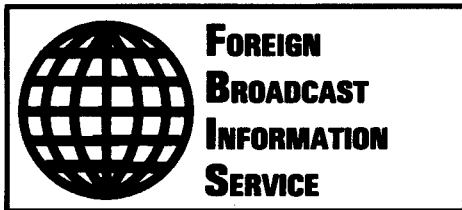


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5 April 1993



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Near East & South Asia

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

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Near East & South Asia

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PNC's al-Husayni Discusses U.S. Relations

93AF0441C Nicosia FILASTIN AL-THAWRAH in Arabic
21 Feb 93 pp 26-27

[Interview with PNC Member Dr. Hatim al-Husayni in Washington; date not given: "Hatim al-Husayni: I Am Optimistic About Palestinian Action in United States"]

[Text] Active community members help with the daily work of the negotiating delegation. Even those who have opposed and criticized the negotiations have not tried to obstruct the delegation's work.

We have had this interview on Palestinian action in the United States with Dr. Hatim al-Husayni, Palestine National Council [PNC] member, former director of the PLO Information Office in Washington, and former deputy chief of the PLO delegation to the United Nations.

[FILASTIN AL-THAWRAH] What is your viewpoint of the policy that Clinton, the new president, may enact, and what is the role of the Palestinian and Arab community in this regard?

[Husayni] President Bill Clinton represents a new and younger generation that opposed the Vietnam war and the Gulf war and the policy of Presidents Reagan and Bush, which was the "Cold War policy." Considering that human rights and democracy are the cornerstone of his policy, he has to fulfill what he has promised in order to prove actually that he is a true man of peace and that his policy is different from Bush's policy.

But he is surrounded by a team of advisers who support Israel, and these people will not permit him to alter the U.S. policy. The Jewish lobby supported President Clinton in the U.S. elections and backed him financially so that he would support Israel, would not pressure it, and would back up its political position in the coming negotiations.

I believe that the Palestinian-Arab community has to perform a difficult, important, and very responsible role, meaning that it has to face President Clinton and demand that he apply the new policy to Israel. This means exerting efforts to end the Israeli military occupation, defending Palestinian human rights, and enabling the Palestinian people to attain freedom and democracy. Human rights and democracy are, according to President Clinton's statements, the foundation of his policy.

There are now new young forces in President Clinton's administration and in the new U.S. Congress. We must talk to them, familiarize them with the facts, and inform them of the terror, killing, and torture to which Palestinian civilians are subjected in the occupied territories.

[FILASTIN AL-THAWRAH] But is the Palestinian community organized and capable of this political action? What is the position of this community's associations and organizations in the United States?

[Husayni] It is my belief that the Palestinian and Arab community has attained a sophisticated degree of organization and that it has influential national associations,

especially in Washington, the capital. The most important of these are the National Association of American Arabs, the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination League, and the Arab-American Institute. All of these operate through the Council of Presidents of Arab Associations in Washington. Notables in these associations have met with advisers to Clinton, the new president, and demanded recognition of and dialogue with the PLO and efforts for repatriation of Palestinian deportees. The council cooperates with a number of Arab ambassadors who defend the Palestinian cause, especially ambassadors of the countries participating in the negotiations.

Moreover, Palestinian communities in the various U.S. cities, including Chicago, New York, Los Angeles, Houston, and other cities, engage in significant information and political activity. There are also councils of Palestinian associations that coordinate efforts and lead the community toward escalating political activity. For example, demonstrations have been staged in these cities, especially in front of the United Nations in New York, against deportation.

However, this Palestinian and Arab activity in the United States needs greater organization and coordination. There are plans and proposals in this regard at all levels. I am optimistic that Palestinian action in the United States will accomplish new successes and will progress in the near future.

[FILASTIN AL-THAWRAH] What about the problems facing Palestinian action in the United States, and how can they be overcome?

[Husayni] Yes, there are numerous problems, and big ones, too. Some of them are connected with the community's social life, with raising children in U.S. society, with work and their residence, and with success of the businesses on which broad sectors of the community there rely. There are the problems of political action, of the disputes that surface at times between supporters of the Palestinian factions, and of the activity of Hamas supporters who criticize PLO supporters and the PLO political line. There are problems connected with how to organize the community, mobilize its efforts, and enhance financial donations to support the occupied territories, especially in wake of suspension of the aid from Kuwait and the Gulf. With determination, resolve, and work, there is a solution to all these problems. The Palestinian community is not frustrated or desperate. Inversely, it supports the intifadah with every means; it participates in national activities, and it responds to whatever is asked of it. It is the responsibility of the factions, especially of Hamas, to steer clear of provoking disputes in the U.S. arena, cooperate in efforts seeking to support the intifadah, and try to lead the Palestinian, Arab, and Islamic community toward influencing the administration policy, especially the policy of Clinton, the new president.

The Palestinian community centers, associations, and mosques try to deal with the community problems, especially the issues of instructing the community's children in

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their language, religion, and history. There are proposals to establish a Palestinian popular organization that channels the community's capabilities toward productive political action. But this requires awareness, a spirit of fraternity, cooperation by all, and putting public interest above private interest.

[FILASTIN AL-THAWRAH] What is your opinion of the role and effort of the Palestinian negotiation delegation in Washington, and has it interacted with the Palestinian community in the United States?

[Husayni] The Palestinian negotiation delegation has performed important and extensive information and political work in the United States, even though its members are preoccupied with the negotiations and even though their experience is new in this regard. Delegation members have visited various U.S. cities, held dozens of press conferences, addressed popular rallies, and met with U.S. associations. The Palestinian and Arab communities have responded to the delegation and provided it with facilities in and outside Washington. Some active community members have joined the delegation to help it with its daily work. Even those who had opposed and criticized the negotiations have not tried to impede the delegation's work. Rather, they have expressed their opinion positively.

Personally, I believe that we have to interact with the new U.S. administration because it represents change, and we want change. We want freedom, democracy, and human rights. Let me stress that the U.S. community must coordinate and unite the effort, support the intifadah, and support the PLO and provide it with all means of political and propaganda aid. The PLO is not responsible for the U.S. arena, which is a responsibility of the Palestinian community. Our kinsmen in Gaza and the West Bank need and ask for real support, not resounding slogans.

I believe that future of the Palestinian action in the United States is bright and that this action will accomplish the desired results.

National Conference To Be Held 'Soon'

93P50108A Doha AL-SHARQ in Arabic 18 Mar 93 p 7

[Excerpt] AL-SHARQ Exclusive—Informed Palestinian sources have told AL-SHARQ that a broad national conference will be held soon in Damascus before the beginning of the peace talks in Washington. These sources noted that the conference was agreed upon during Faruq Qaddumi's recent visit to Damascus. The conference will discuss the final Palestinian position in the peace process. The sources asserted that the conference will be held in the absence of Yasir 'Arafat. [passage omitted]

Hamas Organ Says PLO, Israel Agreed To Exile Fighters

92WR0124Z London FILSTIN AL-MUSLIMAH in Arabic Oct 92 pp 18-19

[Article by Ahmad Jamal: "Conspiracy To Liquidate Intifadah"]

[Excerpt] The issue of the fighters has become one of the most important issues affecting the intifadah and its effectiveness. The fighters, who are now the fortress of the intifadah, have become the target of a conspiracy to eliminate the intifadah. Their activities represent the cornerstone of the intifadah. The conspiracy started at the beginning of the peace negotiations, when the PLO leadership promised to halt acts of violence. To this end, a campaign was launched to cast doubts on the futility of many activities of the intifadah, such as the fighters' activities, the phenomena of the masked [fighters], and the assassination of collaborators, all under the pretext of rejecting violence.

In this context, confirmed information indicates that there were secret contacts, through Egypt, between the PLO leadership and the authorities of the Zionist occupation that led to an agreement to allow the fighters to give themselves up in return for amnesty or plea bargaining, under which the fighter would be exiled for a period of three to seven years, after which he would be allowed to return. This means disbanding the fighters and serving the occupation authorities that have long tried to disband the fighters. The incidents at al-Najah University are a clear example of this methodology. The Egyptian authorities continue to work as a go-between and deliver messages to both parties.

Reasons for Weakness

There were many factors that have weakened the fighters' work, including:

1. The PLO leadership's mistake of linking them to the peace process. This linkage doomed the fighters and ended the role they were playing. The attack against them by the most prominent members of the Palestinian delegation decreased their popularity. This was reflected in the extent of the fighters' belief in the delegates' opinions. There were many incidents that proved that the fighters did not obey the orders of these individuals and that there were mutinies against such decisions. The fighters oppose all of the sentimental practices by members of factions that support the negotiations, such as proffering olive branches. They believe that the armed struggle should continue until all of our rights are restored, despite any orders requesting the non-escalation of any kind of struggle. When the Black Panthers were ordered not to liquidate the collaborators, they did not follow the orders and continued their work.

2. The lack of security in many of the fighters' cells, either due to infiltration of their ranks or the increased number of occupation agents in the areas, such as what took place in Janin and the Gaza Strip. Fierce conflicts arose between the entrenched fighters and the special undercover units of the occupation, which led to the death of many of the fighters' leaders, especially in the Black Panthers. This led to the arrest of seven members of the Red Eagle group in the Gaza Strip, and the arrest of three members of the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Group in Ramallah.

3. The fierce military, psychological, and media warfare launched by the occupation authorities, with the objective

of maximizing the achievements of its special undercover units in its war against the fighters, thus giving them no options other than execution or surrender. The occupation authorities gave undue prominence to the limited cases in which the fighters surrendered, and they also exerted pressure on the fighters' parents to convince the fighters to give themselves up. The occupation authorities extended the authority of the special undercover units and supplied them with information and a network of collaborators, as well as amendments in the rules on opening fire and arresting suspects. The occupation authorities resorted to the use of ultimatums with the fighters and their families by posting lists of fighters' names in Civil Administration headquarters, specifying the ultimatum granted to them to give themselves up. The occupation authorities tend to plea bargain to conclude the arrests.

4. The limited military experience of the fighters, the lack of military direction, and the low quality of the weapons available to them.

5. Some organizations that joined the political settlement process lost interest in the fighters, which led to a state of disappointment and frustration that affected the fighters' security was apparent in the conflicts that took place in Janin and the Gaza Strip. [passage omitted]

Suffering of Fighters' Parents

The life of the fighters' families became a continuous nightmare, as the occupation forces attacked their houses on a daily basis, using new search-and-destroy methods on the houses. They also resorted to psychological warfare. Sometimes would say that they killed the fighter and would bring his body after processing it, and other times they would say that they had arrested him. They also attacked the houses at least three times, which reflected adversely on the social life of the families of the fighters, because family members and friends would not visit them unless it is an emergency.

The occupation authorities resorted to holding the bodies of the fighters for more than a month and would not allow anyone but a very limited number of family members to perform the funeral under tight security measures. They also attacked the private wakes at the houses of the fighters' families in order to arrest any other fighters who were there to pay their respects.

Call for Popular Support

The authorities' decision to issue a five-year, in-absentia prison term is the embodiment of confronting the fighters, aiming at liquidating them because they represent the core of the intifadah. This decision was preceded by psychological and media warfare and persecuting the fighters' families, as well as authorizing the special undercover units to assassinate them. This proves that there was a political decision aimed at eliminating the fighters and covering up the crimes of the special undercover units, who assassinated their opponents under the pretext that they are dangerous fighters.

The effective reaction to this political objective is a practical and swift confrontation of this political decision, supporting the fighters and seeing the true threats of this Zionist decision. Among the most important steps that should be taken are:

- Popular support for the fighters, and helping them.
- Encouraging the fighters and meeting all their needs.
- Launching a media campaign against the Zionist decision.

Abu-Mazin on Hamas' 'Dangerous' Position

93P50105A Doha AL-SHARQ in Arabic 3 Mar 93 p 7

[Report by Hamdi 'Abd-al-Hafiz]

[Excerpts] Moscow—In an exclusive statement to AL-SHARQ, PLO Executive Committee member Mahmud 'Abbas (Abu-Mazin) has affirmed the presence of ongoing PLO contacts with Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] states in order to clear away the vestiges of the Gulf crisis and restore Palestinian-Gulf relations to their previous era.

He said that the Arab situation is still affected—to a small extent—by the Gulf crisis and that there have been hurried efforts to clear the Arab air and overcome the painful effects of this crisis. He indicated that this demands an increase in time and effort to restore Arab solidarity to what it was before the crisis. [passage omitted]

On Hamas' relations with the PLO and its effects on the PLO's role in the occupied territories, Abu-Mazin said that Hamas is a Palestinian movement, that it is present in the arena [ala al-sahah], and that there is no denying its presence. However, it tries to emphasize its role in an artificial way through its illogical opposition to PLO policy, which the Palestinian people have approved. Hamas also refuses to join the PLO bodies and join in the struggle via the PLO institutions. This is a dangerous position that could cause chaos on the Palestinian street at a time that demands closing ranks. He said that the Hamas movement wants the PLO to abandon the peace process and withdraw from the negotiations and that this demand has been totally rejected.

Lebanese, Palestinians Trying To Stop Killings

93P50113A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 24 Mar 93 p 3

[Text] Beirut—Neither Lebanese nor Palestinian efforts have succeeded in ending the ongoing war between Fatah and Fatah-Revolutionary Council, led by Abu-Nidal [also known as Abu Nidal Organization-ANO], which has resumed in the last two days. It has manifested itself in the exchange of explosive charges planted in cars belonging to elements from both groups and in the resumption of assassinations, although to a lesser degree than before.

Regarding the "war of elimination" between the two aforementioned Palestinian organizations, Lebanese parties in Sidon and most of the Palestinian factions have called for holding an emergency meeting to look into ways to end to the Palestinian-Palestinian fighting, which has taken dozens of lives so far.

On this subject, AL-HAYAH has learned that Lebanese and Palestinian leaders are currently studying the possibility of reaching a radical solution to stop the series of assassinations, which would require the Lebanese state—through the Ministry of National Defense's Army command—to refuse to renew the licenses that allow a number of Fatah and ANO elements to carry weapons, after it had been determined that they participated in most of the incidents that flared up between the two in the South, especially in Sidon and Tyre districts.

In light of the contacts with the PLO leadership in Tunis and prominent officials in the ANO, these same leaders are trying to come up with a plan to stop the internal fighting, provided that it would eventually be implemented. They would do this even if they were forced to denounce those who are setting out to undo the plan because they believe that peaceful efforts have failed to end the "war of elimination." This will clear the way for establishing a popular pressure movement that will demand that the government intervene to stop the bloody battle in a way that it deems appropriate.

In another item, the "Families of Martyrs" in the Palestinian camps have begun to circulate a petition due to the deteriorating living conditions and the nonpayment of these families' allowances for four months.

A communique in the name of the "Families of Palestinian Martyrs and Wounded in Lebanon" mentioned that these families staged a sit-in in front of the Bureau of Social Affairs for the Families of Martyrs in Beirut the day before yesterday.

The delegation representing the Families of Martyrs presented a memorandum to Umm-Jihad [Intisar] al-Wazir—the widow of Fatah Central Committee member Khalil al-Wazir, who was assassinated in Tunisia—and to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and PLO Executive Committee members, demanding the payment of their allowances, which have been cut off for four months, and adjusting it on the basis of the high cost of living.

In another communique, it was mentioned that a march was also started in the 'Ayn al-Hulwah camp and that the participants staged a sit-in in the PLO's Social Affairs Center and presented a memorandum of the Families of Martyrs' demands to those inside.

In this regard, it was rumored in Beirut that Executive Committee member Shafiq al-Hut had taken up this subject with the PLO leadership in Tunis and asked it to expedite payment of allowances to the martyrs' families.

Feature Outlines 6 Islamic Groups' Methods, Funds

93AF0385A Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 4, 11, 18 Jan 93

[Article by Zaynab Farran: "Palestinian Fundamentalists: Islamic Jihad Movement"]

[4 Jan pp 35-38]

[Excerpt]

Starting Points of Jihad Movement

[Passage omitted] The Koran refers to important sites in Palestine and to Palestine's blessing and importance. It also refers, according to Jihad, to the future battle that will take place around Jerusalem between Israel, as an arrogant and haughty political force, and the Islamic nation, which embraces the path of righteousness, freedom, and dignity. The Koranic verses underline the phase that we are going through.

