had to end their Intifada in return for local autonomy and Palestinian outsiders must be settled wherever they were. The Arab states and Israel must engage in direct negotiations to sign peace treaties for mutual economic benefit and peace (Shamir, Fall 1991, p. 199).

Task of the US and the Soviet Union was to reconcile the diagonal positions of Arabs /Palestinians and Israelis. President Bush sought to bridge the gap with their compromise through direct negotiations on the basis of the UN resolutions 242 and 338. The parties must proceed

unpressured toward a final settlement of returning Arab lands for recognition of Israel. The Palestinians must be able to control their fate through two-staged five year plan satisfying to Jordan and Israel. Defensible borders between Israel and its neighbors were to be determined by negotiations. Solution of the conflict must rest on justice and peace (Bush, Fall 1991, p. 186).

The American position was supported by Gorbachev in cooperative spirit of the new world system. The conference would not succeed, he said, if any party exploited it at the expense of others and peace would not be permanent if the Palestinian people was not respected (Gorbachev, Fall 1991, p. 190).

Palestinians had mixed reactions to the Madrid conference according to their political philosophy. The official PLO reactions was of two kinds, support and opposition. On the supportive side, Mahmud Abas (Abu Mazin), member of the executive committee and head of the international and Arab relations department in the PLO supported the conference without PLO official participation, though, it practically directed the Palestinian delegation. The conference reflected a new American approach to implement the resolutions and lessen reliance on Israel after the Gulf war. The conference could be useful if Arabs presented a united stand to solve the Palestinian problem. It turned the tide against Israel and gave an independent appearance of the Palestinian people. Those who opposed it were not convincing and did not give an alternative to peace (Abas, Fall 1991, pp. 106-109).

Another PLO executive Abedallah Hurani supported the Madrid conference for giving the chance of creating a Palestinian state. This became possible with the coming of the new world order dominated by the US which wanted to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict. The conference was the first step in a long process Israel will try to undermine (Hurani, Fall 1990, pp. 130-132).

History of Israel's uncommitment to peace and the automatic American pro-Israeli policy taught other PLO members to reject the Madrid

conference. Nayef Hawatmeh leader of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine considered the event a means of forcing Israeli conditions with American help on the Arabs and the Palestinians. More than two-thirds of Palestinians were not represented in it and ignored the Palestinian right for return. The Palestinian people was reduced to a minority living in Israel by subjecting them to an Israeli-invented autonomy. Instead, Hawatmeh urged for Palestinian-Arab unity and continuation of the Intifada against Israel (Hawatmeh, Fall 1991, pp. 149-151).

In the same vein, the deputy of the general secretary of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine Abu Ali Mustafa attacked the conference as a surrender of Arabs and Palestinians to Israel and the US in the wake of the Gulf war. The conference will legitimize imperialist gains by siding with the Palestinian issue through limited autonomy to perpetuate the Israeli occupation (Mustafa, Fall 1991, pp. 114-115).

Imposing Israeli conditions with American collaboration on Arabs and Palestinians would be the only outcome of the Madrid conference in the eyes of the Fateh executive Ilias Shufani. After the Gulf crisis, in his view, it was demanding of the US to bring Arabs, Palestinians and Israelis in one camp to complete its dominance against Europe and Japan. In its international scheme, Israel remained an American post against Arab interests in the region, and the Palestinians will lose unity as the price for being integrated in it. The conference will divide Palestinians and end their Intifada as a strategic Israeli goal (Shaufani, Fall 1991, pp. 116-121).

The strongest opposition to the conference, came from the Islamic Hamas movement whose spokesman Ibrahim Ghushhe warned of disastrous results. The conference would stop the long Palestinian struggle against Israel without a fruit. The Palestinian people should learn from the Vietnamese and Algerian experiences in defeating Israel and the Intifada is the way for unity and victory. Let the opponents of Madrid conference continue to exist; they might at some points become the bulwark against the American-Israeli hegemony in the region (Gushhe, Fall 1991, pp. 112-

113).

