The Internal Palestinian Split: Thinking Differently about the Conflict with Israel

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The years 1987-2000, from the start of the first intifada to just before the second intifada, were the formative period that shaped the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as we know it today – a dispute over borders rather than an existential conflict, with a significant religious but not necessarily hegemonic dimension. An analysis of relations between Fatah and Hamas during those years reveals a struggle that challenged Hamas and sometimes even forced it to accept a status inferior to that of Fatah. An examination of their discourse and how each side dealt with mutual allegations shows a link between the friction within the Palestinian arena and the processes of pragmatism, and even a kind of acceptance of the reality. In the context of this internal Palestinian friction, Israel was and remains a central player, with influence on the outcome of the competition between these two organizations.

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The conflict with Israel has shaped Palestinian society for over 100 years. The conflict was the basis of solidarity and an internal way of life that developed among various sectors, and the source of the ethos that shaped this society as a national entity. Yet even while the narrative that has been transmitted from generation to generation continues to unify all elements of Palestinian society, it has fractured, as the discourse on maintaining national principles and loyalty to the chosen path collides with pragmatic positions that recognize the limits of these principles. Although Palestinian history has known disputes, crises, and enmities since before the arrival of the

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Zionist movement, it seems that the constant friction with Israel since the start of Zionist immigration to the country (early in the twentieth century) has intensified the challenge that Palestinians have had to confront, and created numerous tensions within Palestinian society. It finds itself partly surprised, partly helpless in the face of Zionist initiative and activity, and is hard pressed to identify common denominators for uniting the public around a shared goal. As time passes, the challenge grows and the internal disputes become harsher and more difficult to address.

These internal Palestinian rivalries have undermined societal strength and considerably weakened the opposition to the Jewish presence. It was only the rise of the Fatah movement and its takeover of the PLO (1968) – which until then was controlled by Arab countries – that for the first time provided the Palestinians with one address. The slogan "PLO – the sole representative of the Palestinian people" was not easy to accomplish,[1] but was a huge achievement in the eyes of many Palestinians. It expressed not only a change in the pattern of the struggle against Israel, but also a sense of a common goal and internal solidarity, which until then was perceived as an unattainable objective.

Fatah as an agent of change has over the years enjoyed the status of the first among equals or a firstborn: nobody questioned its hegemony and most of the public identified with its national objectives. The reality in which there is an alternative Palestinian entity, Hamas, has challenged Fatah and its ruling status. This reality has split the Palestinian people, sharpening the differences between the camps and blurring the clan-local dimension that was more dominant in the past. Until 1987 there was nobody to challenge the hegemony of Fatah, which was perceived as the expression of the pan-Palestinian voice. The challenge posed by Hamas to Fatah also undermined the exclusivity of the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people and presented an alternative to its hegemony. The Hamas victory in the 2006 elections revealed the almost equal status of these two organizations among the public, something that couldn't be quantified in the 1987-2000 years.[2]

The internal Palestinian split along the lines that have become familiar since 1987 and the friction it creates between the two camps has generated changes in the positions of the parties regarding the conflict with Israel and the motivation to continue the struggle. The split is stronger than the direct friction with Israel because of the internal weakness that it exposes between the parties and the growing recognition in recent years,

particularly in Hamas, of its inability to resolve the Palestinian problem without cooperating with its rival.[3] Therefore, the call for reconciliation and unity is directed at both organizations from all parts of society.

The Split: A Kind of Nationalism?

"Since when is division a kind of nationalism?" cried a Hamas poster on August 18, 1988, a few days after King Hussein announced that Jordan would disengage from the West Bank.[4] The writers of the poster saw the Jordanian move as an action that damaged Arab unity and left the Palestinians alone to face Israel.[5]

In the first months of the intifada, Hamas already assessed that for the nationalist movement, the purpose was not to free Palestine from the river to the sea, as was generally thought before then, but to establish a Palestinian state alongside Israel.[6] Meanwhile the Unified National Command of the Intifada (UNC), which included all the PLO factions, issued a proclamation on August 5, 1988, praising the Jordanian disengagement from the West Bank as a highly important achievement of the "great popular uprising," which would strengthen the status of the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people.[7] One month later (September 6, 1988), the UNC criticized Hamas for its efforts to decide its own agenda and impose additional strike days on the public, which "broke ranks, damaged unity, and weakened the joint struggle." This proclamation also called on Hamas to unite with "the fighting position."[8] Another proclamation published on November 20, 1988, a few days after the declaration of Palestinian independence, addressed Hamas from a patronizing position, saying: "The Command calls on a number of fundamentalist elements to put the national interest… of our people…before the foundations and the interests of their factions."[9]