As for history's contemporary movement, it seems to Jihad that this movement has been going against the Islamic homeland for nearly 200 years and that it has been relatively centered in Palestine by toppling the Islamic system, creating the regional states, and establishing the Zionist entity in Israel, thus creating the severest challenge posed by the Western colonialist presence, embodied in the [Zionist] entity, which is the center of Western domination. Jihad watches the reality which underlines the alliance of the Jews as a political force, through the Zionist entity, with all of the imperialist regimes that crush their own peoples and the powerless in the world. The danger of this entity is not confined to the Palestinian people, the Arab nation, or the Islamic peoples, but extends to all of the powerless in the world.

When the Islamic Jihad Movement emerged, the Palestinian political arena encompassed on the one hand nationalist forces seeking to liberate Palestine and, on the other hand, traditionalist Islamic forces emphasizing the Islamic dimension and embrace the slogan of jihad to liberate Palestine as a priority. For its part, Islamic Jihad proceeded to debate intellectually the national dilemma that centers on the three elements of Islam, jihad, and Palestine. It determined that Islam can be a starting point for jihad and a means to liberate Palestine from the enemy because, in Islamic Jihad's eyes, no revival plan in the Islamic world can survive if it does not comprehend this fact. The Sudanese cannot unite their country without noting the Zionist presence in the Horn of Africa, and the Pakistanis cannot, for example, establish strategic balance with India without noting the Zionist movement and the Zionist nuclear weapons. Iran cannot continue to raise its slogans without seeing the Zionist challenge confronting it. No revival can be achieved in any Islamic country without confronting the Zionist threat. This is why Islamic Jihad believes that raising the Palestinian issue as an Islamic issue and a regional issue or as a regional issue with a comprehensive Islamic and pan-Arab dimension solves the problem existing between the pan-Arabists and the Islamists. Dr. Fathi al-Shiqaqi, Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine's secretary general, said that he noticed that the Palestinian groups in Palestine avoided answering the question concerning the Palestinian dilemma and that, simultaneously, he noticed great eagerness and high willingness among the Muslim youth to rise and struggle. He also noticed the difference between the youth's fiery spirit and the positions of the Islamic groups with all their various names. Al-Shiqaqi felt that it is necessary that a

political resolution be made by all of these groups, regardless of whether they are connected with the Muslim Brotherhood, al-Tahrir Party, Sufi groups, or with any of the other groups, to change the character of the battle in Palestine and to give it its true and essential Islamic character, and this is what has happened.

Jihad's Emergence

In the mid-1970's, discussions and debates occurred among some Palestinian youths studying in Egypt. One question that was raised strongly concerned the possibility of the emergence of an Islamic Jihad organization that would shoulder the burden of jihad for the liberation of Palestine. Their answer was to agree to form the fighting Islamic Jihad Movement. The rise of this movement was tantamount to a force of renewal in the Islamic philosophy and movement, considering that Islamic Jihad has had viewpoints on even the least significant Islamic issues and that it has viewed the world with an unconventional eye. The intellectual dialogue that began in the mid-1970's turned into a political climate that encompassed broader sectors, even attracting youth from the nationalist movement itself. This is the climate that in the late 1970's produced an organizational nucleus that led the later jihad in Palestine. With the onset of the 1980's, the youth began to return to Palestine and to form cells and teams, performing their role, which went through three phases:

The first was embodied in the mobilizational political, popular, and informational activity embodied in issuing underground magazines and pamphlets and in activities in mosques, universities, and unions. This phase was tantamount to preparation for the jihad phase. The magazines issued by Islamic Jihad include AL-THAWRAH, which was printed secretly in Jerusalem and distributed to all parts of Palestine, and AL-TALI'AH AL-ISLAMIYAH AL-FIKRIYAH [Intellectual Islamic Vanguard]. The enemy pursued the distributors fiercely and arrested dozens of youth. The movement issued numerous other pamphlets, as well.

In the second phase, armed action began its gradual march. This phase continued from 1982 to 1985 and peaked in 1986-87, the period that Islamic Jihad calls the period of Islamic struggle in Palestine. At the time, the nationalist movement was experiencing some frustrations. In this period, Islamic Jihad members escalated their operations against the enemy, which culminated in al-Shuja'ah operation on 6 October 1987. In this operation, four Islamic Jihad fighters were martyred in Palestine in a military clash with Zionist enemy soldiers and intelligence officers. Some of those men had escaped jail five months prior to this confrontation. On that particular day, the Islamic Jihad Movement entered its third phase, i.e., the intifadah phase, which continues to this day.

The Islamic Jihad Movement boasts that its martyrs' blood was the spark which ignited the intifadah that persists to this day. The movement is also eager to see the armed struggle coupled with political action to mobilize the media and the masses to support perpetuation of the intifadah.

Jihad Organization

Talking about the organizational structures and bodies of a movement whose leadership is abroad and whose membership is distributed fundamentally in Palestine and in Arab and Islamic, as well as Western, arenas seems to be a delicate and difficult thing. But the movement has bylaws that regulate its domestic activity. The structures are embodied fundamentally in a general congress that includes individuals from home and abroad. This congress produces, democratically, a consultative council for the movement. A general secretariat, headed by a secretary general, is selected from this council. Because of the circumstances that engulf its activities, Islamic Jihad has not convened a general congress to date. Before creation of the general congress, Islamic Jihad's historical leadership consisted of the founders themselves, depending on their readiness and sacrifices. But this has changed now. With Islamic Jihad's growth, the path of consultation has been followed in this regard. Requirements for membership in Islamic Jihad are applied in accordance with the bylaws. The most significant of these requirements are adherence to Islam generally, a righteous life, and belief in the movement's philosophy, political line, and organizational bylaws. The Islamic Jihad Movement is prepared to accept non-Muslims as members because it does not require faith in Islam of its membership. It requires, moreover, good ethics and belief in its political line. At its outset, the Islamic Jihad Movement was strict about its membership requirements. A candidate was subjected to severe tests that could last up to three years before one was accepted as a member. But with Islamic Jihad's growth, with the multiple arenas [where it exists], and with the stability of its first nucleus, the movement's membership requirements have grown more tolerant now. It is enough now for the movement to make sure that a candidate adheres to Islam's clean line in order to accept him in its ranks. If the Islamic Jihad Movement encounters an individual who is honest and prepared to join it but who does not perform the Islamic duties, then it cooperates with him without granting him the membership right, as the Islamic Jihad Movement puts it.

Islamic Jihad has also settled the dilemma of the presence of Christians in its ranks by seeking guidance from the Koran verses that say there can be no coercion in religion. It only demands that the Christians refrain from committing mortal sins and believe in the movement's political line and organizational bylaws. A number of Christian members did join the Islamic Jihad Movement. But after a period of adherence, they converted to Islam of their own accord.

A number of women are also enrolled in the Islamic Jihad Movement because the movement believes in the role of women in military action and in the philosophical and theoretical importance of this role. Islamic Jihad supports women's participation in the jihad and struggle to the degree that their circumstances permit them to participate. But Islamic Jihad acknowledges that it is remiss in this regard because it does not put women where they can shoulder the burden of accomplishing the required tasks at

home and abroad. However, Islamic Jihad aspires to give women a greater and more important role than the role assigned them now. For a woman to be accepted as an Islamic Jihad member, she has to adhere to all the requirements imposed on men, in addition to the requirement of wearing a veil.

When a member commits a violation, the Islamic Jihad Movement tasks him according to the laws of the country in which he lives, regardless of how just are this country's laws and how credible its judiciary and regardless of whether the country is Islamic or non-Islamic. Islamic Jihad has its bylaws, which incorporate acknowledged values and traditions on whose basis a member is brought to account for organizational mistakes. Despite its adherence to the provisions of the Islamic shari'ah, the Islamic Jihad Movement cannot apply the shari'ah provisions to contravening members, such as severing a thief's hand, for example. It contents itself by expelling or dismissing such a member, justifying its action by the absence of the Islamic state.

Jihad's Relations

The Islamic Jihad Movement presented its ideas for the first time in the Islamic AL-MUKHTAR, a magazine licensed and published in Egypt. Dr. Fathi al-Shiqaqi was tantamount to the magazine's editor in chief, and he wrote in the magazine under an assumed name. Some Islamic Jihad members participated with him. Early Islamic Jihad adherents expressed their ideas through AL-MUKHTAR, which continued to be published until Anwar al-Sadat shut it down one month before he was assassinated. This magazine contributed to the accession of a number of Egyptians to the Islamic Jihad Movement, and they were tantamount to the first nucleus of the Jihad Movement that was formed in Egypt. The Islamic Jihad Movement says that it developed throughout the 1980's, both intellectually and in its relations, which spread to all parts of the world. It is rare to find an Islamic movement that does not have relations with the Islamic Jihad Movement. Despite their special concerns, most of these movements use pamphlets issued by Islamic Jihad to teach their youth.

The Islamic Jihad Movement believes that the Palestinian people's dispersal gives the Palestinian an important role in the international Islamic movement because this dispersal permits the Muslim Palestinian to be in contact with Muslim citizens of the countries in which he lives. Islamic Jihad considers any progress achieved by any Islamic movement in the world a victory, first, for this movement and, second, for jihad and for the Palestinian cause, meaning that any change in any part of the world in the interest of Islam is also a change in the interest of the Palestinian cause. As for its relations with the pan-Arab forces, the Islamic Jihad believes that it has surpassed as of the moment of its creation the fabricated and imaginary contradiction between Arabism and Islam. The Islamic Jihad Movement has been a forerunner in projecting reconciliation between these two tendencies after decades of rifts created artificially between them by colonialism and by some totally Westernized forces. Islamic Jihad

circles say that they have taken this position because they realize that their main contradiction is with the Zionist enemy and colonialism. As for the pan-Arab forces that are hostile to colonialism and that struggle against it, they are allies of Islamic Jihad and of the Islamists in the liberation of Palestine. Any difference of opinion must be settled by dialogue and far from any form of violence or domination.

The Islamic Jihad Movement believes that the objective of the Islamic movements generally is to let Islam control people's life. This is why it says that when it considered the special character of Palestine, it determined that the Zionist presence is the biggest obstacle impeding Islam's control of people's life. Through action to liberate Palestine, the Islamic Jihad Movement seeks to please God, may He be praised and exalted. On this basis, the Islamic Jihad Movement sees itself as an indivisible part of the entire Islamic movement, regardless of how far apart are the concerns and the particular interests of the parties to this movement. The Islamic Jihad Movement understands the special nature of each party. This special nature and these concerns do not affect the Palestinian people's struggle negatively. The Islamic Jihad Movement has relations, for example, with Algeria's FIS [Islamic Salvation Front] and with all of Algeria's Islamic movements; Tunisia's Ennahda Movement; Sudan's al-Turabi-led Islamic movement; Egypt's Islamic movement, especially Jihad, Yemen's Islamic parties; the Islamic movements in Jordan, Turkey, Pakistan and Malaysia; the Islamic forces in Lebanon, especially Hizballah; and with other Islamic groups in the world, particularly groups in Iran and the regime in Sudan. There are friendly relations, visits, and joint conferences between Islamic Jihad and Malaysia. But participation by Malaysian Muslims in the Palestinian people's struggle is obstructed by numerous difficulties that are not easy to overcome. However, the Islamic Jihad Movement continues to be in contact and communication with Muslim Malaysians and others.

Jihad Financing

Until 1988, the Islamic Jihad Movement relied completely on its intrinsic resources. It made abundant profits from the sale of magazines, especially because it is not as costly to produce them at home as it is abroad. For example, it costs one-half dollar to produce one issue of AL-TALI'AH, which is sold for \$1. Subscriptions also covered a considerable part of the [publishing] company costs, especially subscriptions from expatriate Palestinian workers who paid doubled subscription rates. This is in addition to some alms funds and to grants offered by some ardent supporters of the Islamic jihad idea.

But since the eruption of the intifadah and the growth of Islamic Jihad's role, Iran has been providing Islamic Jihad with aid and assistance. Despite the Iranian Islamic support for the Islamic Jihad Movement, the latter is trying to develop its own resources. Islamic Jihad circles say that the movement has refused to receive aid from several parties amounting in value to many times what it gets from Iran, out of concern for the soundness of its political course and line.

The same circles add that the Islamic Jihad Movement has a distinguished relationship with Iran based on harmonious positions toward fundamental issues. Because there is harmony in the political line, Islamic Jihad sees no objection to receiving aid from Iran.

Jihad's Opinion of Other Islamic Movements

The Islamic Jihad Movement believes that the masses' role is the basis. This is why it sees that preparing and mobilizing the masses in an Islamic manner and projecting the Islamic program (that fulfills their aspirations) is the duty of all Muslims.

Therefore, Islamic Jihad supports, as its sources say, popular movements in their various forms, regardless of whether they embrace military or peaceful means or whether they follow the path of popular revolution to achieve their objectives, as happened in Iran, or the path of elections, as is happening in other countries. What is important is that any Islamic movement determines its method on the basis of its own circumstances.

Acting accordingly, Islamic Jihad has supported the Iranian revolution, in which the masses marched into the streets to demand deliverance. It also supported the Afghan mujahedin, the Islamists in Algeria's elections, and Sudan's military rebellion when it determined that this was the only way for the Sudanese people's deliverance.

Because it was created inside Palestine fundamentally, the Islamic Jihad Movement believes that it has managed, within a very short time and with limited resources, to become a third pivot added to the two main forces that are embodied in Fatah and Hamas (Muslim Brotherhood). Even though the Islamic Jihad Movement is the smallest in numbers and the weakest in resources, it enjoys the respect of the Palestinian factions. The occupied territories' masses respond ordinarily to Islamic Jihad's calls for strikes and demonstrations.

Places Where Jihad Exists

The Islamic Jihad Movement's presence outside Palestine is very new. The movement attributes this to the fact that it cannot cover all of the arenas where Palestinians exist, keeping in mind that expatriate Palestinians keep up with news of Islamic Jihad activities through the media and through Islamic Jihad publications. Regarding Lebanon as a frontline arena, the Islamic Jihad Movement has renewed and noticeable relations in this arena. But it acknowledges that the negative impact left by the practices of some Palestinian factions on the Palestinian scene in Lebanon contributes to obstructing the expansion of its influence in Lebanon. However, these difficulties are not stopping Islamic Jihad from carrying on with its confrontation line because it considers itself a Husayni movement that carries out its duties without letting up and regardless of how complex is the issue. It plans to disregard the

settlement, if it occurs, and it is extremely eager to avoid turning its weapons against any of the Palestinian people's factions. It is Islamic Jihad's opinion that revolutions go through periods of ebb and flow and that Islamists are undergoing the phase of steadfastness and perseverance. The movement is confident that the phase of the offensive is inevitably coming.

Jihad's Opinion of the Intifadah

The Islamic Jihad Movement believes that the intifadah is the masses' movement and that the parties and organizations committed a grave offense when they pushed the masses aside and began to fight for political influence in order to exploit the masses. These parties and organizations have begun to fight for every alley in the fashion of Lebanon, thus angering the Palestinian masses, who will work to end this competition despite its deep causes, which are embodied in the conflict of wills and the struggle for influence. The Islamic Jihad Movement also believes that the time for the settlement has arrived and that every faction must define its position toward it.

Even though the Islamic Jihad Movement is proud of the role these forces played in touching off the intifadah, it acknowledges that the masses are the foundation. Despite the endeavors to frustrate the masses and to make them despair and despite the acts of social disintegration that the enemy has been trying to entrench, the causes of the intifadah continue to be implanted deep in the heart of the masses. This is why the intifadah will not die.

The Islamic Jihad Movement believes that the Palestinian people are currently faced with a serious challenge, embodied in Rabin's policy. Rabin misleads the people and the world by abandoning Shamir's ideological logic, which calls for establishing the greater Israel geographically, whereas he seeks to establish the greater Israel through political, economic, and cultural domination.