Like Palestinians in and outside the territories, the Israeli- ruled 1948-Palestinians were divided on the conference, but mostly supportive. Some supported it as long as it will lead to a state for their compatriots without leaving their homes in Israel. Among the supporters were parliamentarians of different parties like Mohammed Mi'ari and Abed al-Wahab Darawshe; also Islamic leader Sheikh Abedallah, Nimer Darwish and the communist party secretary Tawfiq Tubi. They called on Israel to comply with the UN resolutions in withdrawing from the Arab lands, setting up a Palestinian state and allowing Palestinian return. Such goals, however, other 1948 Palestinians maintained Israel will not permit their achievement. The general secretary of Home Sons Movement, Raja Egbaria opposed the conference as an Israeli-American trick to replace the international legitimacy of a Palestinian state and return with local autonomy under Jordanian-Israeli control (Al-Omari, Fall 1991, pp. 157-162).

The Madrid conference was bound to take place following the continuation of the Intifada, defeat of Saddam Hussein in Iraq, and the collapse of the Soviet Union, which provided the US with the opportunity to use its influence on Arabs, Palestinians and Israelis who could have not been brought together had they been left on their own. Israel succumbed to American pressure for its financial needs and the Arabs went along for their military weakness which put the two sides in a situation salvageable only by the US.

Thus, president Bush and secretary Baker were able to whip the parties into a conference of compromise between Arab lands and peace of Israel, but without defining the exact shape of settlement or mechanism of its implementation which were left for negotiations. For the first time, Palestinian national rights were affirmed with simultaneous Israeli-Palestinian presence in an international conference. The door was open for political deals to enshrine their national separation; but with a mutual coexistence in Palestine. There started in earnest the process which will lead to a Palestinian state in the 1967 occupied territories in return for

accepting Israel.

### **conclusion**

The research has analysed the Intifada as a unique Palestinian revolutionary experience against an unusual Israeli occupation for the aim of achieving political independence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. It provides invaluable data and answers about crucial aspects of the Intifada previous research failed to do.

Among the findings of this study is that Israel found itself faced with a Palestinian nationalism in its highest revolutionary form after believing it was ended with the years of occupation which in fact produced the Intifada to give “ Palestinianism” a new life. Thus, the Palestinians became a self-run society, strengthening the imperative for a Palestinian state.

Also, the Intifada started the dynamic to force Israel reconcile with determined Palestinians to fight to the end. Israel had to deal with a Palestinian national rebirth movement encompassing a new political culture of social cohesion, political polarity and modernity. Truly, the success of the Intifada was to be judged by its comprehensive remodeling of the Palestinian society on one national ideology of self-reliance. Palestinians of different political views were solidly aligned in a national front to end the Israeli occupation.

As the Intifada gathered strength, Palestinian self-awareness deepened. Palestinians felt confident that they held the key to changing the status quo as their power on the ground was taking concrete shape regionally and internationally. Israelis began questioning the wisdom of colonizing the Palestinian people. An Israeli anti-occupation movement began developing, though more in the Labor ranks than in the Likud, to recognize the Palestinian national reality. Israeli recognition of Palestinian self-determination went in proportion to the intensity of the Intifada which matched the intensity of the Israeli oppression. The Israeli oppression and recognition were inclusive factors of cause and effect of the Intifada.

With the Intifada running its own political momentum, the international community had to combine it with the resolutions 242, 338 as the basis for a Palestinian-Israeli reconciliation. This was the position of the U.S, Europe and the Soviet Union which highlighted the Palestinian national rights as the point of departure for a peaceful settlement.

Under American pressure, Israel accepted to negotiate with the Palestinians in Madrid in 1991. The conference legitimized the Palestinian national rights and affirmed the PLO leadership through supervising the Palestinian negotiations. Palestinians looked at the Madrid conference as a political Intifada with world participation to build their state; while Israel tried to use it for containing the Intifada. It equalized the Palestinian and Israeli national interest of mutual existence. The conference was a direct result of the Intifada without which it could not have happened

The Palestinian self-determination could not have been solidified had it not been for the Intifada which mobilized the Palestinian people on a national scale unprecedented before. In the absence of Intifada, the Israeli occupation would have been consolidated to the point of annexing the territories to Israel as a Zionist goal of controlling all Palestine. The Intifada was the midwife of the future Palestinian state which has since been developing to a full-fledged reality in the 1967 occupied territories. Unlike Zionism brought aggression, destruction and racism to Palestine, The Palestinian Intifada stood for liberation, human continuation and independence. It was the example of a just revolution to be replicated when needed anywhere.

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