The truth is that the organizers of the intifada did not intend to split the Palestinian public. They were looking for a new way and an alternative to the Palestinian power that was lost in the dispersion caused by the 1982 Lebanon War, after the PLO was expelled from Lebanon. The Palestinian arena was left with a weak, scattered leadership, far from the center of events, and subject to harsh internal criticism due to the difficult Palestinian situation.[10] Enter the intifada's leaders, most of whom were graduates of Israeli prisons and academics with a nationalist political identity shaped by Fatah and the Popular Democratic Front who were looking for new and more effective ways to combat Israel.[11] Some had used their time in prison to study and acquire an education. They discovered the history of

the Zionist movement, which led them to recognize the importance of public opinion in Israel and its influence on the government's decision making process. They also learned about the importance of international relations, with the emphasis on the special symbiosis between the Israel and the United States, and of backing from the international community, which continued to demand that the Palestinians lay down their arms and answer Israeli calls for a peace agreement.

Nonetheless, the intifada became the start of the struggle for power between Fatah and Hamas, while ironically, the general population experienced a sense of exhilaration and optimism at the display of brotherhood and unity. The struggle intensified as the differences grew sharper and Hamas succeeded in strengthening its position as an alternative to the Fatah approach. Until then Fatah had represented the consensus. It defined itself as a national movement and refused to adopt any social, economic, or religious ideology. It wanted to be a home for every Palestinian.[12] Hamas, on the other hand, managed to persuade many people that there was a solid alternative, religious-nationalist in nature. In its writings and messages, Hamas stressed the fact that it was both Palestinian and Islamic, and was not deterred by criticism from its rivals in Fatah for not including the word Palestine in its name (Hamas is an acronym for Islamic Opposition Movement in Arabic), i.e., its main priority was not Palestine, but the Islamization of Palestinian society.

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The rivalry reached a new height with the Palestinian Declaration of Independence in Algeria (November 15, 1988), with its change of direction that for Hamas confirmed its concerns. The proclaimed goal was no longer the removal of Israel, a Palestinian state from the river to the sea, non-recognition of Israel, and "revolution until victory," but a state alongside Israel based on cooperation, good neighborliness, and normalization. In the Declaration of Independence, the Palestine National Council actually clarified that it accepted the partition plan that was rejected in 1947 and wanted to establish a state alongside Israel, explaining that it respected all the resolutions of the UN Security Council and the General Assembly – including resolutions that had been rejected by the PLO, such as 242 and 338, calling for Israel to withdraw from all or some of the territories captured in 1967.[13] Senior

Palestinian figures spoke about the 1967 borders and expressed a wish to inform Israel of these ideas.

The demonstrations of support and victory rallies all over the Gaza Strip and the West Bank strengthened the UNC. For the many who considered the PLO as their sole representative, the way of the intifada was the correct move, because of the interest it aroused in the international community and the growing expectation of an Israeli response. Hamas was alert and did not ignore the broad support for its rival, sensing that the challenge was greater than before the declaration, because it now had to struggle for the hearts of the public. Therefore, Hamas made an attempt to combine the idea of a state within the 1967 lines with its Islamic approach.[14] The intention was to establish a state on condition this did not involve recognition of Israel and did not form the basis for ending the conflict,[15] but matters developed in a different direction. The frequent discussions between representatives of the PLO-supporting nationalist stream and many groups in Jewish society in Israel, the many visits by Israeli groups to the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, the mutual satisfaction of participants and broad international interest – all these showed Hamas the depth of the turnaround. It was no longer a matter of intentions or ideas to be discussed, but of policy that was about to be implemented.