To put it briefly, the intifadah will continue, according to Islamic Jihad, because its causes continue to exist, and they are embodied in the continued occupation, in the accumulated struggle experience, in disappointment in the world order and Arab reality and, finally, in the presence of the Islamic tendency as an influential and explosive element. The Islamic Jihad Movement aspires to see the intifadah continue and to perform what it calls the internationalist duty [al-wajib al-umami]. Even though the means change and alter, Islamic Jihad's philosophy and strategy are constant. The Islamic Jihad Movement is prepared, according to its sources, to deal with the PLO, provided that the latter refrain from acknowledging legitimacy of the occupation, that it carry on with the armed struggle as a way to liberate Palestine, and that it refrain, as a minimum, from abandoning the Palestinian national charter. Without these conditions, Islamic Jihad is disinterested in any participation, even if it is given all the PNC [Palestine National Council] seats, because the issue concerns a firm program, not an external political framework.

[11 Jan pp 33-35]

[Excerpt]

Rise of the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Palestine

[Passage omitted] With the emergence of Hamas and the other struggling Islamic forces in the military struggle and conflict arena, a number of Fatah's Muslim youth evaluated the real condition of all of the Palestinian revolutionary tendencies, both Marxist and pan-Arabist, and reviewed all of the phases of the Palestinian issue. They decided that a serious and responsible pause was needed to create a front that relies on the Koran and on the prophet's Sunna. Thus, the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [IFLP] was born on 15 May 1992.

It is called a front because its founders believe this name is more comprehensive than "league" or "movement" and because Hamas cannot, in their opinion, unite the forces since it does not have a front program. The founders, who distributed a statement in South Lebanon's refugee camps proclaiming the birth of their front, determined that their front must remain underground for fear of the responses of those who are harmed by its birth and who, according to the front, consist of some fundamentalist forces and of the Palestinian right, which is undermined by the presence of an Islamic front that represents the vessel embracing all forces.

IFLP's Policy

The IFLP believes that the way the current PLO leadership is dealing with the artificial Jewish state has been proven to be a failure because it is not based on the national action constants stipulated in the PLO charter and by the PNC's 16th session, in addition to not being based on the Islamic shari'ah.

Regarding fundamentalists, the IFLP its reservation about the relatively isolationist approach embraced by the fundamentalist forces. This approach distances it from coordination with the national forces whose positions are in conflict with the policy of the PLO and of its authoritarian leadership, embodied in 'Arafat and in some of his aides, such as Bassam Abu-Sharif and Nabil Sha'ath. This is in addition to other notables, such as members of the Palestinian negotiation delegation, which was appointed by the PLO chairman, who did not explore the opinion of or consult with Islamist and nationalist forces in the Palestinian arena.

According to Ahmad al-Hasan, the IFLP official spokesman, the front is not basically opposed to the principle of negotiation. Rather, its position calls for organizing a meeting of the Palestinian forces on the basis of a uniform program that opposes the projected settlement because it does not view Resolutions 242 and 338 as resolutions that reflect the Palestinian people's rights and aspirations. The IFLP also sees that the PNC's 16th session talked of a settlement, but according to terms different from the terms projected currently in the Washington negotiations. Moreover, the IFLP does not see in sitting and negotiating with the enemy anything that

conflicts with the Islamic faith and shari'ah, as proven by the al-Hudaybiyah peace accord that was concluded between the prophet, may God's peace and prayers be upon him, and the Quraysh tribe, despite opposition by the prophet's companions. But on the other hand, the IFLP sees no place for likening the al-Hudaybiyah peace accord with a peace accord with the [Israeli] enemy because the latter is dictating his conditions under the canopy of balances of power, which is not in the interest of the struggling forces, and this will inevitably enable the enemy's interest to prevail.

The IFLP also believes that it is necessary to change the real condition of the PLO's political and organizational starting points and tendencies, proceeding on the basis of the Palestinian people's interest.

The front foresees the signs of a coming change that will sweep away the worsening Arab situation as a result of the growing Islamic tendency, which is characterized by relative maturity, in the Arab homeland. The IFLP cites the situation existing in Algeria and Sudan, Iran's Islamic revolution, the revival of the Soviet Union's Islamic republics, and the triumph of the Afghan revolution as proof of the soundness of its viewpoint. The front also considers what has happened and is happening in these countries an indicator of the possibility of change occurring in the Arab homeland and in the Islamic nation, which, in the front's opinion, can only solve the problems of its peoples by referring to Islam's constitution, especially because all past theories and systems and the new world order that the crusader forces are trying to apply to the world, have failed.

The IFLP further believes that the disunity experienced by the official Arab regimes helps the rise of nationalist forces, some of which are already crystallized, although only relatively. These forces are not opposed in principle to the tendencies of the fundamentalist forces, as is the case in Sudan and in Lebanon.

This is in addition to the presence of some Arab patriotic regimes that represent an impregnable bastion in the face of the schemes of the "black house," especially Syria. The domestic and external crises that these countries are experiencing as a result of their relations with other countries do not mean that they have abandoned their vision of and their position on the Palestinian and Arab conflict with the forces that are hostile to the Arab and Islamic nation.

From the legal religious angle, the IFLP does not believe that there is a contradiction between church and state. Rather, it believes that total harmony with the shari'ah is achieved under the canopy of an Islamic state that is governed by the terms and dictates of Islam. The call addressed by the IFLP includes all the forces adhering to Islam, and this is not in conflict with developing a front at the level proposed by Hamas.

Front's Relations and Finances

Ideologically, the IFLP depends on the Koran and the prophet's Sunna, as we have already pointed out. This is why it has established relations with some fundamentalist forces, such as Hamas, which holds periodic meetings with the IFLP at which front action is discussed. However, the

discussion has not yet penetrated the crux of the issue because of Hamas's sensitivity.

Even though the front disagrees with the Habashis [Society of Philanthropic Projects] in interpreting the Sunna, it has not opposed the Habashis' general political tendency because it has discovered through dialogue with them that they do not separate politics from the Islamic faith and shari'ah. The Habashis are one of the forces that have been contacted by the IFLP and invited to join in front action because their presence on the Palestinian scene is new, because their numbers are small, and because the IFLP seeks to develop the Habashis' jihad concepts.

According to the IFLP official spokesman, some fundamentalist forces on the Palestinian scene have not developed relations and alliances in the Palestinian arena that raise them to the level of jihad action. Rather, they have continued to be isolated. There are other forces that are underground no longer. Therefore, their isolation from and failure to engage in dialogue is justifiable no more. They are called upon to open up because their isolation is incompatible with the Islamic shari'ah and is in conflict with the call, which is a call for openness and not for isolation, keeping in mind that the IFLP does not belittle the importance of underground action. However, there has to be pragmatic forces that lead the daily action.

IFLP sources say that even though the front was formed only recently, it receives aid through a party that has relations with other Islamic forces and by way of donations which are collected through official channels in some Arab and Islamic countries that are close to the Palestinian cause. The IFLP covers a part of its expenses with profits from some of its business establishments.

Front's Presence and Organization

The IFLP says that it is present in the occupied territories, Jordan, and South Lebanon and that it has a consultative council composed of seven members who are appointed by the general secretariat. It also has a constituent assembly. It engages in underground action, and it has a military organization based on qualitative, not quantitative, groups.

The IFLP accepts Arab citizens who wish to contribute to it and to participate in it, but through their fronts. It believes that the justifications for armed public displays have disappeared because some have misused their arms. It agrees to the withdrawal of arms, except for arms used for resistance. It further believes that arms not used for resistance are exploited for illegitimate ends. The IFLP is opposed to using weapons to settle conflicts, it supports dialogue, and it is against all forms of internecine fighting.

According to Ahmad al-Hasan, what distinguishes the IFLP from Hamas is that Hamas has proposed developing frontal action and has engaged in dialogue on this issue. But Hamas, which is engaged in struggle in Palestine, has not been able to assume an effective and influential role in leading the Palestinian action, meaning in the Unified Intifadah Command. Moreover, Hamas has not

announced a clear front program. This is why its call has remained unimplemented both at home and abroad. Hamas's organizational structure is not up to front action. Therefore, what distinguishes the IFLP from Hamas is that the IFLP strives ceaselessly to organize all the small fundamentalist forces through its call, keeping in mind many of these forces were not represented in previous fronts. Those fronts were created as a result of the vision of a nucleus that formed this or that front, presented the front's program and political views, and proceeded to carry out the front's activities.

Society of Palestine's Ulema

The constituent statement issued by the Society of Palestine's Ulema, which was founded in 1988, cites the following justifications for founding the society:

- A. To work to confirm the Palestinian issue as the Islamic nation's central issue and the Jews as the archenemy of this nation and of mankind in general.
- B. To create the political facade and framework for these ulema. Consequently, the society speaks in the name of Palestine's ulema and of Palestine's legitimate cause in all of the information media.
- C. To organize the work of the ulema, to preach God's word, and to develop the educational and social capabilities of the ulema through the available resources.

The society's objectives are:

- To survey and make a count of Palestinian ulema who work for the Palestinian cause in Lebanon and abroad and to gather data on their work and their educational and social level.
- To establish a presence in all Islamic political, cultural, and information lobbies to confirm practically and morally the priority and importance of this Islamic cause.
- To develop a uniform secular [ilmaniyah] plan for the society workers in order to achieve the society's objectives in particular and Islamic unity in general, especially because there can be no unity without jihad and there can be no jihad without Palestine.
- To set up information establishments to publicize the society's objectives; to enlist the aid of and cooperate with the Islamic media within a well-considered and programmed plan; to make efforts to fill any information void concerning the central Islamic issue.
- To stay informed of developments, comment on them, and publicize the religious position toward them, and to publish this position in the ordinary and popular media.
- To develop new methods; to enlist the help of developments in the media; to organize symposiums, lectures, and conferences; and to disseminate sermons serving the Islamic causes everywhere, focusing in particular on the special Islamic character of the Palestinian cause.
- To secure academic grants to train ulema and develop greater knowledge and awareness among them.

- To seek to establish mosques and Islamic institutions with the available resources.
- To accomplish the society's objectives by opening up to all Muslims, without any discrimination and without undermining the principle of the shari'ah; to consider the Islamic nation the main support after God, may He be praised and exalted; and to deal with its members without any discrimination, without excluding anybody and within the principle of preaching the objectives, not of conducting a trial.

Organizationally, the Society of Palestine's Ulema consists of:

A. A general secretariat, which is comprised of the ulema who belong to the society. Executive administration, information, missionary, and other committees emanate from this secretariat.

B. Specialized subcommittees, which include Muslims who are specialized in certain areas and who wish to cooperate with the society.

C. District and province committees, which are tantamount to local instruments that draft and implement local plans in cooperation with the general secretariat.

The fact is that this society's information activities, as well as its other activities, came to a halt a year after the society was founded because of disagreements which developed among the ulema over the position toward the Gulf war. But despite this, dialogue is still going on to reunite the society and implement its program.

Religious Society's Rhetoric

Shaykh Salim Mahmud al-Lababidi, secretary general of the Society of Palestine's Ulema, has said that the society's rhetoric is not religious or political because in Islam, politics and religion are an indivisible whole and they cannot be separated. Islam is different from other faiths because it is God's religion, which all people in all places and at all times have embraced as the only religion that takes into account man's relations with his God, with himself, and with his society and because it discusses all of the Muslim's family and environmental relations. Islam deals with the issue of followers of the book and of infidels as individuals and as a state. The society's rhetoric is not political. It is a religious rhetoric that follows religious policy. Imploration itself is political, even though people consider it purely religious. Imam Zayn al-'Abidin used imploration as his means to confront oppression and tyranny. In Islam, there is no rhetoric outside this framework.

As for peace with Jews, Shaykh al-Lababidi believes that in accordance with the dictates of the revealed book and of the prophet's confirmed Sunna and by examination of the situation on which the religious opinion is sought, there can be no way to permit peace or negotiation with the Jews because there can be no negotiation with an aggressor until he is deterred or with a usurper until what he has usurped is regained. Shaykh al-Lababidi believes that the main thing is not who rules, but what the ruler rules with.

The primary right lost in Palestine is embodied in failure to establish God's law on Palestine's soil. Palestine is an Islamic land and God's law must be established in it, provided that all its citizens are treated equally before this law.

An Islamic state does not negate the presence of other religions but rather give each his due right. It gives the citizens all his rights, which is something that international charters issued by the United Nations do not do. This state protects their [Christians'] churches and monasteries. Shaykh al-Lababidi says that the society opposed the al-Ta'if accord because it is tantamount to the death of the Islamic condition and the nationalist condition.

Shaykh al-Lababidi has pointed out that the society is not a goal but a means, that it is not pagan, and that adherence to the goal is more sublime than adhering to the organizational frameworks. The Muslim must adapt his means and must have religious flexibility. Palestinian Muslims are influenced by the tendencies of any arena in which they are present. In Jordan, Lebanon and other countries, and in Lebanon's refugee camps, the majority of Palestinians are Sunni. Therefore, they are influenced by the organizations and movements of Sunni ulema. Thus, one finds among them those who belong to the Islamic Group, to Hizballah, to al-Tahrir Party, or to a narrow Palestinian organization that takes into account the special characteristics of the area in which it exists, such as the struggling Islamic movement. One also finds those who are tied to Islamic organizations inside Palestine, such as the IJM and Hamas, and those who are tied to ulema, such as followers of Shaykh al-Habashi and others.

[18 Jan pp 31-33]

[Excerpt]

Islamic Group Movement, Murshid, and the Ancestralists

[Passage omitted] In the Palestinian environment, the Islamic Group movement is considered an extension of the group in Lebanon. The Islamic Group emerged in the Palestinian environment shortly before 1982 and then grew as a result of the social and political developments experienced by the Palestinian society. Those developments are embodied in the weakening of the previous major political options and in the emergence of the Islamic tendency, which focused on refuting the previous options, in accordance with which the Palestinian people had acted and which had not produced the desired outcome. However, the Islamic Group does not hold the individuals who adopted those options completely responsible for the current condition of the Palestinian issue because regional circumstances and the pressure of the international situation have played a major role in leading the parties concerned to a dead end. The Islamic Group expects the Islamic option not just to develop more and more but also to possibly become the only decisive option under the canopy of the labor the world is experiencing.

Group Organization

The Islamic Group has an organizational structure largely similar to the structures of other organizations. It has branches for political and social action, for missionary work, for women's and youth action, and for athletic activity. It has central committee, which is tantamount to a consultative council, a political bureau, and provincial committees. The Islamic Group does not have its own organization in the Palestinian environment. However, Palestinian elements are enrolled in the Islamic Group in the Lebanese arena. The movement's philosophy emanates from the desire to please God, may He be praised and exalted. This is why, according to Engineer Usamah 'Abbas, the political officer in charge of action in the refugee camps, Islamic Group actions are based on the sublime and greater goal of pleasing God, may He be praised and exalted, by preaching the worship of God alone, by leading people away from the worship of men to the worship of the Lord of men, and by obeying God and His prophet's Sunna. Islam is a comprehensive faith that regulates relations between men and God and among men themselves. It regulates the Muslims' social, political, economic, and other affairs. The question of succession and of building the Islamic state is one of the major problems, but not the sole problem, preoccupying the Islamic Group. In the opinion of the Islamic Group, pleasing God is the greater and more sublime objective. Action to establish the Islamic state may be one of the means used to please God.

The Islamic Group believes that its task is focused on spreading the true religious call and Islamic culture in the hearts of Muslims. Its objective is not to control a mosque here and a neighborhood there. It cannot determine how widespread it is in the refugee camps. But it says that it is present through its role and its activity in the various aspects of the Palestinian issue in the camps. Islamic Group missionary activity is confined to preaching the Islamic concepts, and its social activity is confined to aiding the orphaned, the needy, and the poor.

Movement's Finances and Means

The Islamic Group secures funds through grants provided by some organizations, such as al-Hariri Establishment, and some local charitable associations to which it is tied by relations of social cooperation. This is in addition to aid provided by some forces present in the Lebanese and Arab Islamic arena.

The Islamic Group uses mosques to spread its call by public lessons it offers at the mosques. Moreover, it makes use of the Friday podium and of the symposiums and rallies it organizes on Islamic public occasions. Furthermore, the Islamic Group utilizes the its social activity and the statements it distributes on public occasions to disseminate its call. Because mosques are built with the donations of residents of the quarter in which a mosque is built and with the support of major organizations and associations, the Islamic Group believes that mosques belong to all and that every shaykh represents his platform in the mosque he controls.

Membership Requirements

The Islamic Group says that every upright Muslim who performs the Islamic duties generally and who is well-behaved can join its membership. The movement justifies its membership requirements by saying that it does not follow the method of the elitist or selective organizations. It is not a movement of intellectuals, workers, or farmers, keeping in mind that all these groups are found within the Islamic Group. As for women, the veil is a requirement that they have to observe in order to become Islamic Group members, because the veil shields, protects, and safeguards them. No woman is committed to Islam unless she is committed to the veil. However, the Islamic Group call is addressed to all Muslims.

Relations With Other Parties

Regarding the Islamic Group's position on armed action by the Palestinian Islamic forces, the movement believes that jihad for God is embodied in military struggle which holds a great place in Islam. God has said: "O ye who believe, shall I lead you to a bargain that will save you from grievous penalty? That ye believe in God and His prophet, and that ye strive (your utmost) in the cause of God, with your property and your persons: That will be best for you, if ye but knew" [Koran: 61:10, 11]. But to date, the Islamic Group has not had, according to its sources, the opportunity to engage in jihad action compatible with this concept. Rather, the movement has not had the objective circumstances to be able to perform this duty because of domestic, regional, and international conditions. When the appropriate circumstances become available to this movement, it will not hesitate to proceed in this direction. The Islamic Group does not hold any position that is in conflict with the existing Islamic tendencies because, fundamentally, they are not different as far as the call is concerned. The disagreement is centered on some legal opinions. The Islamic Group coordinates with everybody, and it works to unify all these tendencies. But if unification is impossible because of the positions of some organizations toward others within this tendency, the Islamic Group seeks alliance and coordination relations with every party separately because it has no problem with anybody. It is the Islamic Group's opinion that uniting these Islamic tendencies depends on creating the right conditions for such a step, and these conditions are brought about by intellectual or political changes in these parties.

As for the Palestinian revolutionary factions, the Islamic Group coordinates with them and understands them. The Islamic Group tries on its own to establish these relations on the basis of understanding and coordination and of non-confrontation with any faction. The Islamic Group exerts efforts to establish distinguished relations with Hamas and the Islamic Jihad Movement because it is proud of them. It does have distinguished relations with Hamas in particular.

Regarding the projected settlement, the Islamic Group sees in it a settlement founded on U.S. and Israeli terms that are unfair to the Palestinian people and their cause. The Islamic Group also believes that the Palestinian party

involved in this settlement does not see it as the only means to settling the Palestinian issue and is perhaps not convinced of this settlement. But the international and regional situation permits this settlement only, and this is why it is negotiating for it. Perhaps the Palestinian party is compelled to do so. The Islamic Group believes that the outcome will be unjust and that it cannot support it on the basis of its Islamic understanding of the Palestinian issue.

Social Affairs Oversight Council (Murshid)

This council is concerned with tending the religious affairs of Palestinian camps in Lebanon. It was founded in 1982 as a public Islamic awqaf organization, from which several other institutions emanate. It was declared an Islamic waqf [religious trust] in the Sunni religious court, which is controlled by the Council of Ministers, in accordance with decree No 740 of 25 Ramadan 1406 of the Hegira, corresponding to 2 June 1986. Murshid (the acronym for the Social Affairs Oversight Council) was founded in the wake of a study on the religious situation in the camps that demonstrated that there was a shortage of ulema in the camps and that camp mosques needed to be restored and equipped. Murshid has a mosques department that is concerned with affairs of the mosques existing in the camps, which number 33 altogether. The department tends to all their affairs, securing custodians for the mosques and paying the monthly wages of their preachers, imams, and muezzins. Murshid also provides financial and in-kind aid, including raw materials for restoring and enlarging mosques in al-Shamal [north], al-Biqa', Beirut, Sidon, and Tyre camps.

Regarding construction, Murshid has exerted efforts to build al-Quds [Jerusalem] Mosque in Nahr al-Barid Camp in the north, a mosque and a venerable Koran center in Sidon, an oratory at the Cultural Center, and al-Tawbah [repentance] oratory. Murshid has also contributed to building Bilal oratory in 'Ayn al-Hulwah. Murshid also has an education department that tends educational affairs by sponsoring a number of semi-free Islamic kindergartens, including al-Huda kindergartens in al-Rashidiyah, 'Ayn al-Hulwah, and Nahr al-Barid camps. It also sponsors a number of free Koran-teaching schools in al-Rashidiyah, 'Ayn al-Hulwah, Day'at al-'Arab, al-Wasitah Camp, al-Na'imah Quarter, and Nahr al-Barid. In addition to the Koran, these schools provide year-round instruction on the creed and on jurisprudence, using the system of courses. Murshid awards prizes to winners at the end of each course.

Murshid also supervises courses for training male and female teachers of the subject of Islam. These courses provide instruction on elocution, methods of religious teaching, and special and general methods of Islamic preaching. Moreover, Murshid provides academic and financial grants to students of Islamic shari'ah colleges and tends their affairs until they graduate with a bachelor's degree in shari'ah sciences. Contracts are then concluded with the graduates to teach at Murshid's religious and educational institutions. Some graduates are appointed mosque imams and Friday preachers.

Murshid founded a shari'ah secondary school (al-Murshid Religious Institute) in 1986. The school provides instruction in shari'ah disciplines, such as Koran and hadith sciences, the creed, jurisprudence, and the apostle's biography, plus Arabic, geography, English, mathematics, and sciences. Studies at this institution last three years, after which a graduate acquires a degree that entitles him to enter Sudanese shari'ah colleges.

The faculty is comprised of ulema and holders of shari'ah degrees and other educational degrees. Studies and books are free of charge. The institute has a library of Islamic references that contains master religious works on religious opinion, biographies, the hadith and the creed, jurisprudence, the apostle's biography, history, Islamic culture, language, and Islamic philosophy.

Structure and Finances

According to Article 3 of Murshid's constitution, the Social Affairs Oversight Council consists of:

- The chairmanship council, which is comprised of Islamic ulema working in areas of Lebanon where Palestinians live. This council drafts the council's administrative and financial regulations and supervises the activities of the public committees and institutions.
- Specialized committees, which include the specialists in each of the working committees.
- The general assembly, which includes the active members, specialized committees, chairmanship council, and all those who volunteer to work in the council's institutions.

The fact is that the council is careful not to embrace a certain political viewpoint and not to engage in partisan action so that its work and activities will be confined to religious, missionary, and charitable aspects. The council's financial resources come from grants, aid, and donations by individuals and by domestic and foreign philanthropic, religious, and humanitarian institutions with which the council cooperates.

Islamic Right Guidance and Beneficence Association (Ancestralists)

This association was licensed in 1990. But the call on which the association is founded was launched in 1977. This call was launched in schools, mosques, and homes. It is a call to God that follows the model of the apostle (may God's peace and prayers be upon him). Another aspect with which the association is concerned is embodied in providing services to the poor, the needy, and widows, plus health and educational aid and other forms of assistance.

Bases of Call

The Islamic Right Guidance and Beneficence Association's call is based on unification according to the law of God and of His prophet and on adherence to the course and concept of the prophet's companions, may God be pleased with them, and of the ancestors who followed them. The association's call is founded on the following provisions:

- Turn to the Koran and the confirmed Sunna and understand them the way the righteous ancestors, may God be pleased with them, understood them as education and action, as a call and jihad, and as a comprehensive way of life.
- Familiarize Muslims with their righteous religion and urge them to enact its teachings and dictates and to embrace its virtues and ethics, which are sure to please God and to bring Muslims honor and happiness.
- Preach the Sunna and unification and warn Muslims of all forms of infidelity, heresies, destructive creeds, alien ideas, and unrecognized and contrived hadiths that have distorted the beauty of Islam and impeded the progress of Muslims.
- Emphasize the completeness of Islam and its inclusion of all aspects of life and reform people as individuals and societies by promoting virtue and prohibiting vice and by jihad for the sake of God.
- Revive free Islamic thinking within the context of the Islamic principles and eliminate the intellectual stagnation that has dominated the minds of Muslims and has steered them away from the pure course of Islam.
- Seek to resume an Islamic life, to establish an Islamic society, and to apply God's law on earth so that there will be no sedition and so all religions will belong to God.

Methods of Disseminating the Call

The Islamic Right Guidance and Beneficence Association cooperates with the awqaf's private mosques to disseminate its call, but without seeking to control these mosques completely so as to give other parties the opportunity to use them. These mosques include Zayn al-'Abidin Mosque in 'Ayn al-Hulwah Camp and al-Ghawwar Mosque in al-Tawari' [Emergency] Camp in Sidon. The association is also engaged in activities in Nahr al-Barid and al-Baddawi camps in the north.

The association focuses its effort on the educational area, including religious schools and institutes, mosques, sermons, lessons, lectures, audiotapes and videotapes, pamphlets, and books. This is in addition to using homes [for educational purposes].

The association operates within both Lebanese and Palestinian circles. Its work in the Palestinian camps is considered an extension of its effort in the Lebanese environment. Accordingly, it has founded the Islamic Right Guidance Institute, which is an intermediate and high school for girls and boys. Moreover, it has established Koran memorization centers in Tripoli, Sidon, and the camps. The association has also built a school and a mosque in Ra's al-Sakhr area. Furthermore, the association provides health and educational services and financial aid to poor families and orphans. In its work, the association proceeds on the basis of its slogan, which says: "learning, action, call, and patience." The association receives assistance from Muslims and believers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf states, especially Kuwait and the UAE, in addition to aid from the

Islamic organization in these countries with which the association cooperates, such as the Islamic Heritage Revival Society, the Kuwait Alms House and the UAE Alms House, the Dubayy Charity House, the Islamic World League, and the Saudi Arabian Relief Organization. Cooperation and dealings with these associations are still in their early phase.

Association's Structure

The association consists of an executive board headed by a chairman and of committees emanating from this board. The committees carry out work and activities to entrench the association's objectives. The committees are:

- The committee of ulema whose task it is to examine religious issues and to come up with legal opinions approved by the association.
- The cultural committee whose task it is to draft educational curricula for the institute, such as programs for Koran instruction courses.
- The call committees, which are concerned with examining how to disseminate and convey the call and how to proliferate virtue and eliminate vice. Each of these committees has branches in more than one area.
- The orphans committee and its subcommittees. Its task is to assist orphans as much as possible.
- The health committee, which is concerned with providing aid to patients.
- The sports committee, which consists of a scouting subcommittee and athletic teams.
- The followup committee, which has the task of following up on what the call committees and the association's other projects and activities need. This committee has branches at home and abroad.

According to Shaykh Da'i al-Islam Bin-Salim al-Shahhal, the association chairman and the religious grand master of the followers of the call who embrace the association's course, the number of the association's official members is very small, and these members are found in the Sunna areas in particular.

Association membership requirements demand that the candidate be a Muslim of good Islamic character who performs the duties dictated by the Islamic shari'ah, that he be honest and of good conduct, and that he receive the approval of the executive board to become a member.

The association has a women's committee concerned with women's affairs. The veil is a requirement for women's membership. The association grand master says that the association is characterized as a Wahhabist association in reference to Ulema Muhammad Bin-'Abd-al-Wahhab.

Association's Relations

The association does not have strong relations or alliances with any non-Muslim party, be it Palestinian or non-Palestinian. As for Islamic forces, it has with them cooperation relations ranging from acceptable to good, as in the case of the Islamic Group and the other small groupings. Despite this cooperation, the Right Guidance and Beneficence Association has observations on some concepts and

actions by these forces and groups. These observations include weak observance of the Koran, the Sunna, and of the concept of predecessors, poor education and training of members, and dissatisfaction with the relations which some of these groups establish with parties whose Islam is suspect.

The association believes that involvement in the political and military arena is possible if certain conditions are present, such as sound religious basis and adequate material and moral preparation.

But there should be no involvement in the political or military arena before the required conditions are ensured so as not to cause greater harm. According to the association leader, there is jihad for self-defense and jihad on demand. When a battle is imposed on the Muslims, then self-defense becomes permissible, regardless of how small are the resources. But one may not embark on jihad before all the requirements of the jihad are met. Jihad against the Jews with all the might at the Muslims' disposal is a required duty. At times, the plan varies from group to group. Those who fight the Jews while embracing the East or the West are not engaged in jihad because the objective of jihad is to uphold Islam and protect Islamic honor, property, and soil. The real situation is the best proof that this conduct has not produced any result.

The sound religious method is embodied in preparing the Muslim to become a mujahid who does not accept to bargain or to abandon faith, soil, and honor.

It is the association's opinion that for the Palestinian resistance to overcome the dilemma it is experiencing, it must alter its policy that does not uphold the faith, which is the secret behind the Muslim's glory and their triumph over the enemies. Because the current resistance doesn't have the components to regain and restore Palestine, then there is no objection to employing a phased approach, but without making concessions and squandering rights and provided that it is an honest approach.

The association acknowledges the presence of disagreements among the Islamic groups. But in its opinion, it is not permissible to abandon right for falsehood just to demonstrate a unity that does not take long to disintegrate again and again. If the Islamic groups turn to the principles of Islamic dealing and the principles of settling disputes with Islam, then they can meet.

There is no doubt that Islamic unity is a required duty. But it will be accomplished when agreement and proximity are achieved in the theoretical, practical, and ideological approach. People differ in understanding and commitment, and this is the secret behind the disunity of the Islamic groups and of the fact that their relations are confined to alliance and cooperation, but not unity and merger.

With unification, the nation and the faith are preserved. When the nation is restored, Islam will triumph, Palestine will be inevitably regained, the shari'ah will rule, and justice will prevail.

Officials React to Possible Gaza Withdrawal

93AA0016A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
21 Mar 93 p 3

[Article: "Some See Withdrawal as Fruit of Intifadah; Others Believe Objective Is To Pit Palestinians Against Each Other"]

[Excerpt] Amman—[Passage omitted] What is the Palestinians' opinion of the call for withdrawal from Gaza Strip?

The immediate international [as published] reaction came from Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, head of the Palestinian negotiation delegation and a Gaza Strip citizen, who has expressed surprise and apprehension over the proposed Israeli process.

But other reactions followed in succession. Dr. Taysir 'Aruri, deputy chairman of the strategic committee for bilateral negotiations, believes that the talk and the statements we hear from Israeli political figures on withdrawal from Gaza Strip are not serious enough because, in his opinion, Rabin and the Israeli decision-makers will inevitably try to use withdrawal from the Gaza Strip, despite all the burdens with which it saddles Israel, as a bargaining card to gain something in return, whether in the West Bank or in the context of the transitional period and in the powers and responsibilities of the proposed autonomous transitional government.

Shaykh 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Sa'ih, the PNC [Palestine National Council] chairman who is currently in the Medical City Hospital in Amman, has said that the "Israeli proposal for withdrawal from Gaza is intended to pit the Palestinians against each other." However, al-Sa'ih asserted that Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and from all the occupied Palestinian territories will take place sooner or later and will be a fruit of the intifadah, which constitutes a part of the Palestinian people's struggle throughout the past 70 years.

Hamas has welcomed Israel's withdrawal from Gaza. In press statements, Engineer Ibrahim Ghawshah has said that he considers this an accomplishment for the national struggle and that he looks forward to another unconditional withdrawal from the West Bank. Ghawshah stressed that it is necessary that the Palestinian factions meet to agree on the appropriate formula with which to manage the strip in the initial phase.

Umm-Jihad [Intisar al-Wazir] stressed that the issue of Israeli withdrawal from Gaza Strip will have the priority of discussion in the forthcoming agenda of the PLO Central Council and Executive Committee.

In a related development, an authoritative PLO source has stressed that a plenary Palestinian national conference will be held in Damascus prior to the start of bilateral Arab-Israeli negotiations in Washington on the 20th of next month.