Thus a serious rift in the Palestinian home was created, which to some extent weakened the struggle waged by the leaders of the intifada. There was a noticeable decline in response to the proclamations issued by both organizations, which were tests of respective strength. If a strike took place on the date specified by a proclamation, it demonstrated support for the organization that issued it. When the call was heeded by very few, the organization appeared to be losing strength. Gradually, the organizations understood that strike days were a heavy burden on the people and limited them, but this did not reduce the mutual tension. Accusations of treachery, normalization, defeatism, deceit of the public, and abandonment of sacred national principles were repeated again and again in Hamas journals and at public appearances. Hamas figures refused to meet with anyone from Fatah or the PLO, considered them to be traitors, and claimed that "we can't sit together with them." In other words, "the PLO must not get the impression that Hamas will follow them to a political settlement."[16]

Nevertheless, both sides wanted to avoid violent confrontation. Hamas feared that hostilities would exacerbate their inferior status in the public opinion. They preferred to be content with expressions of protest, writing

critical texts and holding mass rallies. Their rivals in Fatah and in the UNC were also unwilling for the situation to become violent, although the daily friction was stronger than any requests and instructions given to activists. Although Hamas was a young, fresh, and small force compared to Fatah, it posed a palpable challenge to Fatah and the PLO. It broke the dichotomy between Islam and politics dictated by Arab regimes and gave legitimacy to this combination. Fatah had to deal with a rival that was proposing the same ideas but arguing that implementation had failed so far because they were "cut off" from the religion.[17] But according to the national school of thought, the combination of religion and nationalism brought the risk of exclusion. Through its "totalism," Islam ignores and even suppresses the rights of non-Muslims, gives them inferior status, and seeks to impose religion on daily life. The Arabism that had developed into a national idea was intended to some degree to serve as an alternative to the comprehensiveness of Islam.

The rise of Hamas was the first expression of the growing strength of emerging political Islam and aroused much hope among those for whom religion was a central element of their identity.[18] Hamas accused its rivals of corruption, neglecting the public interest, abandoning the refugees and weak members of Palestinian society, and concentrating on internal and personal matters. These accusations found an eager audience and strengthened the public status of Hamas. The heaviest challenge for Hamas came when the Oslo Accords were signed. Hamas leaders wondered how to continue the opposition to Israel without becoming embroiled in a fight with the Palestinian Authority, and how to frustrate the agreement without being drawn into a civil war. The answer was to postpone the larger conflict to a later stage, and meanwhile to undermine public trust in the accords.

The Erosive Friction

The directives Hamas issued just before the arrival of the PLO leadership to the region in April 1994 emphasized the importance of avoiding friction with any Palestinian government element, while continuing and even intensifying the armed struggle with Israel. The instruction was to avoid any conflict with the Palestinian security mechanisms, even at the cost of "turning the other cheek."[19] On the one hand, Hamas was concerned about an internal conflict in which it would lose the public support it enjoyed at the time, and on the other hand, it saw it as a test for the PLO and its leader, Arafat. Would they stand against Hamas activists, forbid "opposition to the occupation," and appear to the public in the service of Israel, or would

they be restrained, look the other way, and not use all the pressure that Israel and the other observers who signed the accords expected from them?

The reality that developed in the first months after the establishment of the Palestinian Authority played into the hands of Hamas. True, Israel withdrew from the Strip, but the terror attack by Islamic Jihad less than two weeks later and other attacks by Hamas forced Israel to make the process of crossing in and out of the Strip more difficult. Gradually quantities of goods and numbers of people crossing the border between Gaza and Israel declined. There were big losses to traders whose goods were held up at the border, and the loss of freedom of movement drastically affected daily life within the Strip. Employment rates dropped, and with them the purchasing power of the population. Commercial life was severely disrupted, and there was a serious crisis of expectations. The high hopes that prevailed just before the Oslo Accords were signed, that Gaza would flourish and "be a new Singapore," seemed unreal. The anger toward the Palestinian Authority intensified, together with the distrust of Israel. Israel was accused of bringing the PLO leadership from Tunisia to release it from the burden of responsibility for the Strip, and not necessarily in order to bring peace. There was a strong sense of suffocation, and the Strip was defined as one large prison. The argument that was already being sounded between Abu Mazen and Arafat about what message the Authority wished to send to the Palestinian opposition became central to public discourse. Many people supported Abu Mazen, who wanted Arafat to take a strong line against these rival organizations and renounce the military option he still propounded, as it was contrary to the signed accords; they criticized Israel for not putting Arafat in his place and exposing the double talk he used in his contacts with these organizations.[20]

The message received by the public also worked in Hamas's favor – the Oslo Accords were not intended to improve the situation for ordinary people, and the signatories were not guided by the good of the people but by what was good for the PLO and Fatah. Arafat clearly wanted to convince his detractors that he retained a military option, in order to maintain his image as a fighter and revolutionary. But Israel's avoidance, for reasons of its own security, of a tougher approach to Arafat was perceived as a conspiracy to serve both parties to the accords.