It was agreed to hold this conference during Faruq al-Qaddumi's recent visit to Syria, where he met with officials of the 10 Palestinian factions in Damascus, including Ahmad Jibril and Talal Naji, but not with the Abu-Musa faction (the dissident Musa Movement).

The Palestinian source said that Palestinian Chairman Yasir 'Arafat will not attend this conference but that Hamas Movement will participate in it because it has made it conditional that a plenary Palestinian conference be attended by all Palestinian factions.

Khalid al-Fahum, chairman of the Palestinian National Salvation Front who lives in Damascus, said that Israel's withdrawal from any inch of occupied Palestinian soil is a gain for the Arab Palestinian people and that there is no call for some people's fear that an inter-Palestinian clash will develop if Israel withdraws. Taysir Qubba'ah, a Salvation Front leader and the PNC deputy chairman, has urged the Palestinian leadership to convene an urgent meeting which is attended by all factions to hold dialogue and evaluate the situation that will develop after any withdrawal from Gaza.

Palestinian Chairman Yasir 'Arafat announced years ago that he is prepared to set up the Palestinian state on any inch of soil from which Israel withdraws. Since the start of the negotiations in Madrid, Israel has been maneuvering and releasing "test balloons" on the various Arab fronts. One time, Israel alludes to the possibility of its withdrawal from the Golan, and another time from Lebanon or Jordan. Meanwhile, nothing tangible has been accomplished. Rather, Rabin's government has accelerated the construction of settlements, the deportation, imprisonment, and torturing of hundreds of Arab citizens, the demolition of homes, and the shooting of citizens. This is why numerous Palestinian leaders and officials see the Israeli call for withdrawal from Gaza Strip as just a step to sidetrack the ongoing negotiations and to contribute to creating confusion in the Arab ranks, in general, and in the Palestinian ranks, in particular.

Report Summarizes PFLP, DFLP Meeting Results

93AA0016B London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 19 Mar 93 p 17

[Article: "Damascus: Unified PFLP-DFLP Leadership Council Demands Withdrawal From Negotiations"]

[Text] Damascus—The Unified PFLP-DFLP [Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine] Leadership Council held a plenary session at which it discussed the current developments, the ongoing preparations to resume the bilateral and multilateral negotiations and issues connected with developing joint action.

A statement said that the Unified Leadership Council has evaluated the "immense revival being experienced by the popular intifadah inside the homeland, the noticeable growth of popular participation in the intifadah activities,

and the escalating armed resistance operations that confront the terroristic campaigns of oppression launched by the enemy forces and the troops of settlers."

The Unified Leadership Council noted that this revival "refutes and exposes the defeatist inclinations that are propagated by some Palestinian bureaucratic and rightist tendencies to justify their joining the Madrid-Washington procession on the pretext that it is a compulsory pass."

The statement says that the council discussed the outcome of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's visit to the region. Christopher's main objective was to "fragment Palestinian and Arab consensus on the need to implement Security Council Resolution 799, which calls for the immediate and collective repatriation of Palestinian deportees, so as to turn over a new leaf on the deportees issue and to resume the bilateral and multilateral negotiations far from this issue."

The statement warns of the "danger of embracing the call for separating the deportees issue from the issue of resuming negotiations because what this call means practically is to submit to the U.S.-Israel deal and to shelve the Security Council resolution." The statement also warns of the consequence of "sliding into the trap of fragmenting Resolution 799 under the pretext of timetables because of the serious precedent such fragmentation creates."

The two fronts' unified leadership has stressed that "it is necessary to block the path in the face of putting international and regional pressures on the Palestinians to resume the negotiations. The PLO Executive Committee must proceed to issue immediately a decisive and final resolution to withdraw from the coming rounds of bilateral and multilateral negotiations and to adhere to the necessity of the full and immediate implementation of Resolution 799 on the collective and immediate repatriation of the deportees and on terminating the deportation policy. The resolution must also insist on rejecting the Madrid formula and its unfair conditions; must underline the PLO's right to represent the united and unified Palestinian people, with all of their gatherings in the homeland, including Jerusalem, and in the diaspora; and must adhere firmly to the UN resolutions that call for complete Israeli withdrawal and for securing our people's national rights to repatriation, self-determination, and an independent state." The unified leadership urged all of the Arab countries to shoulder "their pan-Arab responsibilities and obligations by acting in solidarity with our people, their national resolution, and their just cause, which is the central national cause of our Arab nation and the crux of its conflict with the Zionist enemy."

The unified leadership discussed the calls released by some elements of the Israeli Government for a unilateral withdrawal from Gaza Strip and expressed the belief that this "confirms that the strategy to escalate the intifadah provides realistic possibilities of forcing the enemy to depart from our occupied land."

Territories' Future Economy, Demographics Charted

93AE0314A Jerusalem AL-FAJR in Arabic
18, 19, 21, 23, 24, 28, 29 Dec 92

[Report on Economic Demography of Occupied Territories by Muhammad al-Nakhal]

[18 Dec 92 p 7]

[Text] In order to identify an area within specific boundaries in regional geography, it is necessary to define the area within its historic, geographic, and political boundaries, as well as defining its rainfall, latitude and longitude, etc.

The purpose of this work is to determine the population density in the Gaza Strip. Therefore, after identifying the area and its boundaries, or defining them, in order to arrive at the true population density, I was forced to study the particulars of development and increase in population numbers, as well as their natural increase. Accordingly, I was also obliged to determine the land area and its type and ownership. The importance here is in the accounting process to learn the true surface extent that is at the disposal of Arab residents.

In order to complete the picture of the Gaza Strip, I was obliged to write about agriculture, industry, and the labor force to enhance my understanding of the basic matter, which is population density in the Gaza Strip, and to provide some background on the economic situation because of the changing agricultural lands of the residents.

The economic components with regard to population increase, which is pushing toward high population density, give credence to my belief that high population density and weak economic infrastructure stem from the same problem. This is the restructured area of the Gaza Strip, which is estimated at only 360,000 dunums. According to the latest official statistics, approximately 655,000 persons live on this amount of land, giving a population density of 1,819 persons per square kilometer. However, I differ with official sources regarding the amount of surface area upon which that population density must be measured.

It is my belief that the complete area that is actually for the use of Arab citizens is what must be used to measure the population density of the Arab citizens in the Gaza Strip. I have not counted land belonging to Israeli settlements or land for the Army's use. Moreover, I have included forecasts of population density for 2002. Assuming that the area presently available to the Arabs will remain constant, I compared population density in the Gaza Strip with that of other countries, such as Egypt, Israel, and Japan.

Finally, I have developed some solutions that I believe might lessen the density that threatens the Arab community because that density contains social diseases and impedes economic progress.

Gaza Strip

Gaza's boundaries have varied depending on the political period. Under the British Mandate, the province of Gaza

extended north to the al-Ramallah District and east to the Hebron District and Beersheba. Al-Falujah, for example, was one of the district towns.¹

Historically, the geographic position of Gaza and its district have been determined. In ancient history, Gaza was bordered on the north by Ashqelon, on the east by Bayt Jabrin, and on the south by Suq Miz and Rafah.²

Throughout history, Gaza has been in an advantageous position, dominating the overland and maritime trade routes between Syria and Egypt and between the Mediterranean and the South. Therefore, it was always subject to the ambitions of invaders, from Alexander the Great to Napoleon and, in the present century, Allenby.

The Gaza Strip was a part of Palestine under the British Mandate until the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. Because of the defeat of the Arab nations in 1967, especially Egypt, Israel occupied the Gaza Strip. It is a small strip of the southeastern Mediterranean coast. The overwhelming majority of its population is Palestinian.³

It is bounded on the north, east, and southeast by Israel, on the southwest by Egypt, and on the west by the Mediterranean Sea.

Determining the Astronomical Position

Gaza is located at 31.30 north latitude and 34.27 east longitude.⁴

The Gaza Strip's surface is 352 square km, or 135 square miles. It is a narrow strip, measuring 44 km along the Mediterranean coast, and it is 7 to 8 km in width. It is a rolling plain that is partly covered by sand dunes. It is a transitional, semiarid area, whose northern part receives adequate rainfall for agriculture that depends on rain, while in the southern portion, the rainfall is less.⁵

In fact, the measurement of the exact surface area varies, and several figures have been given. For example, the Civilian Administration set Gaza's area at 140 square miles.⁶ Another source estimated the area at 327 square km⁷, and another at 365,000 dunums.⁸

Note: Despite the difference in units of measurement, the areas given are unequal. Therefore, I have carefully examined the area, since the purpose of this study is to clarify the relationship between numbers of population and the land area that is—in fact—available for Palestinian use in the Gaza Strip.

Geology and Topography of Gaza

The soil is sedimentary, composed of crumbled rock that has been strewn about by natural elements, such as water and wind. The salts from this crumbled rock were dissolved in water, and the land became fertile.

Under the sedimentary rock is limestone, which water dissolves with the action of carbonic acid, because of the many ferrous materials in this soil. It is suitable for growing grains and citrus fruits.

The surface strata is composed either of sand that contains certain organic materials, or alluvial silt, which is carried by streams from the mountains. Under this is a layer composed of sea runoff.

When we dig deep into many areas, a stratum of dry clay is reached. The success in growing citrus fruit is attributed to this stratum. It is a meter thick and contains considerable organic matter, including the remains of fossils. Under this is a layer of limestone, which covers the basalt.

Its fertility is attributed to an abundance of potash, as well as phosphates. Water must be provided by irrigation. If irrigation is meager, the salts in the soil settle because of the dry climate and the soil's productivity is weakened.

As for seepage soil, it is clay that retains water because the components of iron, aluminum, and red sandy soil slope toward the bottom. This is the cohesive stratum, in which salts and carbonates of lime are lacking. The seepage soil is not suitable for citrus fruit. When it is thin, it is suitable for certain fruit trees.

Its color changes from the coastal plain area to the area of the city of Gaza, where it becomes black and the percentage of lime increases. Grains and greens may be grown here.

With regard to the land that extends westward from Gaza and Rafah and eastward from Beersheba, it is composed of loess. This is powdery soil that is derived from the sea and then dried and converted into dust. It is then blown about into the atmosphere, and it later settles and accumulates. It enters into the atmosphere and water easily and requires considerable moisture.⁹

The entire Gaza Strip lies between two areas, sand in the west, according to Israel's map, and soil composed of sea runoff in the east.

Origin of the Name

The Gaza Strip was named after the city of Gaza, which is the largest of the strip's towns. The origin of the name of Gaza goes back to ancient times. The name varies according to the historical age. The Arabs called it Gaza, and the Jews called it 'Aza. The Canaanites called it Hazzat; the ancient Egyptians called it Ghasatu; the Assyrians called it Azzati; the Greeks called it Raza; the Crusaders called it Gudres; and the English called it Gaza. Gaza in Greek and Farsi means "king's treasure." In Arabic, it means glory.¹⁰

Gaza's climate is the prevailing climate of the Mediterranean basin. It is moderate in temperature, humid in summer, with moderate cold and rain in winter. Rainfall averages differ in the Gaza Strip. In the north, the average rainfall is 370 mm, but this amount is less in the south, where it averages 200 mm. The overall average rainfall is 275 mm annually. During the seven months from October to April, the average number of days with some rainfall is 50.¹¹

Water

Surface Water

The only source of surface water in the Gaza Strip is the Wadi Gaza, which flows for about one-half month per year. This wadi is located between the city of Gaza and Dayr al-Balah. It courses eastward, rising tens of meters, and then heads west toward the Mediterranean coast.

The Israeli authorities have built dams on this wadi to allow agricultural settlements to benefit from this water.

Footnotes

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2. Abu-Yunah, Mikha'il, 1984, *Jughrafiya Tarikhiyah Lilarad al-Muqaddasah*, Fifaq Institute, Jerusalem, p 17.
3. Al-Dawlah al-Filastiniyah, 1990, *Wijahat Nazar Israe'iliyah wa Gharabiyah*, Jaffa Center for Strategic Studies and Center of Palestinian Studies, Beirut, p 262.
4. Al-'Arif, 'Arif, 1943, *Tarikh Gazah*, Dar Al-Iytam al-Islamiyah, Jerusalem, p 298.
5. Al-Dawlah al-Filastiniyah, 1990, op cit, p 215.
6. Israeli Information Center, 1986, *Yahuda wa al-Samarah wa Qita' Ghazah Mundhu 1967*, Jerusalem, p 1.
7. Samid al-Iqtisadli 1991, "Al-Siyasah Al-Isra'iliyah LilMiyah B'Qita' Ghazah," *Hisam Shahada*, File 84.
8. Benvenisti, Myron, and Hiyat, Shlomo, 1988, "Atlas al-Diffah al-Gharabiyah wa Qita' Ghazah," JERUSALEM POST, Jerusalem, p 112.
9. Al-'Aiyidi, Mahmud, 1954, *al-'Alim al-'Arabi*, Al-Sina'iyah Company Press, Amman, p 13.
10. Al-Dabbagh, Mustafa Murad, 1963, op cit, p 110.
11. *Al-Atma' al-Isra'ilyah fi Miyah al-Diffah al-Gharabiyah*, 1987, and a series of studies, Dar Bin-Rashd, Amman, p 25.

[19 Dec 92 p 7]

[Text]

Groundwater

Groundwater is the sole water source in the Gaza Strip, amounting to 100 million cubic meters.¹²

Groundwater is filled from surface water coming from the east, from rain water, or from water increasingly produced from irrigation and drains.

Groundwater depth below the surface in the Gaza Strip ranges between 20 and 80 meters, possibly reaching 80 meters on the coast. The groundwater basin in the Gaza Strip is approximately 50 km long and 8 to 12 km wide.¹³

Artesian Wells:

The number of artesian wells in the Gaza Strip in 1949 was 442; in 1964, 861; in 1968, 1,200; and in 1986, the number of Arab wells, as well as those belonging to the Makurut Company and the UN Relief and Works Agency [UNRWA], totaled 1,815.¹⁴

Use of Land: Distribution and Advance

Political circumstances forced the migration of thousands of people to the Gaza Strip. The number was estimated to be twice the number of original citizens. Consequently, the need to use land was at the expense of agriculture.

By comparing the map of Gaza produced in 1945 with the map drawn in 1984, we may note the elimination of considerable agricultural land area. Water salinity might be one reason for this, but population density and a need to expand construction were among the main reasons, as well.

Land Ownership

The following is a list of land use by dunum:¹⁵

Land use	Number of dunums
Land for Arab construction	56,500
Israeli Settlements	37,000
Arab agricultural land	168,000
State-owned land and Army use	103,000
Total land	365,000
Irrigated land	110,000
Unirrigated land	58,000

However, the process of land confiscation that occurred later has left less than 110,000 dunums in Arab hands for agricultural use. This has harmed citrus fruit orchards and, consequently, has increased population density per square kilometer. We will discuss this matter later.

Table 2: Method of Distributing Land Ownership¹⁶

Type of land	Area in Dunums	Water Percentage
1. Arab land	178,500*	48.9%
2. State-owned land	100,000	24.4%
A. Used by Jews	54,000	
B. Used by Arabs	36,000	
C. Used by Army	10,000	
3. Land belonging to Beersheba	72,000	19.7%
4. Land belonging to foreigners	8,000	2%
5. Settlements	1,500	.4%
6. Other uses	5,000	1.4%
Total	365,000	100%

* There is a discrepancy in land area given between Sharif Kana'nah and Myron Benvenisti. Kana'nah states that there are 224,000 dunums of land.

Agriculture

Between 1948 and 1967, the agricultural sector was the most important in the economic life of Gaza. One-third of the gross national product [GNP] was from that sector. Moreover, it employed between 33 and 40 percent of workers and farmers. Agricultural crops represented 90 percent of exports. After the 1967 war, however, the agricultural sector fell behind. The agricultural sector's percentage of contribution to national income fell from 24.4 percent to 12.3 percent from 1967 to 1981. Furthermore, it dropped even lower for a number of reasons, including:

- Water problems;
- Population problems; converting the agricultural land into residential land;
- Agricultural land confiscation and the building of Israeli settlements; and,
- The shift of many agricultural workers to jobs inside Israel.

In Gaza, there are 360,000 dunums of land, and the percentage of Arab use of this land dropped after 1967 because of Israeli settlement, confiscation of land, and control over water.¹⁸ [as published] As a result, at least one-third of the total land was lost and shifted to Israeli control, either by the Army, its camps, or the settlements.

The agricultural situation was different before 1967. For example, land use in 1958 was 43 percent for agriculture, i.e., approximately 140,500 dunums. In 1966, this had increased to 52 percent, i.e., 170,255 dunums; and in 1968, 55 percent or 198,000 dunums. However, in 1982, the arable land area began to deteriorate, dropping to 177,000 dunums and then to 165,000 dunums. In 1985, it had dropped to 100,000 dunums.¹⁹

The most important element of agriculture in the Gaza Strip is citrus fruit. Nearly one-half of the land is planted with citrus fruit. This area totaled 71,579 dunums in 1981, dropping to 65,340 dunums in 1986 as a result of previously mentioned reasons.²⁰

Citrus fruit is considered the most important Gaza Strip export and was a source of hard currency for the area. It is

worth noting that the Port of Gaza was used in the past to export citrus fruit, particularly to Europe.

Use of Agricultural Lands²¹

Table 3. Area in Thousands of Dunums

Crop	1967		1979		1981		1982		1984	
	Dunum	%	Dunum	%	Dunum	%	Dunum	%	Dunum	%
Grain	56	28.3%	17	10%	20	11.3%	17	10.3%	[figure not given]	[figure not given]
Greens	22	11.1%	30	17.7%	30.7	17.3%	29.2	17.8%	57	31%
Citrus Fruit	70	35.3%	72	42.3%	71.6	40.4%	71.5	43.4%	66.7	36.3%
Other Crops	50	25.3%	51	30%	54.7	31%	46.9	28.5%	60	[figure not given]
Total	198	100%	170	100%	177.1	100%	164.6	100%	183.7	100%

It is well known that the Gaza Strip is poor in minerals and primary raw materials. Despite that, primary industries have been established there because there is copper ore. The Gaza Strip is marked by light industries—most importantly, light bottling and beverages. The work force in the industrial sector used to represent a small fraction of total workers.

Before 1967, industry was simple and marked by light industries. For example: in 1953 there were 2,500, and in 1960, there were 1,782.

Footnotes

12. Al-Muhandis al-Zira'i al-'Arabi, 1989, Secretariat General of the Arab Agricultural Engineers, Folio 24, Damascus, p 24.

13. Nakhal, Muhammad, 1990, "Water in the Gaza Strip," *Samid al-Iqtisadi*, Folio 81, p 190.

14. Nakhal, Muhammad, 1990, op cit, p 195.

15. Benvenisti, Myron, and Hiyat, Shlomo, 1988, "Atlas Al-Diffah Al-Gharabiyah wa Qita' Ghazah," JERUSALEM POST, p 112.

16. Benvenisti, Myron, and Hiyat, Shlomo, 1988, op cit, p 113.

17. Kana'nah, Sharif, and al-Madani, Rashad, 1984, *al-Istitan wa Musadirat al-Arabi fi Qita'ghazah 1967-1984*, Bayr Zayt, West Bank Center for Research and Documentation, Bayr Zayt University, p 9.

18. Rawi, Sarah, 1986, "Gaza Strip Survey," West Bank and Gaza Strip Information Project, JERUSALEM POST.

19. Rawi, Sarah, 1986, op cit, p 19.

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21. Gharayabah, Fawzi, 1985, *Iqtisadiat al-Diffah al-Gharabiyah wa Qita' Ghazah*, Jerusalem, pp 87-89.

[21 Dec 92 p 7]

[Text] Home industries numbered 7,690 in 1967, but there were only 11 organizations that employed more than 10 workers.

As of 1967, there were only two organizations that employed more than 100 workers.²³[as published] After 1967, i.e., 1968, the number of labor's contribution to the industrial sector increased, reaching 7,000 workers, along with the percentage of this sector's contribution to the GNP. However, it had decreased by 1980 to 5,000 workers while, in 1984, it rose to 6,383.²⁴

It is worthy of note that personal income in Gaza was the lowest in the world.²⁵ That was in the 1960's. The situation improved, especially after tens of thousands of people began to work in Israel, where their earnings were higher compared with those workers inside the Gaza Strip itself.

Livestock

Animal resources represented 26 percent of agricultural production for 1982, totaling 5,000 cattle, 15,000 goats, 21,000 sheep, and 160,000 chickens, distributed among 153 farms.

This sector has the following distribution: meat, 48 percent; milk, 27 percent; and, eggs, 17 percent.

It is worth noting that people raise livestock at home, not on large ranches. Egg production between 1967 and 1983 increased 300 percent.²⁶

Fishing is the smallest branch of agriculture, totaling only 3 percent in 1983. One should note that in 1970, this sector's contribution was 30 percent.²⁷

Labor Force

The increase in the number of workers was natural because of the natural population increase and the decrease in number of emigrants. However, we also note an increase in number of workers from the Gaza Strip who work in Israel. This was natural because the Gaza Strip is too small for the army of workers. Presumably, if the Gaza Strip had

sufficient infrastructure, industrialization, and investment, they would have been content to work within the Gaza Strip itself. However, the paucity of income for workers in the Gaza Strip and the insufficient number of

places to work forced many to work in Israel and the West Bank. Table 4 explains the number of workers and the increase in the labor force, in addition to the places of work in the areas.²⁸

Table 4: Workers in Israel, West Bank, and Gaza Strip Between 1970 and 1984

Year	Workers in Israel		Workers in West Bank and Gaza Strip		Total	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
1970	5,900	10%	52,900	90%	58,000	100%
1975	25,900	35.7%	46,700	64%	72,600	100%
1980	34,500	42.7%	46,300	57.3%	80,800	100%
1981	35,900	43.5%	46,600	56.5%	87,500	100%
1982	36,100	43.1%	46,100	56.9%	82,200	100%
1983	39,700	46.5%	45,600	53.5%	85,300	100%
1984	40,200	46.1%	48,000	53.9%	87,200	100%

Development of Population Growth in Gaza:

The following numbers are considered the latest population statistics for the Gaza Strip. They are only for the city of Gaza and do not include other towns, such as Khan Yunis and Rafah. At the end of the Egyptian rule in Gaza in 1840, the population was 2,000. At the end of the last century, it totaled 18,000. In 1956, the population totaled 40,000, including 750 Christians and 3 Jews. In his book, Baedeker described Gaza's population as about 40,000 persons, including 1,000 Orthodox Christians, 100 Latin-Rite Catholics, and 150 Jews. In his book *Travelers Handbook: Palestine, Syria, and Iraq*,²⁹ Cook estimated the population at 42,000 before World War I. During World War I, many were forced to emigrate. By 1920, the population had dropped to 17,480, including 700 Christians and 54 Jews.

In the 1922 census, Gaza's population totaled 21,643, including 17,046 living in the municipal area and 4,597 living outside. On 1 April 1945, Gaza's population was estimated at 34,170 Arabs, including 1,010 Christian (the remainder were Muslim). On 31 December 1946, they were estimated at 37,820,³⁰ and in 1959, the population total was 98,973 persons.

On 1 April 1945, Khan Yunis's population was 11,220, including 40 Christians. On 31 December 1946, the population was estimated at 12,350, and in 1959, it was 40,204. According to British statistics, it was the largest village in Palestine. According to Egyptian statistics, the Gaza Strip had many towns and villages. However, the Gaza Strip and the province of Gaza, before and after 1948, had different boundaries and development and increased population will be introduced before 1948. But within the limits that we estimated for the Gaza Strip initially, the recognized area is 365,00 dunums, i.e., the present surface area.

However, we shall return to the past to learn how the population figures developed, especially the refugee camps, towns and villages, and the communities located in them, along with their area and number of residents.

Table 5: Population in the Gaza Strip, according to British Mandate Sources, 1945, and Egyptian Government, 1959³¹

Name of Settlement	1945 Population	1959 Population
City of Gaza	34,170	98,973
Khan Yunis	11,220	40,204
Jabaliya	3,520	6,013
Bani Suhaylah	3,220	4,712
Bayt Hanun	1,680	—
'Absan	2,230	3,503
Rafah	2,220	14,588
Bayt Lahiya	1,700	2,448
Al-Najlah	1,330	1,884
Khaza'ah	990	1,520
Dayr al-Balah	2,560	3,308

The population of Gaza Strip in 1946 was 71,000 (Footnote 32).

The following table shows the population increase for the Gaza Strip during the British Mandate:

Table 6 (Footnote 33)

Month/Year	Gaza Population in Thousands
October 1922	28.8
November 1931	48
December 1946	71
Percentage of Average Annual Increase	
Years	Percentage
1922-31	8.5
1931-46	2.7
1922-46	3.8

The population in Gaza increased about 12 times between 1922 and 1972. This increase was unimaginable and

affected economic development in this small area, as a result of the high population density, which was greater than its poor economic resources. More than half of its population are refugees, who fled from occupied Palestine in 1948.

During the British Mandate, the Gaza Strip's population increase averaged 3 to 8 percent a year. This was the largest percentage recorded in Palestine during the mandate. During the 1948 war, between 120,000 and 190,000 persons fled to the Gaza Strip. Therefore, the ratio between refugees in the Gaza Strip to original inhabitants was three to two.

During British rule, there was no free migration out of the Gaza Strip because of restrictions. On the other hand, the annual increase of 3.2 percent continued, and the population increase continued at this rate during the 1950's because of restrictions on migrating out of the Gaza Strip.

However, the situation was different after the 1967 war, because the Israeli authorities permitted travel abroad and offered an open-door policy for those who wanted to depart. Consequently, the percentage of migration was very high, especially during the first year of Israel's control over the Gaza Strip. However, later, as a result of natural increase, the loss was compensated for and the balance of population increase was changed. The Gaza Strip's population in 1946 was 71,000.

Footnotes

22. Kana'nah, Sharif, and al-Madani, Rashad, 1984, op cit, p 9.
23. Gharayabah, Fawzi, 1985, op cit, p 71.
24. Budayri, Muhammad, 1982, *al-Taghirat fi al-Diffah al-Gharabiyah wa Qita' Ghazah Tahtu al-Ihtlal al-Isra'ili al-Quwan al-'Amilah wa al-Tajammu'*, Folio 51, p 54.
25. 'Untani, Hisham, 1979, *Mash Lilmasani' al-Diffah al-Gharabiyah wa Qita', Bayr Zayt, al-Diffah al-Gharabiyah*, University of Bayr Zayt, p 24.
26. Israeli Statistical Office, 1985, No 36, Jerusalem.
27. Gharayabah, Fawzi, 1985, op cit, 38, for years 1970-75, 1980-82, and Israeli Statistical Office, op cit, for years 1983-84.
28. Rawi, Sarah, 1986, op cit, p 4.
29. Cook, 1906, *Travels to Palestine, Syria, and Iraq*
30. Al-Dabbagh, Mustafa Murad, 1963, op cit, p 106.
31. Al-Dabbagh, Mustafa Murad, 1963, op cit, p 107.
32. Rawi, Sarah, 1946, p 4.
33. *Numuw wa Tatawwar Iqtisadiat al-Arabi al-Madarah, 1922-72, 1972*, David (Horovitz) Center for Studies of Developing Countries, University of Tel Aviv.

[23 Dec 92 p 7]

[Text] However, other sources have given different numbers (Footnote 34).

Table 7

Year	1922	1931	1944
Total	73,885	94,634	137,180
Arab Population	73,555	94,213	134,300
Percentage	99.5%	99.5%	97.9%
Jewish Population	330	421	2,880
Percentage	.5%	.4%	—

In comparison with the other numbers, these figures high and inconsistent with the British statistics. Since most of the statistics set the Gaza Strip population in 1948 at 71,000, we will continue to use that number so that we can see the demographic imbalance, or sudden increase, that occurred in 1948, as a result of the Arab-Israeli War, when 160,000 to 180,000 refugees came to the Gaza Strip, and the population increased to more than 250,000 or 260,000 persons.³⁵ [as published]

In 1967, the population of Gaza Strip totaled 354,000.³⁶ Another source gave an even higher number than that, i.e., 455,000.³⁷ Benvenisti estimated the Gaza Strip population in 1967 at approximately 390,000.³⁸ And in 1968, the number dropped to 345,000 because of migration to other Arab nations for work. There is a variance in the number of emigres, but it ranges between 50,000 and 100,000. This number was significant 10 years, including 30,000 in 1968.

However, the Gaza Strip population had increased again by 1979, totaling 404,000.³⁹

In 1983, the population was between 493,000 and 479,000, while by 1985, the number totaled 510,000, an increase of 51 percent over 1967.⁴⁰

In 1987, the population had reached 623,000.⁴¹

In 1988, the population was 635,000,⁴² and in 1989-90, the population was 655,000 people, according to Ministry of Health statistics.⁴³

The latest population figures that the Bureau of Statistics in the Gaza Strip has for 1992 show the total number of residents to be 675,000.⁴⁴

The next table shows population numbers from different sources, beginning in the middle of the last century.

Table 8

Year	Population	Other Non-Arab Sources	Other Arab Sources
1840*	2,000		
1890	18,000		
1906	40,000		
1912	42,000		
1920	18,000		
1922	21,643	28,800	73,885
1931	48,000		94,634
1945	34,170		137,180
1946	37,820	71,000	
1948	260,000		
1966	455,000		
1967	390,000	354,000	455,000
1968	345,000		
1979	404,000		
1983	493,000	479,000	
1984	510,000		
1987	625,000		
1988	625,000		
1989-90	655,000		691,000
1990-91	642,000		725,000
1992	675,000		

* City of Gaza only

Various sources show the development of population growth from the middle of the last century up to the latest statistics this year. One should note that most of the statistics for the same year differ because of the various Arab, Israeli, and Western sources and the different policies of each source.

The following table shows population areas (towns, districts, villages, and refugee camps), the number of residents, and type or nature of the inhabited area, in addition to the surface area in dunums, according to 1986 statistics.⁴⁵

Table 9. Settlements (town, village, refugee camp), Population, and Developed Area, 1986

Place	Population	Type of Settlements	Developed Area (in dunums)
Bayt Hanun	12,455	village council	3,680
Bayt Lahiya	18,606	village council	
Jabaliya	63,824	village council, refugee camp	6,600
Gaza City, Shati'	235,277	municipal council, refugee camp	12,000
al-Burayj Camp	16,890	refugee camp	910
Dayr al-Balah	32,420	municipal council	5,555
al-Zawayidah	2,168	village council	930
al-Maghazi Camp	12,803	refugee camp	745
al-Nusayrat Camp	30,093	refugee camp	1,070
Kararah	2,183	village council	
Bani Suhaylah	13,642	village council	2,300
Khan Yunis	98,374	municipal council	11,840
Khaza'ah	4,041	village council	1,000
'Absan al-Kabirah	8,795	village council	2,580

Table 9. Settlements (town, village, refugee camp), Population, and Developed Area, 1986 (Continued)

Place	Population	Type of Settlements	Developed Area (in dunums)
'Absan al-Saghirah	1,825	village council	730
Rafah	81,876	municipal council, refugee camp	7,895
Totals	633,562		56,530

To show how the population has developed since 1967 and the places in which it is distributed, we should note that, then, the city of Gaza, with a population of more than 100,000, was the largest, and Khan Yunis had a population of up to 99,999. Three smaller communities, with populations of up to 49,999, were Rafah, al-Nusayrat (refugee camp), and Jabaliya (local council and refugee camp). There were two communities in 1967 with up to 19,999: Dayr al-Balah and al-Burayj (refugee camp). There were also three population concentrations of up to 9,999. They were Bani Suhaylah, al-Maghazi (refugee camp), and Bayt Lahiya.

There were two population centers containing up to 4,999: Bayt Hanun and 'Absan al-Kabirah, and there were some villages of up to 1,999: including 'Absan al-Saghirah and al-Zuwayidah.

However, changes have occurred in population concentration in the Gaza Strip. Map J [not published] makes clear the extent of those changes with regard to the increase in population by 1987.