The situation became more complex because of the negative effects on public opinion within Israel. There too a strong opposition demanded a halt to implementation of the Oslo Accords due to the terror attacks. The

opposition saw this as definitive proof that the Palestinians were unwilling or unable to fulfill their commitments, and that signed agreements did not indicate their true intentions. Hamas saw that terror attacks served its purpose: they increased the public credit that it needed, and also intensified opposition within Israeli society to Oslo.

The murder of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on November 4, 1995 marked the start of a change in the relationship between the Palestinian Authority and Hamas. Arafat, who saw Rabin as a partner and had developed a relationship of trust, felt that an important piece of the edifice they had constructed together had collapsed. However, like many Israelis, he believed that the opposition would pay the price in the elections planned for May 1996. As time passed, however, Arafat learned the extent of the danger of failing to take action against the terror attacks. Hamas exploited the confusion of the Palestinian Authority, saw the murder as a positive development, and continued its efforts to frustrate implementation of Oslo. It carried out a number of terror attacks that seriously undermined the Israeli electorate's trust in the Palestinians. The result was that the opponents of the accords were victorious in the elections, which raised a large question mark over Oslo's further implementation. From now on, Israeli delegates to talks with the Palestinians were preoccupied with how to prevent implementation of this or that clause of the accords without actually breaching them, rather than how to implement them in a way that would satisfy both sides. In other words, the motivation changed and there was a growing demand on the Palestinians to prove their intentions.

It was only after these elections that Arafat understood what he refused to recognize previously, that the destruction that Hamas and its supporters were trying to cause to his political plans was substantive, and that unless he took stronger action against them and other opposition groups, he would lose his government. Indeed, the Palestinian Authority's campaign of pursuing and breathing down the neck of the opposition after the Israeli elections was unprecedented. Large numbers of Hamas members were arrested and imprisoned, weapons were confiscated, there was closer monitoring of the money coming into their accounts and how it was used, and activities were monitored. Cooperation with Israeli security mechanisms improved, as well as the Palestinian Authority's image in the eyes of the international community and Arab countries.

Not long after, Hamas threw up its hands. At a press conference in October 2000, leader Ahmed Yassin attributed the small number of attacks

carried out by his organization at the start of the al-Aqsa intifada to the fact that Hamas "suffered from past problems that everyone recognizes."[21] The Hamas journal *Felastine al-Muslama* included discussions of the question "has the armed resistance lost its relevance." Public support for Hamas waned and the organization cut back on its terror attacks against Israel. It began a process of self-reflection that included a prominent element of coming to terms with the limits of its power against the Arafat-led Palestinian Authority. For a short time it looked as if the struggle between the two was over, and Hamas leaders recognized they would have to formulate a new policy and use other means. In media interviews during the period of intense pressure from the Palestinian Authority, Yassin and other leaders admitted their weakness and inability to deal with what they called a powerful four-way coalition between the Palestinian Authority, Israel, the United States, and the international community and Arab states, mainly Jordan.

In fact, this was the end of the first chapter in a relationship fueled by anger and blood, which began with the first intifada and ended before the second intifada. Hamas put its head down, aware that circumstances were not in its favor. It believed that this was temporary, and better to lose a little now and gain a lot later, estimating that Israel would never give the Palestinians what they wanted. The Palestinians had to prove their credibility and the link between words and actions, and that they could control the territories handed over to them. Hamas contended that Israel was simultaneously enjoying the status of referee and party to the agreement, and this view was widely held among the Palestinian public. Arafat and his people believed that the third parties acting as brokers – the United States and Europe – would restore the balance to this asymmetry. Since then, Hamas has never stopped arguing that it is not possible to reach a settlement without equal status between the parties.