Footnotes

- 34. Palestinian Statistics 1983, PLO, Palestinian Statistical Center, Damascus.
- 35. [Habiyah], Edward A., 1974, "Arab Palestinian Residents: Demography of Palestinian Population," *Majlah al-Darasat al-Filastiniyah*, pp 52-53.
- 36. Rawi, Sarah, op cit, p 4.
- 37. [Kanovski, Elishu], 1970, *al-Tashirat al-Iqtisadiyah al-Harb al-Ayam al-Sittah (Israel, Occupied Territories, Egypt, Jordan)*, Praeger, New York, p 174.
- 38. Benvenisti, Myron, and Hiyat, Shlomo, 1988, op cit, p 109.
- 39. Rawi, Sarah 1986 op cit, p 5.
- 40. Israeli Statistics 1985, Israeli Statistical Center 36, Jerusalem.
- 41. Benvenisti, Myron, and Hiyat, Shlomo, 1988, op cit, p 112.
- 42. *Al-Dawlah al-Filastiniyah*, 1990, op cit, p 216.
- 43. Mushukhi, Muhammad 1992, "Gaza After the Israeli Occupation," AL-SHA'B, Jerusalem, 13-17 May 1992.
- 44. Mushukhi, Muhammad 1992 op cit, 13-17 May 1992.
- 45. Benvenisti, Myron, and Hiyat, Shlomo, 1988, op cit, p 113.

[24 Dec 92 p 7]

[Text] We should note that there is more than one community that contains more than 100,000 persons. These communities are Gaza and Khan Yunis. There is more than one population center that contains up to 99,999. These areas are Rafah and Jabaliya. There is also more than one population center with up to 49,999 residents. These areas are Dayr al-Balah and al-Nusayrat. There are more than five communities with up to 19,999: Bayt Hanun, Bayt Lahiya, al-Burayj, al-Maghazi, and Bani Suhaylah.

For 20 years, changes and developments have occurred that have helped to almost double the population. There are many reasons, including:

1. Stopping counter migration.

The Gaza Strip has suffered from high migration abroad, especially to the Gulf States. One should recall that 95,000 citizens migrated to the Gulf states to find work. The Israeli authorities permitted those who wanted to work abroad to leave the Gaza Strip. This was the opposite of Egyptian Government's policy, which blocked migration until 1967.

After the June 1967 war, tens of thousands migrated, resulting in a decline in the population in the Gaza Strip. However, this phenomenon receded because the number of migrants decreased as the labor force found an alternative in the Israeli labor market. Among the estimated 92,000 workers in 1986, 41,700 were employed in Israel.⁴⁶ Until the start of the intifadah, this number remained approximately the same, but then it began to decline because of political and security factors.

2. Natural increase, which resulted from:

- A rise in birthrate because of the increase in years of fertility, early marriage, and prolific childbearing; and
- Health and medical advances, which reduced the deathrate.

This resulted in an annual population increase rate of 3.2 percent.⁴⁷ This is a very high percentage. Other sources state that the annual population increase is more than that, while Arab sources put the annual increase at 5 percent.⁴⁸

Whether or not the annual increase is 3.2 or 5 percent, both rates are high. This means an enormous increase in population during the coming years.

Health progress has occurred, since the Gaza Strip now has five hospitals providing services to citizens. This includes an ophthalmological hospital, one for children, another for neurology patients, etc. It is worth noting that difficult cases are transferred to Israeli hospitals. In addition, there

are 28 clinics distributed in the Gaza Strip's villages and towns. These hospitals and clinics are supervised by the Civilian Administration.

There are other private hospitals, and nine other clinics that are run by UNRWA. There are also local associations, like the Palestinian Red Crescent, Friends of the Ailing, and the Federation of Churches.

All of these organizations have contributed to raising the percentage of national population increase through their services.

The national increase rose from 2.2 percent in the 1970's,⁴⁹ rising in the early 1980's to 2.7 percent,⁵⁰ and then in 1986 to 3.2 percent.

Other sources have stated that the rate of natural population increase has reached 5 percent.⁵¹

It is worth noting that, according to 1984 statistics the annual increase in numbers was more than 20,000 people per year, i.e., the equivalent of 40 per 1,000. Moreover, there are those who claim the increase is 3,000 monthly, i.e., 36,000 annually.

The birthrate has reached 146 per 1,000.

Age and Gender Groups in the Gaza Strip Population:

In 1984, the population of the Gaza Strip was 509,000—254,000 men and 255,400 women.⁵²

Refugees totaled 367,000 in 1986.⁵³

UNRWA statistics estimate that the number of refugees living in the Gaza Strip is 354,700, with an estimated 238,400 living in eight refugee camps. Approximately 116,300 live outside of camps.⁵⁴

Other sources have stated that the Gaza Strip population is 356,300, including 207,300 refugees who came to Gaza in 1948 as a result of the Arab-Israeli War. They form 58.2 percent of the total population. As for those who, in fact, live in refugee camps, their number as of the June 1967 War was 172,500, i.e., some 48.4 percent.⁵⁵

With regard to age groups, one should note that most of the people of Gaza are children and young people, since 82.1 percent of the population are below 34 years old, according to 1984 statistics. See Table 10.⁵⁶

Age	Percentage of Population
0-14	47.8%
15-34	34.3%
Over 35	17.9%

The growth and development of the population and the increase in the number of young people is increasing, as we explained before, as a result of health advances and prolific childbearing.⁵⁷

Table 11

Age	1977	1984	Increase Percentage
0-4	89,500	97,200	9%
5-9	62,700	83,800	34%

Most statistics indicate an uninterrupted growth in population increase, since the rate of counter migration has declined considerably. In addition, the rate of births over deaths is nearly 4 percent. Consequently, researchers deduce that Gaza's population will reach the 1 million mark by the end of this century.⁵⁸

Footnotes

46. Benvenisti, Myron, and Hiyat, Shlomo, 1988, op cit, p 113.

47. Benvenisti, Myron, and Hiyat, Shlomo, 1988, op cit, p 109.

48. Al-Mushukhi, Muhammad 1992, op cit, 13-17 May 1992.

49. Benvenisti, Myron, 1982, *Ma'lumat Ihsa'iyah al-Mawdu' al-Diffah al-Gharabiyah wa Ghazah, Interim Report No. 1, Jerusalem, p 1.*

50. Rawi, Sarah, 1986, op cit, p 6.

51. Al-Mushukhi, Muhammad, 1992, op cit, 13-17 May 1992.

52. Israeli Statistical Center, op cit, p 38.

53. Benvenisti, Myron, and Hiyat, Shlomo, 1988, op cit, p 109.

54. UNRWA, 1985, "Statistics Concerning Size of House Floor Space, Divisions, and Types," International Relief Agency, Gaza.

55. C.T.S. 1968, *al-Iskan wa al-Milikiyah fi al-Arabi al-Madarah*, Second Edition, Jerusalem, p 28.

56. Israeli Statistical Center, 1985, op cit, p 42.

57. Israeli Statistical Center, 1985, op cit, p 43.

58. Al-Dawlah al-Filastiniyah, 1990, op cit, p 143.

[28 Dec 92 p 7]

[Text] Before finishing our topic concerning population, we shall briefly touch on the Israeli settlements in the Gaza Strip. This is an important subject, not because of the number of settlements, but because of the land area that they own, which we must subtract from the accounting process at the expense of population density, i.e., the process of dividing the population by the area that is actually available and in their possession.

In the Gaza Strip, there are 20 to 27 agricultural, industrial, and security settlements and army positions and camps. According to 1990 statistics, the number of settlers

totaled 2,500, while the total confiscated land in the Gaza Strip was 146,000 dunums. That is more than 30 percent of the Gaza Strip's total land area of 360,500 dunums.⁵⁹

Most of this land is state-owned or subordinate to Beer-sheba, especially in the southern Gaza Strip. This land is outside the scope of citizen use, either for construction, agriculture, or any other use.

It is worth recalling the water crisis in Gaza, which emerged after the Makurut Company began pumping water to these settlements. As a result of drawing more for both Arabs and Jews, a shortage of water developed, i.e., a shortage of drinking and agricultural water.

Population Density

As we mentioned before, if we look at Table 2, we see an area of 146,000 dunums outside the accounting process of a total of 365,000 dunums.⁶⁰

Despite the difference in numbers, all sources agree that the percentage of population density in the Gaza Strip is very high. Some gave it as 1,300 to 1,400 per square km.⁶¹ In 1986, the density was even higher, reaching 1,730 persons per square km, compared with Israel's 198 per square km.⁶²

However, I differ with their view concerning population density, because it is much higher than that, even if we concede that the population in 1986 was 633,000, and there are differing views about the true population number. The Jaffa Center for Strategic Studies and Benvenisti, himself, believe that the authorities do not state the true population number. However, I might agree with Simcha Bahiri's study, in which he gave 1,737 per square km as the population density in the Gaza Strip.

From my point of view, the population number is greater than that. The land that is, in fact, available to them is less than 365,000 dunums. Therefore, I will use the official Israeli statistics for the population, which is 633,000. Out of the 365,000 dunums, the total land that is in the possession of Arabs is 178,500 dunums, in addition to the 36,000 dunums that the state has allocated to the Arabs. (See Table 2, Land Ownership).

There is a total of only 215,000 dunums in Arab possession on which they are able to build, farm, or otherwise control. [text missing]

365,000 [available land]

215,000 (see Benvenisti's Table of Land Owners)

150,000 dunums are outside the accounting process, since these dunums are state or settlers' control.

Table 12: From Official Sources

Year	Population	Density per Dunum	Density per Square Kilometer
1987	633,000	2,944/dunum	2,944/square km
1989	655,000	3,046/dunum	3,046/square km
2 January 1992	675,000	3,139/dunum	3,139/square km
1992*	725,000	3,374/dunum	3,374/square km

*Unofficial source

Taking into account the official statistics for 1987, 1989, and 1992, and comparing last year's figures with numbers from a non-Israeli source, the numbers appear dubious. The official numbers also show a density of more than 3,000 persons per square kilometer. Therefore, the consensus of the various sources is that the population density is very high.

Footnotes

59. Shahadah, Hisam 1991, "Israeli Water Policy in the Gaza Strip", *Samid al-Iqtisadi*, File 84.

60. Benvenisti, Myron, and Hiyat, Shlomo, 1988, op cit, p 113.

61. Rawi, Sarah, 1986, op cit, p 5.

62. Benvenisti, Myron, and Hiyat, Shlomo, 1988, op cit, p 159.

63. Bahiri, Simcha, 1989, "Building in West Bank and Gaza Strip," JERUSALEM POST, Jerusalem, p 61.

64. Benvenisti, Myron, and Hiyat, Shlomo, 1988, op cit, p 113.

65. Benvenisti, Myron, and Hiyat, Shlomo, 1988, op cit, p 113.

66. Israeli Statistical Center, 1987, *Population Forecasts in Judea, Samarah, and Gaza Strip to 2000*, Jerusalem, Table A.

67. Israeli Statistical Center, 1987, op cit, Table 9.

68. Dahlan, Ahmad Sa'id, 1989, *Population, War, and Policy: A Study of the Gaza Strip*, Academy of British Geographers, London, p 241.

[29 Dec 92 p 7]

[Text] It is worth noting that 96 percent of the Gaza Strip's population are city dwellers. (See Table 13)

Table 13 shows the population of human settlements (cities, villages, refugee camps) according to the area of towns or villages. It also shows the population density according to developed areas.

Table 13: Population Density According to Human Settlement and Developed Areas in the Gaza Strip

Settlement	Type of Government	Population	Developed Area	Population Density (People/Dunum)
Cities				
Gaza Shati'	municipal council, refugee camp	235,277	12,000	19.6
Dayr al-Balah	municipal council	32,420	5,555	5.8
Khan Yunis	municipal council	98,374	11,840	8.3
Rafah	municipal council	81,876	7,985	10.3
Total		447,445	37,380	12
Refugee Camps				
Jabaliya	refugee camp			
Bayt Lahiya	village council	76,430	6,600	12.3
Al-Burayj	refugee camp	16,890	910	18.6
Al-Maghazi	refugee camp	12,083	745	16.2
Al-Nusayrat	refugee camp	30,093	1,070	28.1
Total		140,497	9,325	13
Villages				
Bayt Hanun	village council	12,455	3,680	3.1
Zawayidah	village council	2,168	930	2.3
Karaka	village council	2,183		
Bani Suhaylah	village council	13,642	2,300	5.9
Kaza	village council	4,091	1,000	4.5
'Absan al-Kabirah	village council	8,795	2,580	3.4
'Absan al-Saghirah	village council	1,835	730	2.5
Total		46,119	11,220	4.1
Grand Total		634,060	57,925	10.7

Table 13 makes it clear that population density is high. In al-Nusayrat Refugee Camp, it has reached a record number, with more than 30,000 persons living on about 1,000 dunums. That is 30 persons per dunum, which is a very high population density.

Population density in the city of Gaza and the Shati' Camp is in second place, with a total of 235,277 persons in an estimated area of 12,000 dunums. That is a ratio of 19.6 persons per dunum.

These numbers explain the population pressure under which the Gaza Strip lives. Even though the population density varies from one area to another, the various areas all have high population densities.

The total area that is actually available to Arab citizens in the Gaza Strip is 215,000 dunums, with the population figure approaching 655,000, according to official statistics for 1989.

We wonder how the population density can reach more than 3,000 persons per square kilometer, which is what will happen in the future. This is the expectation for the future because of the high annual increase in births, with the fertility rate in the Gaza Strip estimated to be 7.2 per 1,000.

There has been an increase in average life expectancy, rising from 63 to 66, because of scientific progress. Moreover, counteremigration has declined, with migration now estimated at 10 persons per 1,000.

Future predictions expect that the Gaza Strip population in 2002 will be between 992,300 and 1,070,000 persons.

The question now is: What will the population density be in 2002, with a population increase like this, if we assume that the land area available to the Arabs will remain at 215,000 dunums, i.e., that no more land will be confiscated?

The following are the expectations of population density in 2002, depending on the data and predictions of the source:

Table 14

Year	Population	Area in Dunums	Density per Dunum	Estimated number of persons per square kilometer
1992	675,000	215,000	3.1	3,139
2002 (a)	992,300	215,000	4.6	4,615
2002 (b)	1,070,000	215,000	4.9	4,976

An area measuring 36,000 dunums on which there are settlements was subtracted from the total amount land, in addition to the state-owned land and the land subordinate to Beersheba. Consequently, the area actually available for use by Arabs and by which the population density of Arab citizens in the Gaza Strip must be measured is 215,000 dunums, i.e., 215 square km. According to its program, the World Zionist Organization expects 20,000 Jews to be located in the Gaza Strip by 2000.

Consequently, the equation with regard to available land area will change and, in practice, this will increase the population density.

Solutions

The following question arises: Is there a possibility of doing something to stop this increasingly high density, which carries within itself destructive and harsh circumstances and suffering as a result of severe overcrowding?

Some might suggest delaying the age of marriage or limiting the number of children, etc. However, I would suggest something else. It is difficult to change a society that does not believe in a policy of limiting children or similar ideas. Therefore, I propose:

- The confiscation of additional land should cease.
- The authorities should make more state-owned land available to Arab citizens in the Gaza Strip.
- Arab citizens should alter the building patterns that they use, since this construction method used is to build a single-story dwelling with a garden or a two-story house. They should begin to build high-rise apartments and flats in order to maximize land use. However, construction will be at the expense of agricultural land, and this is a tragedy in itself.
- Coastal lands should be drained and distributed for the purpose of increasing area. However, this will be very costly, especially in light of the absence of a national authority, in addition to a lack of resources.
- A specific agreement with Egypt and Israel, which border the Gaza Strip on the north, east, and south, should be reached to initiate optional settlements for those who wish to live in the northern Sinai or west of Beersheba, because the population density in Egypt is 50 per square km, while in Israel it is 198 per square km.

Most of these solutions appear—at first glance—impractical, but there is no serious, quick solution. The time bomb represented by the continuous population density increase will lead to negative consequences against the aggressor society itself, because it carries social diseases and places psychological and economic pressures on the citizens.