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The situation indeed developed as Hamas foresaw. Talks between Israel and the PLO failed, there were renewed hostilities and bloodshed between Israel and the Palestinians, and Hamas returned as a much stronger player, with greater public legitimacy. Thus, began the second chapter of blood-stained friction between the two Palestinian organizations, fed by distrust and a large element of competition. Ultimately, there was a striking dissonance

between each side's understanding of the limitations of power and the need to unite, and the barriers that threatened organizational identity and prevented such unity.

The Lessons

The intifada that erupted in late 1987 in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank could be labeled as "the first Arab Spring." But unlike the Arab Spring of the twenty-first century, the first intifada led to changes in the thinking of both sides. It created a reality in which the masses led the leadership, rather than vice versa, and decisions followed. In other words, it was a bottom-up process, where the initiative moved from the popular level to the PLO leadership. It also posed a different kind of challenge to Israel, and in 1988, the Palestinian Declaration of Independence questioned what had been the major Israeli assumption until then, that the Palestinians would never accept its presence in the region.

Nonetheless, it seems that the main change took place within the Palestinian community. The Declaration of Independence posed a very difficult challenge to Hamas and other opposition elements. The public, so Hamas hoped, would tend to support it, because the Declaration of Independence clashed with national principles. But the public backed the move, gave the PLO credit, and was in fact the prop on which the process relied. PLO leaders and supporters believed that the link with Israel and the political progress would lead to economic prosperity and serve as leverage to pressure Hamas and the other opposition groups, who kept warning against what they called capitulation to Israel and international patronage. In other words, the added value that the PLO had and has over Hamas in the deep enmity between them is the partnership with Israel. When this partnership proceeds constructively with positive outcomes, it can remove many Palestinian obstacles buried deep in their religion, history, and scars caused by the conflict with Israel.

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The PLO's abandonment of the demand to remove Israel shattered the Palestinian package. There was no longer one end of the spectrum that can lead to a solution of the Palestinian problem without the other end, and in the absence of unity, weakness becomes paralysis. In the eyes of parts of the Palestinian public, Israel – the third element in this equation – has failed to do its job. It did not stand with the PLO and did

not show its rival, Hamas, that it had little chance of defeating the party with which it had signed agreements. It is true that Arafat, as head of the Palestinian system, through his double talk and retention of the military option, severely disrupted the process, but there was much anger toward him in the Arab media, among the PLO leadership, and above all in the Palestinian street, who knew Israel and believed it would not support such conduct and would play the role of a mentor to put anyone who strayed back on the right track. Thus it is not surprising that Ahmed Yassin and his Hamas followers spoke in terms of surrender when Arafat's mechanisms became more aggressive against the organization (1997-2000). Hamas understood that Arafat relied on the broad shoulders of Israel and the international community. They saw Arafat's use of Israeli and international backing as a change in the rules of the internal Palestinian game, and willingness to risk the organization's image of revolutionary fighter. The public backing for Arafat's moves contributed to the weakness of Hamas.

Reality saw another reversal when the second intifada broke out in 2000. But the lesson to be learned from these developments is that Israel was and remains a central player in the internal Palestinian arena. In the eyes of many Palestinians, Israel was part of the dowry that the PLO brought to the dispute with the opposition groups, and the critical mass that would decide the dispute. If Israel kept its eyes on the Palestinian public and supported the path of recognition and negotiations chosen by the PLO, it would show that public support for this move was correct. If it devoted its resources only to the fight against terror and the armed opposition to Hamas, it would erode any remaining Palestinian support for the Oslo process and the status of the PLO leadership.

A decision in the Fatah-Hamas dispute is therefore essential in order to achieve any political settlement. Although Arafat's conduct did not help to implement this lesson, the expectations of the Israeli public were high in those years, and today – years after Arafat – implementation of the lesson is still of much relevance.

Notes

1 At the Rabat Conference in 1974 the Arab League recognized the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people.

2 The period from 2000 to 2017, which is not examined in this article, shows the reasons why internal reconciliation is so hard to achieve, the growing friction between Fatah and Hamas, how Hamas is regaining its strength, and the struggle for hegemony in the Palestinian arena.