Conclusion

After we determined the Gaza Strip's historic and political boundaries, its geographic location, and its rainfall, we discussed water resources, agriculture, industry, labor force, population, and area. This was our background of the Gaza Strip in all its various aspects.

The Gaza Strip is narrow in surface area, poor in economic resources, and lacking in infrastructure. However, it is rich in population relative to land area. Therefore, the Gaza Strip suffers from high population density, which, according to official government bureaus, reached 1,819 per dunum in 1990, assuming that the population figure is 655,000 and that the land area is the total area of the Gaza Strip, i.e., 360,000 dunums. This assumes that all of the land is actually available to Arab citizens, while disregarding the areas confiscated for settlements and for the Army's use. This density ratio of 1,819 persons per square km is a very high percentage in comparison with other places in the world. In Israel, it is 198 per square km; in Japan, it is 324 per square km; and in Egypt, it is 50 per square km.

However, the fact is that the population density is higher than that for several reasons:

- The population number is higher than the figure given; and,
- It is erroneous to divide the population by the Gaza Strip area of 360,000 dunums because we must subtract the land that belongs to the settlements or is used by the Army, as well as Beersheba land and state-owned land, which should be dropped from the accounting process. All of this land totals 145,000 dunums, and, consequently, only 215,000 dunums remain at the disposal of Arab citizens for their use and for agriculture. We use this amount in the accounting process to learn the true population density, which has peaked this year at 3,139 persons per square km.

It is believed that the population density will reach 4,115 persons per square km by 2002. This number shows the extent of the need for prompt action vis-a-vis this unimaginable figure. Sound and credible solutions are needed to correct the demographic course in the Gaza Strip, because its economic resources are too poor to carry this enormous population burden.

EC Scenarios for Regional Economy Outlined

93AF0440A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 11 Mar 93 p 13

[Report from Brussels by Nur-al-Din al-Furaydi: "Palestinian State May Be Similar to Hong Kong"]

[Text] European experts are working to crystallize scenarios for regional cooperation in the Middle East in the year 2000 on the assumption that the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations will be fruitful. They describe anticipated difficulties as "incidental."

The experts base their designs for the economic future of the region on the experiences of European countries that destroyed each other in the first half of the 20th century, but have joined since 1957 in a common market that ensured peace, stability, and economic prosperity for Western Europe.

European Commission President Jacques Delors wondered during last February's session of the European Parliament: "Why don't Israel and the Arab states establish a common market based on water and energy sources, just as the European Community was based on the steel and coal industries?"

Thoughts that AL-HAYAH extrapolated from responsible European sources highlight some aspects of European scenarios that conflict with the Israeli viewpoint, or more specifically with the viewpoint of Israeli foreign minister Shimon Perez who invited the European Community more than once to augment multilateral talks on regional cooperation.

European concepts approach an opinion expressed by Jordan's crown prince Hasan Bin-Talal during a recent visit to Brussels. He called for "establishing between Jordan, the Palestinian entity, and Israel economic cooperation fashioned after the current economic union of the three smaller Benelux countries (Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg)."

European and Palestinian economic concepts are not incompatible from a practical standpoint, except for the Palestinians' emphasis on putting the political horse (a political solution) before the economic cart (cooperation). Syria, supported by Lebanon, refuses to participate in the multilateral talks because they are, in the words of its foreign minister, Faruq al-Shar', "premature."

The recommendations that European cooperation experts will bring to the region's capitals at the end of this month underscore that "the shape of tomorrow will be determined by the actions of today." Therefore it is imperative for the parties concerned to clearly examine their current and future relations with each other.

No economic and political ties exist today between Israel and the countries of the Arab Levant (Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and the occupied territories) whose small areas impede their development and which will subsequently have no alternative but to open up to each other. "Economic integration between those countries and Israel is the only available option to ensure social and economic development of the area's population, which will have grown by more than 50 percent early in the 21st century. That option also entails parallel integration with the Middle European environment."

The economic integration option, as conceived by European experts, means "the creation by the year 2010 of a zone for free trade among Egypt, Palestine, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria, and the establishment of free trade between each of them and Europe and the majority of the Mediterranean countries." Israel is so far the only Mediterranean country to share a free trade zone with the European Community. This free trade is to be expanded in the near future in step with European Common Market developments and the with the creation of the European economic domain in the middle of this year.

Cyprus and Turkey are looking forward to membership in the European Common Market. The European Community has proposed the creation of a customs union with Turkey and is negotiating for free trade with Morocco. It also has targeted free trade with Tunisia.

European recommendations note that this scenario seems today to be futuristic and that it raises two issues: the stages the region will go through before it arrives at the regional integration scenario, and when it will be possible to take practical steps in that direction.

European recommendations clearly address the two issues in that it would be impossible to take any action "until Israel enters into peace agreements with Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan and until it accedes to autonomy for the Palestinians." Optimists believe that this would be possible to achieve next year (1994), at which time normal trade relations will be given priority. This means establishing crossing points, opening closed borders, and simplifying customs procedures among countries of the region provided that those steps are completed by 1996. "Israel must engage in free trade with its neighbors in the manner of the European Community's actions toward its neighbors in Central and East Europe and in the Mediterranean basin in the 1970's, as well as in the 1990's. Such steps cannot be expected before 1996, but mentalities, especially in Israel, must be oriented toward that goal." The European Community can, meanwhile, propose to update the agreements it concluded with the Levant countries into partnership agreements similar to those it proposed with Morocco and Tunisia that are to be negotiated in 1993 and 1994.

As for the normalization of trade relations between Israel and the neighboring Arab states, "procedures for crossing between Israel and Jordan and among Syria, Jordan, Palestine, and Egypt must be investigated in order to promote trade among countries of the region."

Trade requires bolstering the infrastructure of the countries concerned. Investing in building road networks may be feasible when the trade volume expansion warrants the pumping of large capital but the construction of new networks seems to be far off. Building electric networks could be a first step towards regional integration. Studies are currently being made on the feasibility of linking the region's electric networks with funding provided by the Arab Monetary Fund and by the European Community. These are expected to be completed early in 1994 and will form a basis for investments in 1995. Electric networks in

Israel and the neighboring Arab countries must be linked, not only because Israel is a crossing point between Egypt and the other Arab states, but because it is a major producer and consumer of electricity and also because of different sabbath days and holidays in the region."

As far as water is concerned, European recommendations emphasize that a "Jordan River Water Authority" needs to be created jointly by Syria, Jordan, Palestine, and Israel in order to "improve the flow and the allotment of the river's water resources."

The European recommendations also deal with travel issues and propose "simplifying entry visa procedures for foreign tourists and area residents and preferably abolishing that requirement altogether for European tourists." The recommendations also note that it is in the interest of the various states to preserve migration trends not for purposes for permanent immigration but to facilitate the seasonal movement of labor. Inhuman controls imposed upon Gaza Strip and West Bank Palestinians are an incentive to make arrangements for the movement of labor. It would be useful in this regard to learn by European Community experiences and by bilateral agreements between European and other labor-exporting countries.

Politically speaking, respect for international borders is the most important outcome of peace negotiations that, if drawn to their conclusion, would leave behind a single major problem—the status of currently occupied territories." It seems that a Palestinian state with a population exceeding 2 million would not be feasible in a narrow area of rock sand unless it is economically developed in the style of Hong Kong and unless it has use of the infrastructures and institutions of both Jordan and Israel."

In practical terms, "Palestinian state federation or confederation with Jordan would be a dimension that would make its creation possible, provided the two states adopt uniform foreign and economic policies, a uniform defense system, and a single currency standard. The more the Palestinians are cognizant of their limitations the better off they will be."

Palestinian Commercial Bank Obtains License

*93P50104A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
15 Mar 93 p 11*

[Text] Amman—The Palestinian Commercial Bank has obtained an official license to do business as a joint-stock company in the occupied West Bank.

The bank's capital is 10 million Jordanian dinars, and all of its founders are citizens of the West Bank.

It is to be noted that this is the first license for a local bank in the West Bank since 1967. There are currently branches of the Cairo-Amman Bank on the West Bank. Permission was also given to the Bank of Jordan to open branches there.

Labor Market Loses \$750,000 From Gaza Closing

93AF0441A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 8 Mar 93 p 8

[Article by Salah Hazin: "Palestinian Labor Market Loses \$750,000 as Result of Israel's Closing of Gaza Strip"]

[Excerpt] Amman—A Palestinian economist has estimated the loss incurred by the Palestinian labor market as a result of the Gaza Strip closing at \$750,000 daily. This economist has based his estimate on the number of Gaza Strip Palestinians who work behind the green line in Israel and who cannot go to work because of closing of the Gaza Strip. Their number is estimated at 35,000 workers who represent 33.7 percent of the total Palestinian labor that goes every morning behind the green line to work in the construction, agriculture, and industry sectors mainly.

This economist has told AL-HAYAH that this closing means that these workers lose all their wages, which he estimated at the abovementioned figure on the basis that a worker earns 60 shekels daily.

The economist warned that it is possible that Israel will exploit the opportunity of the Gaza Strip closing to retreat from its "cosmetic" policy toward the occupied territories—a policy based on alleviating the pressure on these territories, even if only slightly, so as "not to kill the patient." Israel launched this policy in wake of the Gulf war. This economist added that one feature of this policy is to alleviate the confining and restrictive measures that Israel has continued to apply to the occupied territories' inhabitants throughout 25 years. He noted that alleviated measures include approval of the foundation of a number of factories in the West Bank and Gaza Strip whose economy was on the verge of collapse. He added that the construction of a juice plant in Gaza, which is an old project that Palestinians have been demanding for many years, falls within the context of this plan. The economist has characterized this plan as "cosmetic" at times and as a patchwork plan at others because it has been applied under the pressure of world public opinion and the pressure of some factors connected with Israel itself. These factors include unemployment rates rising to 10 percent because of Jewish immigration from the former Soviet Union and the realization that some countries that had acted as a refuge for the Palestinians, such as the Gulf states and Kuwait, are no longer so. The same applies to Jordan, whose market has been inflated with hundreds of thousands of Palestinians and Jordanians repatriated in wake of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

The Palestinian economist said that these facts have confronted the Israelis, who have worked throughout 25 years to annex the Palestinian economy to the Israeli economy and encourage Palestinians to find employment markets outside their territories, thus forcing them to resort to this solution, which is also not perfect. The investment promotion policy declared by Israel has been implemented in a haphazardly manner and not through an investment plan beneficial to the occupied territories. For example, three plants have been licensed to bottle [butane] gas whereas one plant is enough to cover the entire market.

As for promoting investment by expatriate Palestinians and for giving them permanent residence in their country when they invest in it, this kind of investment has been applied only within the narrowest bounds, and with extensive intervention and with even greater complexities. All of this has caused interest in this type of investment to be limited.

The Palestinian economist has cited the tax law imposed on the occupied territories' inhabitants as an example of the intervention and of the complexities. This law permits Israelis to collect from these inhabitants twice the taxes they collect from Israelis in the various income brackets. An Israeli citizen earning an income of \$2,000 is exempted and pays no tax whereas a Palestinian pays a tax of \$200 for the same income. While a Palestinian pays \$650 in taxes for \$4,000 in income, an Israeli citizen pays no more than \$150.

He said that these facts make the new Israeli policy vis-a-vis the Palestinian economy a patchwork policy.

However, he warned against backsliding on this policy, despite its drawbacks, especially in Gaza Strip where economic conditions are on the verge of collapse and where unemployment rates have risen to fearful levels of more than 45 percent. He said that he would not be exaggerating if he said that one out of every three Palestinian workers is unemployed. [passage omitted]

PLO Organ Reviews Tax Situation in Territories

93AF0441B Nicosia *FILASTIN AL-THAWRAH* in Arabic
28 Feb 93 p 20

[Article by Iyad 'Abd-al-Haqq: "Occupation Collects \$750 Million in Taxes in One Year"]

[Text] The Hague treaty says that occupation authorities must spend the taxes they collect from occupied territories' inhabitants in the occupied territories. In the occupied territories, the occupation authorities collect more taxes than scheduled, without regard for the Hague treaty.

The Palestinian economy is subjected to numerous losses as a result of the tax burdens imposed on it by the Israeli occupation authorities, amounting at times to 400 percent. This leads to the increased cost of processed Palestinian goods and, consequently, curtails their ability to compete with similar Israeli or foreign products. It also reduces investment by creating a situation that does not promote such investment at all.

There are nearly 70 types of taxes connected with all production elements and 50 military decrees concerning customs fees and consumption fees on all exports from and imports to the occupied territories. This has undermined the growth, even the continuity, of the various Palestinian economic sectors.

The occupation authorities impose numerous procedures on Palestinian importers. The importers have to present a

permit for every shipment, and it takes four to six weeks to get a permit. This is in addition to customs inspections and clearance procedures that last more than a week and result in high storage fees at Israeli ports under the pretext of security measures.

HA'ARETZ, an Israeli paper, said recently that the West Bank civil administration last year collected 8 million more shekels than estimated by the government budget. It should be noted that the total annual taxes collected by the Israeli authorities from the occupied territories amounted to \$750 million last year.

Nearly 100 Palestinian merchants have filed a lawsuit against the civil administration head through Avigdor Feldman, an Israeli attorney.

The lawsuit is based on the legal principle of the Hague treaty. Articles 43 and 48 of this treaty govern the collection of taxes in occupied territories.

Ilyas Rashmawi, a Palestinian pharmacist from Bayt Sahur who performs the task of coordinator of the committee following up on the income tax issue, has admitted that the "Palestinian merchants are not deluding themselves about any decision made by the Israeli court because they are convinced that this court has always served the Israeli occupation and its interests. The objective behind filing this lawsuit is to expose the Israeli tax-collection procedures." Rashmawi recalled a 1982 Supreme Court decision that defined how taxes in the West Bank and Gaza Strip would be collected in accordance with the terms of the third Hague treaty. But the Israeli authorities have not implemented that decision. This is why the Palestinian pharmacist has said that the "Israeli authorities have no legitimate authority to collect the taxes," because, first, they have not observed the 1982 Supreme Court decision; second, because evidence proves that the tax-collection agency is responsible for draining the economic resources of the occupied territories; and, third, because of the tax imbalance between Israel and the occupied territories.

Rashmawi expressed the belief that importance of the 1982 Israeli Supreme Court decision emanates from the fact that it acknowledged the third Hague treaty as the legal reference on the tax issue. He urged the necessity of refunding the collected money so it will serve the inhabitants' interest. (AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI, London)

It should be noted that the Israeli tax-collection agencies were transformed into military agencies as of the end of 1982. Appellate and civil courts were abolished and replaced by military appeals courts responsible for whatever pertains to taxes. Tax agency personnel were given broad powers and their identity cards say they have the power of soldiers. Accordingly, they have been given the power to raid, inspect, arrest, and confiscate.

At the beginning of this year, the occupation authorities dealt the Palestinian national economy—the transport sector this time—another blow by issuing the traffic law which they have implemented in the occupied territories.

This law calls for suspending the license of taxicabs that are more than 10 years old, which means replacing Palestinian public cars and buses regularly at a time when the prices of spare parts, fuel, and insurance are rising. Thus, this law saddles those people with large sums of money that cannot be secured from intrinsic sources in the West Bank under the current circumstances.

In mid-February, the Federation of Palestinian Chambers of Commerce and the Palestinian Drivers Union submitted protest memoranda to the Israeli prime minister and to a number of people concerned with human rights. These memos demanded that this decision be abolished because of the harm it will cause thousands of Palestinian families that depend on this sector for their livelihood.

It should be noted that Palestinian buses charge only one-half the passenger fee established by the Israeli authorities, whereas Israeli buses charge the full fee. Moreover, the Israeli authorities give Israeli buses operating in the occupied territories financial incentives, which allow the Eged Company to charge \$1 for every kilometer its buses travel in the occupied territories.

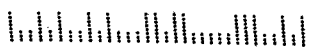
In 1985, there were 720 buses. Now, the number is no more than 462 buses because of Israeli restrictions on their purchase. Currently, the price of a bus amounts to nearly \$120,000, excluding the value added tax imposed by Israel, which amounts to 8 percent the price.

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