3 A few months after the Hamas electoral victory, Ismail Haniyeh, Chairman of the Hamas Political Bureau, stated in a speech at the National Dialogue Conference in Gaza that was designed to find a solution to the internal rift that hampered the creation of a government under his leadership: "There is one fact that nobody disputes, that there are two main forces on the Palestinian street – Fatah and Hamas, who both enjoy wide popular support... There is no home without family members with allegiances to these two forces." See *WAFA*, May 25, 2006, http://www.wafa.ps/ar_page.aspx?id=U3Yowqa63434337450aU3Yowq; similar sentiments were expressed by Khaled Mishal, Haniyeh's predecessor as Chairman, in the years following the coup in Gaza. He often stressed: "We were wrong when we thought we could rule alone... Any thought of an alternative is a mistake... cooperation is the solution." See *24*, September 25, 2016, https://bit.ly/2Cl5rmx.

4 Ze'ev Schiff and Ehud Yaari, *Intifada* (Tel Aviv: Shocken, 1990), p. 351.

5 The Jordanian disengagement came a few months after the first intifada broke out. King Hussein had started processes of "Jordanization" some years earlier, and saw the intifada as an opportunity to sharpen the distinction between Jordanian identity and Palestinian identity and to rid himself of responsibility for the fate of the West Bank.

6 See, for example, a Hamas proclamation distributed on February 23, 1988, a few months after the start of the first intifada, which criticizes those who "run and pant after Shultz and his envoys... to close miserable deals behind the scenes." See Shaul Mishal and Reuven Aharoni, *Stones aren't Everything: The Intifada and the Proclamation Weapon* (Tel Aviv: Hidekel, 1989), p. 209.

7 Ibid., p. 134.

8 Ibid., p. 142.

9 Ibid., p. 159.

10 At a speech to the PLO Central Council (October 27, 2018), Abu Mazen encouraged his audience by saying that the period following the expulsion from Lebanon (1982) was harder for the PLO than the present period. He reminded them that it was not possible for PLO institutions to assemble in 1984, due to the absence of a quorum. He said that people denied their membership in the organization and were unwilling to participate in meetings. They had to recruit members in order to re-activate these institutions.

11 Mutzafa Kabhaa, *The Palestinians: A Dispersed People* (Raanana: Open University, 2010), p. 282.

12 See, for example, a review published in *Arabi-21*, January 26, 2016, https://bit.ly/2HatzxO .

13 "Palestinian Declaration of Independence (1988)," Declaration Project, http://www.declarationproject.org/?p=397.

14 See Matti Steinberg, *Facing their Fate: Palestinian National Consciousness 1967-2007* (Tel Aviv: Yediot Ahronot, 2008), p. 249.

15 See the Hamas journal *Felastin al-Muslama*, December 1988; see also Wael abed Elhamid el Mabhouh, *Opposition in the Political Thought of Hamas Movement 1994-2006* (Beirut: al-Zaytuna, 2012), pp. 99-100, which reviews the Hamas position on the political settlement issue, https://bit.ly/2CgjARO.

16 These statements are attributed to Khalil Koka of Hamas, who was expelled from Shati refugee camp in Gaza at the start of the first intifada, reached Jordan, and refused to meet with Arafat. See Schiff and Yaari, *Intifada*, p. 239.

17 Meir Litvak, "Hamas: Islam, Palestinian identity, and Jihad," in *Islam and Democracy in the Arab World*, ed. Meir Litvak (Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuhad, 1997), pp. 156-57.

18 Article 27 of the first Hamas Charter is very striking in its explanation of the difference between it, Fatah, and the national stream given the PLO's distance from Islam and its adoption of the idea of a secular state: "On the day that the PLO adopts Islam as a way of life we will be its soldiers," Schiff and Yaari, *Intifada*, p. 364.

19 Hamas, "Preliminary Paper: How to Avoid Physical Conflict without Losing the Right of Self Defense," September 1993.

20 See, for example, an article published by Abu Mazen in the East Jerusalem paper *al-Quds* a few years later, with its strong criticism of Arafat whom he accused of responsibility for all Palestinian problems since implementation of the accords began. "Directing the Intifada to a Military Track Diverted it from the Correct Track," *al-Quds*, November 27, 2002.

21 Sheik Ahmed Yassin: "Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades are ready, but the question is one of time. We do not expect the Arab and Islamic states to mobilize their armies for us," Hamas website, October 13, 2000.